



African Union Gender Policy

(Final Draft)

[2008]

Contents

Forward

Acknowledgement

PART I - Historical Background ...1

PART II - AU Gender Policy Commitments ...7

PART III - Policy Delivery Strategies And Institutional Framework ...17

PART IV - Plan Of Action (to be circulated later) ...22

Annexes ...23

List of acronyms

ADB	African Development Bank	NGOs	Non- governmental Organisations
ACHPR	Africa Charter on Human and People's Rights	OAU	Organisation of African Unity
APRRRW	African Protocol on People's Rights and the Rights of Women	PFA	Plans for Action
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism	PLWHA	People living with HIV/AIDS
AU	African Union	RECS	Regional Economic Communities
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women	SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
COMESA	Community of East and Southern Africa	SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
CS	Commonwealth Secretariat	SWCF	Second World Conference on Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	TWCW	Third World Conference on Women
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration	UEMOA	Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa	UN	United Nations
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
EGDC	ECOWAS Gender Development Centre	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
FWCW	First World Conference on Women	UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
FWCW	Forth World Conference on Women	WAD	Women and Development
FP	Focal Point	WID	Women in Development
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation		
GAD	Gender and Development		
GBV	Gender Based Violence		
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure		
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment		
GFP	Gender Focal Point		
GMS	Gender Management System		
GMT	Gender Management Team		
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome		
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development		
ICT	Information Communication Technology		
ILO	International Labour Organisation		
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals		
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development		

Africa Union Gender Policy

Preface

On behalf of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, it is my great honour and pleasure to record the Assembly's satisfaction on the development of the first ever African Union Gender Policy. This document encapsulates decisions and Declarations of this Assembly and other global commitments on gender and women's empowerment and demonstrated the continued leadership of the African Union in advancing gender equality in the continent.

This Gender Policy provides a mandate for the operationalization of Assembly commitments and is accompanied by a comprehensive ten year Action Plan, which will guide the implementation of these commitments by AU organs. And also compliment ongoing implementation of these commitments at the Member States level and in Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

H.E. President Jakaya Kikwete
Chairperson
Assembly of African Union
President of United Republic of Tanzania

Africa Union Gender Policy

Forward

I am extremely delighted to forward the first ever African Union Gender Policy , whose final development phase coincided with my assumption of the office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, making it one of my first Policy documents to forward. The Women's Gender and Development Directorate which has developed this document is in my office, so it gives me double honour to carry out this noble and important task .

The development of the AU Gender Policy and its 10 year implementation plan has been inspired by the overwhelming political will and commitment demonstrated by African Union's Heads of States and Government who in the last few years have adopted important decisions including Article 4 (1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union which has enshrined the Parity Principle, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa

The AU Heads of States and Government Summit continue to champion gender equality and empowerment through their subsequent decisions aimed at accelerating the implementation of their own commitments and those of the platform of Beijing and Dakar, Millennium Development Goals in general in general and particular MDG 3 on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment .

The AU Gender Policy could not have come at a better time. Its adoption coincides with phase two (20) of the review of the implementation of Horizon 2004-2007 in which the Gender Policy will both guide the Commissions revised implementation phase of all its programmes, but also will constitute the gender action Plan. The Commissions ambitious plan to establish gender management systems requires programmatic tools and mechanisms needed to raise standards for tracking and eliminating gender discrimination and other inequalities. It is for this reason that the Commission undertook a Gender Audit on the Commission and plans to carry out Gender Audits in other AU Organs and institutions. With these Gender Policy and Action Plan in place, the Commission, other AU Organs, RECs and Member States will be able to ensure equality, human dignity and peace for all and fulfil the vision of AU.

The Africa Region is committed to social economic development which takes into account the diversity in social, cultural, and traditional setting and is making effort to address cultures and practices which militate against enjoyment of freedom and rights by women and girls. The AU Gender Policy Commitments will be used to provide the basis and to eliminate barriers to gender equality in the continent. It will also guide gender equality actions for the continent in implementing other global commitments on gender including MDG 3 targets.

I am confident that the AU Gender Policy will serve as point of reference in Policy making and provide overarching leadership in Gender Equality to AU Organs, Member states and the Commission.

H.E. Jean Ping
Chairperson
African Union Commission

Africa Union Gender Policy

Acknowledgement

The development of the African Union Gender Policy has come a long way. The process kicked off in early 2006, and the possibility of presenting a completed policy to the African Union Summit was envisaged as early as January 2007. Although it has taken the Directorate longer than earlier projected, this milestone has finally been achieved, thanks to a team of dedicated experts consisting consultants, stakeholders, development partners representative including of UNFPA, UNIFEM, World Bank, RECs representatives from COMESA, CEN-SAD, ECAS, ECOWAS, SADC and ECA, Parliamentarians including PAP, EU partners, CSOs who participated in the 1st and 2nd Stakeholders Forum on the Gender Policy, WGDD Consultants, and also to my predecessor, who started this process and provided technical and overall leadership in the first phase of this process.

Special gratitude goes to the former Chairperson of the AUC for the indispensable role he played in championing the development of various policies in the commission, including the Gender Policy.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to H.E Jean Ping the current Chairperson of the AUC, who has overwhelmingly supported the work of the Gender Directorate in general and this Gender Policy in particular, from the day he assumed the office of the Chairperson. The overall support from Deputy Chairperson H.E Erastus Mwencha and technical support from Commissioner for Social Affairs Department is appreciated.

Finally I wish to thank Gender and Women Affairs Ministers, Experts from member states, AU staff who participated in the Inter-Directorate retreat, Members of PRC, the AUWC and representatives of AU Organs, for their inputs as well as staff members in the WGDD, for their hard work during the entire process.

Litha Musyimi-Ogana(Ms)
Director, Women, Gender and Development
African Union Commission

Historical Background Africa Union Gender Policy Part I

I. Preamble

The Africa Union Heads of State have been in the forefront in championing gender equality following the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to African Union (AU). This is clearly demonstrated by their adoption of Gender equality among other principles guiding the transformed Union. Article 4 (l) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union enshrined the Parity Principle when they adopted the Constitutive Act at the Heads of States and Government Summit held in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. At the 2nd ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of States in Maputo, the implementation of Article 4(L) commenced with the election of an equal number of female and male Commissioners.

To further promote the commitment on gender equality, the Maputo Summit also adopted the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in July 2003. Exactly one year latter, the Heads of States adopted the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and also adopted the he Maputo Plan of Action which prioritises African women's health, affirming their continued continental leadership in gender equality not only at the AU Assembly, AU organs and member states level but also providing a global example to other continents in the implementation of existing gender related commitments, principles, goals and actions set out in regional, continental and international instruments on gender equality, women's rights and women's health.

The AU member states continue to implement global commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment in accordance with agreements in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms of Action, the International Conference on Population and Development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), among others. Indeed, equal participation of women and men is a condition precedent to achieving sustainable development.

The Africa Region is fully committed to social economic development which takes into account the diversity in social, cultural, and traditional setting and is making effort to address cultures and practices which militate against enjoyment of freedom and rights by women and girls. The AU Gender Policy Commitments will be used to provide the basis and to eliminate barriers to gender equality in the continent. It will also guide gender equality actions for the continent in implementing other global commitments on gender including MDG3 targets.

II. Introduction

The 1948 United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights States that rights and freedoms will not be limited by a person's sex and establishes that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". In 1946, the United Nations created the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) to champion women's empowerment and gender equality to enable half of the world's population enjoys equal rights as and lives in dignity as equal citizen everywhere. Since then, the United Nations through the DAW in championing women's empowerment, rights and equality and in 1974, declared an International Year of Women, which was globally celebrated by women and ended in Mexico City, Mexico (1975).

It was realised in Mexico City that one year was not enough to create the awareness on gender imbalances, address gender discrimination and lack of empowerment and so the United Nations declared Women's Decade at the Mexico City World Conference on Women. There after, successful Women's Decades and their mid-term reviews have been held with full participation of UN member states.

African Union Member states have been actively involved in these conferences and helped shape the debate on women's empowerment and gender equality for over the past 30 years starting with the First World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Mexico City, Mexico (1975), followed by the Second World Conference on Women (SWCW) held in the Copenhagen, Denmark (1980), then the Third World Conference on Women (TWCW) held in Nairobi, Kenya (1985) and lastly the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995. While these conferences have contributed to progressive strengthening of the legal, economic, social and political dimensions of the role of women, the world is still far from achieving gender equality.

Furthermore, African member states are signatories to the UN General Assembly landmark Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted in 1979. Although each of these global conferences gave birth to powerful recognition of the crucial role of women both rural and urban at family, community and national level, their specific contribution to development has not yet been captured and rewarded. While it is evident that women are central contributors to economic, social and political development as well as in environmental management, they have received marginal benefits from economic growth and development, continue to be outside the decision making sphere and barely enjoy any human rights.

Despite the fact that human rights of women as inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights, violence against women continues as an intolerable violation to their rights, in addition to lack of basic needs including food, water, shelter, clothing, education and access to health services in general and reproductive health services in particular. Fundamentally, basic services are essential for women's empowerment and pre-condition for the enjoyment of their rights, personal empowerment and to access equal opportunity. Even though women have made significant advances in many countries in Africa their concerns are still given second priority in development.

Women still face discrimination, exclusion, and marginalisation and do not share equally the benefits from production.

In the 1990s the international community built a momentum and commitments to gender equality and empowerment of women (GAD) drawing from the powerful synergies of the women movement which fuelled the drive towards gender equality for sustainable development to replace the Women in Development Approach (WID) of the 1980s. The United Nations (UN) World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 emphasised the importance of gender equality in all areas of social and economic development, as did the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo – ICPD (1994), emphasised the quality of life of the present and future generations and emphasised empowerment of women and gender equality. Through Agenda 21, Women's role was stressed in the Rio commitment which centrally placed women contribution in environment management, while at the same time acknowledging their suffering due to environmental depletion which now has taken alarming dimensions in the context of climate change and also intensified pollution driven by wasteful consumption, unprecedented growth in human numbers, persistent poverty, and social and economic inequalities. Gender perspectives of the issues were well articulated.

The Fourth World Women Conference on Women, Beijing (1995) was a real watershed conference. The message from Beijing conference was very clear that women issues are inclusive, universal, and local and need legitimate attention and mainstreaming building on Women in Development (WID) approaches of the 1980s even though WID Approach did not enable women to strategically benefit from socio economic –political integration and cooperation as agents and beneficiaries of development. Given that women were not represented in the mainstream of policy, programme and resource allocation decisions, governments had to play an active role in addressing, mapping out and addressing deeply entrenched and systemic attitudes, practices and barriers which perpetuate in-equality and

discrimination against women in both public and private lives especially socio-cultural-political issues. This gave birth to the Gender and Development (GAD Approach).

As consensus emerges that equality of opportunity for all people is essential to the construction of just and democratic societies for the twenty first century, the fundamental linkages between the three objectives of Equality, Development and Peace have to be realised. The 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform of Action (PFA) emerged as a powerful agenda for empowerment of women and gender equality. At the conclusion of the Beijing+5 and 10 reviews (2000 and 2005), member states and stakeholders were asked to accelerate the implementation of the PFA.

The commitments were to be translated into policies for programmes that value and support women and men equally to demonstrate capacities to cope with old and new issues including poverty, leadership and participation in decision making, prevention, care and support of HIV/AIDS programmes from a gender dimension; women's rights, reproductive health and well being; elimination of all forms of discrimination against and violence against the girl child, financing for gender equality and women empowerment and equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS.

More recently the UN Millennium Development Goal 3 on Gender Equality and women empowerment has become an effective way to bridge the gender gap in education, combat feminised poverty, and improve health and HIV/AIDS, and other sectors to stimulate development by the year 2015. In addition the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 agreed on principles which if engendered could accelerate development in general and advance gender equality. UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has emerged as an all inclusive resolution to address gender perspectives and women's specific issues in of peace ,conflict resolution and post conflict management(DDR) and has already become a powerful tool which has already been domesticated by the AU as evidenced by Constitutive Act of the Union (Articles 3 and 4), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and also Article 2 of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

Resolution 1325 is a landmark step that politically legitimises women's role in peace, security in conflict and post conflict management. The resolution contains actions for gender mainstreaming in humanitarian operations and DDR. It also stresses the importance of inclusion and collaboration by UN organs, civil society. Commission on Status of Women

III. AU Institutional Profile

The AU has engaged unprecedented political, social and economic transformation reflections leading the continent to a new renaissance that engages all in an intense process of reflection and actions leading eventually to a Union Government of Africa. This strategic action creates an opportunity for AU to perfect its mandate which is primarily to advance political and socio economic integration, leading to higher living standards and enhancement of its efforts to play a rightful role in globalisation. AU is also leading in conflict resolution and peace building in several countries. The nature and power of the AU constitutive Act, AU Organs (9), the RECs (7) and 53 Member States, its vision and mission and strategic plan, the new structure, excellent human resource base, (based on the Maputo Declarations 2004) as well as key programmes of NEPAD and APRM reflect the African leadership committed to ensure a bright future and better life for its people-women, men and children. AU's Partnership and Cooperation with the European Union –EU, United Nation (such as ECA, UNFPA, UNIFEM, ILO.), Bilaterals and Multi Nationals (The World Bank, ADB) in sharing visions and mutual beneficial relations is strategic and enhances Africa's inclusion in important global Meetings and agreements AU is aware that gender and women perspectives cut across all these issues. AU has a strong political will for gender equality and has demonstrated support for gender equality and making efforts to institutionalise gender mainstreaming and establish a working Gender Management System (GMS). The

Gender mainstreaming work of the AU Commission is led by the Women and Gender Development Directorate

IV. The AU Commission Level

The Women and Gender Development Directorate--WGDD was created in 2000 under the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission and given the function of leading, facilitating, coordinating, and advising on gender equality actions in the AU system. It has overall mandate of ensuring that capacity is built for all AU Organs, RECs and Member States to understand gender, develop skills for achieving gender mainstreaming target and practice in all policy and programme processes and actions by 2015, in order to close the existing gender gaps and deliver the promise of equal opportunity for all African People, men, women, boys and girls. Since its inception WGDD has achieved useful targets and milestones including

1. Enforcement of Articles 3 and 4 Constitutive Act of the union, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).
2. Conducting Gender Audit in all the Sectors of the Union. The AU Gender Audit undertaken in 2006 revealed that limited progress has been made towards the implementation of these commitments at all levels of the Union. Lack of capacity and the willingness to mainstream gender and ensure women's empowerment were identified as central to the slow implementation of these commitments.
3. Developed a Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan for the African Union covering the period 2008 to 2011 (GMSPAU), which is now being aligned to the AU Gender Policy. The plan aims at operationalising the commitments of the African Union to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment in the next five years.
4. The core responsibilities of the Directorate are gender mainstreaming, coordination, advocacy monitoring and evaluation, capacity building through training and research and women empowerment programming.
5. The Directorate also coordinates activities with internal and external partners such as Sector Departments, and Civil society **voices** through ECOSOC, all AU Organs especially Pan African Parliament, Court of Justice and Financial institutions and mainstreaming gender in all activities are also being coordinated with ECA, UNIFEM, UNFPA, ILO, EU, ADB and Bilateral agencies.

V. The AU Organs

AU Organs including, The Assembly of the Union, The Executive Council, The Pan African Union, The Court of Justice, The Commission, The Permanent Representative Committee, The Specialised Technical Committee, The Economic, Social and Cultural Council, The Financial Institutions have political will to promote gender equality demonstrated in the provisions of various international and regional Conventions, Treaties, Charters, Protocols and Declarations adopted over the years. The Constitutive Act of the Africa Union Article 4 (I) The Union will function in accordance with the principle of .Promotion of gender equality... By this principle all AU Organs address gender equality in policies and programme.

Through this decision, key mile stones have been achieved

1. Women, Gender and Development Directorate which is in the office of the Chairperson of the Commission, has been established to coordinate activities on gender equality in the Commission. The WGDD was established at the apex of the decision making machinery of the Commission for prominence but to ensure functional adherence to gender equality and draw upon the authority of the Chairperson.
2. The launching of the AU Women's Committee on Gender in 2006 is a key milestone for the Commission as it has a broad mandate to advise the Chairperson of the Commission.
3. The AWCPA was established in July 2003 following a decision by the Executive Council of African Union to transform the African Women Committee on Peace and Development

(AWCPD) into the AUWC. The Executive Council in its wisdom felt that the mandate of the AWCPD should be expanded to cover not only peace and security matters but also matters dealing with women empowerment and advocacy for gender equality. The AUWC was then established as a principal advisory body to the Chairperson of the AUC.

VI. The RECs Level

1. All except only one Regional Economic Commissions RECs including, Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) Common Market for East & Southern Africa (COMESA) Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) : have Gender Units.
2. The RECs and their Member States have developed Gender Policies, Gender Declarations, Action Plans and Frameworks, strategic plans, gender audits and gender analysis tools which guide gender mainstreaming, programming and budgeting. They have also developed Training Tools and Resources and have Roll- out Plans. The RECs have limited core funds for gender mainstreaming and funds for special women empowerment activities from donors and development partners such as UNIFEM, ILO, World Bank, EU and ADB.
3. Some RECs such as ECOWAS have good practices for gender mainstreaming—They have a comprehensive well functioning Gender Management System and a vibrant gender Training Institution—(ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC) located in Dakar Senegal which trains among others, gender focal points, development agents, parliamentarians’ member states, civil society and private sector in gender mainstreaming for socio economic integration and harmonisation). Several University programmes in ECOWAS sub region, SADC region (South Africa.), East Africa offer Gender and Development Courses. Gender equality actions include, leadership training programmes, gender mainstreaming into national laws through constitutional and legislative reforms, and setting up appropriate enforcement mechanisms and institutions to deliver necessary legal and gender equality services.

VII. The Member States Level

Most Member States currently have gender policies in addition they are in the process of implementing declarations and have developed action plans, strategic plans to implement their commitments. A few of them have started Management Systems based on the UN resolution 2006/36 ...” reaffirming the commitments made at the 2005 World Women Summit to actively promote the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres and to further undertake to strengthen the capacities of all stakeholders”. Member states acknowledge gender mainstreaming as a global, regional and national strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDG 3 Gender Equality. While many of them are committed to implement global commitments they face challenges of weak Gender/Women machineries and inadequate resources in the context of unfulfilled bilateral and multilateral pledges in general under ODA with serious budgetary cut in some sectors resulting negative gender impacts. At the regional level, AU Member States adopted SDGEA and the Protocol which encompass core critical issues in the Beijing and Dakar Platforms and in the MDS. Progress on Member States implementation of SDGEA and the protocol is submitted every year at the January Summit of Heads of States and Commitment.

VIII. AU Governing Principles and Values

The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR adopted in 1981 OAU Assembly of Heads of States and Commitment) has in it the principles and values stated in articles 2, 3,5,18 stated as rights for individual freedom, equal before the law, entitlement for protection of the law, entitlement to respect for life and integrity of persons, and prohibition of

slavery, torture, cruel inhuman and degrading punishment. **Article 18 (3) states:** *The State will ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the women and the child as stipulated in the international declarations and conventions.* The Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (1991) in its Article 3 (g) (h) recognises the principles and objectives of the OAU Charter regarding human rights and re affirmed the recognition, promotion and protection of human rights and people's rights has well laid out principles and values of freedom that assists in the establish its legal structure and political framework This is stipulated in Articles 2, 3, 5, 18. In Article 75, the Treaty called on Member States to put in place mechanisms for the development and value of the African Woman through improvements to her social, economic legal and cultural conditions and ensure full participation of women in the development and activities of African Economic Community.

AU Vision

The Vision of African Union is that of an Africa Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful; an Africa Driven by its Own Citizens; and Africa which is a dynamic Force in the Global Arena.

AU ensures a just and peaceful environment where men and women live dignified harmonious lives to benefit equally from socio - economic prosperity.

IX. AU Mission Statements Include

1. Building capacities for integration
2. Ensuring over all coherence of the programmes aimed at speeding up integration process through actions undertaken in two directions (Harmonisation and rationalising the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), integration)
3. Organise brainstorming and institute strategic watch tower on key issues affecting the future of the continent includes gender equality
4. Assuming dynamic information and advocacy role for Africa vis-à-vis the World
5. Play a leadership role for promotion of peace , human security and good governance on the continent
6. Stimulate economic, social and cultural development on the continent Establish a standing follow up /evaluation a mechanism. *Gender perspectives cut across AU mission statements.*

X. Rationale for AU Gender Policy

AU has made a number of commitments in the area of democracy and good governance for the continent. The Durban Declaration on Elections, Governance and Democracy; the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance; the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption; and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights Relating to the Rights of Women are just a few of the decisions in the area of governance that have been adopted in the last two years alone. AU has also witnessed synergies of the civil society activities and pressure from women organisations for gender equality and women empowerment encouraging international agencies to provide support and build capacity for developing, policies, action plans, and guidelines to accelerate women empowerment and gender mainstreaming actions. Regardless of this high level commitment and interest, gender mainstreaming is not practiced to expectation. There is a *snail pace effort* for institutionalisation .gender mainstreaming in the AU Organs, RECs and Member States.

Yet situation analysis findings continentally reveal that gender disparities exist in many areas of development plans and core sectors including low representation of women in decision making, politics and power sharing, the economy, , trade, , agriculture and rural economy, domestic energy, health, and peace negotiations .Only few national development plans have strong gender equality elements, and several national gender equality action plans have little or no connection to national development strategies or accounts/budgets. The relatively low

female representation in cabinet positions in several countries and indeed the low percentage of women in Parliament and Judiciary is a major concern and challenge needing rapid solution. **Notwithstanding the evidence indicating that women have limited education and decent work to earn income and manage poverty which has become feminised.** The paradox is Africa's potential to achieve sustained high economic growth rates and reduce endemic poverty level depends on investment in women and girls.

The African societal context is very important to consider in determining how to promote gender equality. The roles that women, girls, men and boys perform are relative to their status, relationship among one another and power- relations in private and public spheres. Concepts and the historic background such as patriarchy that has shaped the relationship between women and men and boys and girls, are context specific and based on very different value systems and structures in different countries and must be established for gender equality. Development is about creating the supporting processes through which human beings/women and men are able to realise their full potential. Gender stereotypes especially unequal power relations, often bloc this process for men as much as for women. These elements must be considered in AU's gender equality work and contextualised in the regional and universal human rights and women's rights instruments.

The AU Gender Policy will be used to accelerate the execution of gender perspectives of mandates of AU Organs to promote the social, economic, political and cultural development of the African Continent cooperation and integration and ensure that women issues are included equally, It will take forward the 2004 Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa by African Heads of State and Government which articulates the African gender issues. It offers a framework for the enhancement of gender equality stated in the policy commitments and principles for the AU Organs, RECs and Member States.

XI. Conceptual Framework

The actualisation of human dignity, development and prosperity for entire Africa people underpins the AU struggle for socio-economic and political development anchored on a vision of "an integrated prosperous and peaceful Africa ... driven and managed by its own citizens... and representing a dynamic force in the international arena". Both women and men have worked for the liberation of the continent, and for the economic emancipation, solidarity and cohesion necessary for its integration and unity. Therefore they must benefit equally and entitled to development processes, hence the quest for gender equality and women's empowerment and hence the institutional arrangement for all AU organs, RECs and Member States to address the key issues of

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|---|--|
| 7. equal economic independence | 13. equal access to ICT infrastructure and Applications, global alliance for IT development and building a sustainable e-future |
| 8. equal participation and access to globalisation opportunities | 14. eradication of all forms of gender based violence |
| 9. equal participation in peace and security matters | 15. elimination of high maternal mortality |
| 10. equal representation in decision making and good governance and politics | 16. elimination of stereotypes and sexism |
| 11. equal education, livelihood and decent work opportunities | 17. promotion of gender issues in policies, programmes, budgets and accountability frameworks are underpinning's for AU Organs, RECs and Member states |
| 12. equal access to prevention , care, home based support and treatment of HIV/AIDS | |

Women's empowerment and gender equality should form the basis of Gender Mainstreaming in the AU, AU organs and Member States, while men and women should be the socio- economic-political glue for the integration of the African continent.

XII. Gender Policy Principles and Values, Goals, Objectives and Targets

The Purpose of the Gender Policy

The main purpose of gender policy is to establish a clear vision and make commitments to guide the process of gender mainstreaming and women empowerment to influence policies, procedures and practices which will accelerate achievement of gender equality, gender justice, non discrimination and fundamental human rights in Africa.

Policy Values and Principles

The African Union believes in excellence, integrity and commitment in implementing this and other policies and will be guided by the high values and principles stipulated in the Constitutive Act and other AU commitments, those of its organs, member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The include:-

1. The promotion of good governance, which ensures protection of human rights and rights of women through democratic and transparent institutions.
2. Adherence to the principle of gender equality between men and women, boys and girls in enjoying their rights, sharing of opportunities, benefits and contributions
3. Strict observance of the principle of gender equity which guarantees fairness and equal treatment for all
4. Strictly adhere to the Parity Principle as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union
5. The Promotion of the principle of shared responsibility, accountability and ownership of the commitments contained in the policy document
6. The promotion of regional integration as vehicle for the advancement of women in particular, the peoples of Africa and the development of the continent in general,
7. The Principle of Subsidiary to ensure that this policy is operationalized at levels where it can make the greatest impact in society.

Policy Goals: The overall Goals of the AU Gender Policy are to:

- address gender equality and gender mainstreaming in Policies, Programmes, Budgeting and Reporting Systems and meet international gender equality and women empowerment goals by 2015;
- develop a *common understanding and continental approach* to gender equality, and women's empowerment issues at all levels of socio – economic -political integration and cooperation in Africa continent in order to achieve sustainable socio economic development in the Africa by 2015;
- build capacity for AU Organs, RECs and Member States to mainstream gender issues so that African women and men become agents and beneficiaries of social, cultural, economic and political development and democratisation processes for sustaining human development at national, regional, and international levels by 2015; and synchronise and harmonise all gender policies and programmes in line with the framework of the AU Gender Policy within all AU organs and institutions;

Policy Objectives

- To advocate the promotion of gender sensitive attitudes, mindset, behaviour and respect for all human beings in line with the gender policy commitments and Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

- To ensure gender parity (50/50) as an institutional culture, promote values and work practices within the AU Commission, other AU Organs, the RECs and Member States.
- To adopt gender mainstreaming as a core value and practice in transformation of policies in the AU Commission, other AU Organs, the RECs and Member States and to establish the framework for gender mainstreaming into policies, programmes Strategic Plans ,Operational and Administrative Structures, assessment and performance appraisal systems projects, budgets and decision making processes of the AU Commission, other AU Organs, the RECs and Member states
- To establish an effective institutional framework in form of Gender Management Systems (GMS) for the implementation of the Gender Policy, in the AU Commission, other AU Organs, the RECs and Member States and to enable the AU Commission, other AU Organs, the RECs and Member States to publicise and popularise all relevant AU charters, declarations, treaties and protocols, for the information and education of women on their human and people’s rights and entitlements within international/UN gender frameworks.
- To advocate the eradication and criminalisation of all socio-cultural practices such as FGM, Child Marriages, Child prostitution, and related issues that threaten physical integrity, dignity, self esteem and physical security of persons, especially women and children at AU High Political and Decision Making Levels
- To reinforce good practices of respect, equality and human dignity between men and women in the workplace and in the larger society and enforce zero tolerance to gender based violence, sexual harassment, assault, rape, sexual favours, gender stereotyping, sexism and abusive language and actions in the workplace and therein establish severe sanction and punishment.
- To facilitate free movement of persons without hindrance through the removal of cross border inhibitions for women and men;
- To promote equal and easy access to information technology and ICT skills in order to bridge the existing digital divide between men and women in Africa;
- To build synergies with other institutions including bilateral and multilateral development partners, UN agencies, Civil Society and other stakeholders to implement the AU Gender Policy;

Policy Targets

1. Parity Targets:

Put in place policy, institutional mechanisms and processes by 2010 and strive to achieve parity in AU Organs, member states and RECs by the year 2020 and

2. Protocol (PHRRWA) Targets

Achieve full ratification on the Protocol on the Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa by 2015 and full domestication by 2020.

3. SDGEA Targets

Achieve various commitments set out in the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa as follows;

Articles 1. In line with targets set in the Abuja and Maputo Declarations

Articles 2. Achieve 30% results by 2015 and 50% by 2020 of UN Resolution 1325

Articles 3. Report compliance to Assembly in January in 2012

Articles 4. Report compliance to Assembly in January in 2013

Articles 5. Report compliance to Assembly in January in 2014

Articles 6. Report on implementation to Assembly in January in 2015

Articles 7. Report on implementation to Assembly in January in 2016

Articles 8. In line with Gender targets set in the EFA report on implementation

Articles 9. In line with PHPRRWA targets, report to Assembly in January 2017

Articles 10. Report on implementation to Assembly in January in 2016

Articles 11. Launch and operationalize the African Women Trust Fund by December 2009

Articles 12. Report annually to the January Assembly

Articles 13. Report annually to the January Assembly

Africa Union Gender Policy

Part II

AU Gender Policy Commitments

Policy Commitments:

The policy commitments are based on AU and other international gender equality instruments including the Constitutive Act of African Common Position, MDGs, SDGEA, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, BPFA, UN Resolution 1325 (2000) on Peace and Security emphasising gender mainstreaming as core in the promotion of culture of peace, promotion of democracy, economic and social development and, human rights. The policy commitments are overarching and anchored on the pillars of AU Organs, RECs and Member States institutional policy statements, strategic plans, roadmaps and action plans for achieving gender equality and women empowerment targets in **seven** areas as follows

18. Gender Mainstreaming in priority sectors.
19. An enabling political environment
20. Gender Mainstreaming Capacity Building
21. Legislation and Legal Protection Actions against Discrimination for ensuring gender equality
22. Mobilisation of different players for Gender Equality in African
23. Rationalisation and harmonisation of Regional Economic Communities Gender Policies and Programmes; and
24. Resource Mobilisation

Commitment 1:

Gender Mainstreaming and Priority Sectors:

A commitment That AU organs, RECs and Member States will strengthen their gender policies and include gender perspectives in core development issues/sectors and adopt regional approaches for sustainable solutions

1. Peace and Security: AU Organs, RECs and Member States will

- Henceforth use UN Resolutions 1325 on Women, Peace and Security Framework as a key tool to shape programme actions on Women, War and Peace in Africa by mainstreaming gender in peace policies, programs and activities. In furtherance of this, the department will endeavour to create consultative regional peace platforms for exchange of knowledge and information and harmonisation of strategies for results.
- Use the **Paris Principles** and guidelines associated with armed forces or armed groups as basis for programmatic interventions in Africa. The protective environment should incorporate measures to prevent sexual abuse and discrimination against the girls whose use in arm conflict is pervasive yet often unrecognised, and to promote their equal status in society.
- Ensure substitute the word 'equal' representation and participation of women in peace and security processes within such structures as the AU Assembly, the Peace and Security Council, the Department of Peace and Security of the AU and Pan-African Parliament. Women Leaders to be mobilised and included in Peace Mediation and Think Tank processes and post conflict actions by working with effective Networks such as Mano River Women Network, WIPSEN, and others on the Continent
- Work jointly with relevant UN bodies to enforce operations of *Truth and Reconciliation Structures* in the AU system for tracking violations against women and girls in time of conflict and find lasting solutions
- Scrutinise every legal instrument presented to the AU Assembly for signing, to ensure that it adequately embraces and addresses gender and women's issues and

the gender equality and parity principle, and facilitates participation of women in the AU decision making processes on peace and security.

- In conflict situations, the AU makes it incumbent upon the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons (HARDP) or equivalent structure to ensure that Country Assessment and Briefing Notes to ambassadors highlight issues affecting women and children in the conflict situations, and that the issues are adequately addressed in the mandates of the humanitarian and peace-keeping missions and interventions
- HARDP will facilitate gender sensitisation and training of peace-keeping troops and civilian humanitarian workers, to minimise violation of human rights and especially violence against women and refugees, paying full regard to sexual violence and abuse of women and children

2. Political Participation and decision making

- Endeavour that current and future political dispensation instruments adequately address gender equality and equity issues in good governance, electoral processes and politics, starting with the 'African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance; etc The Pan African Parliamentarians institute will lead debates dialogues, think tanks and create consultative platforms for accelerating and pushing equal representation of men and women that was 50/50 gender parity in politics, parliament, decision making and eliminate gender stereotypes and exclusion in democratic processes.
- The Pan African Parliamentarians institute will lead debates, dialogue, and create consultative platforms for accelerating the promotion of equal representation of men and women i.e. 50/50 gender parity in politics, parliament, decision making and eliminate gender stereotypes and exclusion in democratic processes.
- Work with established tasks forces, to popularise Articles 3(j) and 4(l) of the Constitutive Act establishing the AU, and Article 9 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, in order to entrench the rights of women in politics, governance and electoral processes.
- Work in close consultation with all the partners including the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, to develop and disseminate guidelines on the implementation of, and reporting on, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, to facilitate speedy access by women in Africa to gender equality and to their human and women's rights

3. Social Affairs (Social, cultural and human development)

- Enforce the application of the Maputo Decision (2003) which presents gender mainstreaming as a core function of the AU Department of Social Affairs (DSA), together with relevant international instruments. Health programs focus on gender issues in health bearing in mind differences in risks and vulnerabilities of different categories of African women and men using the life cycle-- **disability**, old age and rights based approaches (and include health needs of young men and women- unmarried and married, in school and out of school)
- Universal Access to Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Africa and policies on sexual and reproductive health and women's total health (access to appropriate services)
- Control of HIV and AIDS in Africa (focus on Prevention , Home Based Care and Support and Access to equal Treatment), control of other communicable diseases
- Emergency preparation and response; and gender issues and response to and control of non-communicable diseases such as breast and cervical cancers, diabetes, conditions which lead to stress, for stress can lead to hypertension, high blood pressure and other illnesses.

- Girl Child Education, livelihood and decent work, Adolescent Health-teen pregnancy, unsafe abortions, fistula conditions, mental health etc
- Safe motherhood and access to total health for women/ Control of Malaria and TB women specific diseases... occupational health...etc and health of mother and child responses in conflict and emergency
- DSA and WGDD will work with AU organs RECS and Member States and relevant partners to review all AU strategies, objectives, decisions and programs around the above concerns and especially HIV and AIDS and malaria control to ensure that they explicitly and adequately address gender inequalities and differences in health risks, vulnerabilities and match it with availability, accessibility and affordability of healthcare services and materials such as Mosquito Nets for pregnant and nursing mothers and children and use the African Regional Strategy (ARNS) 2005-2015 as a model and support Member States to develop National Nutrition Plans of Action (NNPA) with a view to incorporating specific measures for addressing the special nutrition needs of women and children in general, and of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in particular and women's involvement in food security policies and food utilisation decisions
- Promote and support the development of culture as a vehicle to empower women's equal access to national heritage resources such as tourism, arts, film and other cultural industries.
- Promote cultural development and identify and institutionalise best practices that strengthen women's dignity and their human rights in all spheres of life. Monitor and ensure compliance with national educational policies and ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other United Nations actions. Monitoring compliance with policy measures addressing the concerns of girls and developing broad based education programmes on human rights

4. International Migration Human/Drug Trafficking

- Be part of AU, RECs and Member states dialogue, and roadmaps on migration , human trafficking and drug trafficking and articulate gender perspectives reflecting child labour, girl's prostitution, abuse and vulnerabilities by 2010
- Form an expert group to work on gender perspectives of migration as a baseline document for advocacy....
- Establish funding and technical cooperation for capacity building, improvement and upgrading of sustainable livelihood skills and facilitate access to legal and economic solutions including creation of *decent work models and good practices by 2015*

5. Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Girls

- Address prevention and eradication of violence against women and girls and adopt a continental measure and methodology to do so. Focus will be placed on areas including; legal, social economic, cultural, political services, education and awareness creation and use of integrated approaches to combat violence against women and girls.
- Make efforts to eliminate violence against women and domesticate internationally recognised instrument and sanctions for combating political, domestic and sexual violence through legislation, community based actions and capture voices of women and men on stopping the practice
- Improve logistics and response to the UN actions on Gender based Violence (16 day activism should be celebrated with enthusiasm continentally.)

6. Education

- Publicise the AU Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa highlighting that gender and culture is one of the seven areas of focus

- Create consultative platforms within the AUC and other organs of the AU for exchange of information and harmonisation of strategies
- Collaborate with other departments, especially WGDD on the validation of indicators pertaining to gender issues prior to the setting up of the Educational Management Systems (EMIS) (Gender sensitive indicators will help achieve goal 5 of EFA and goals 2 and 3 of the MDG's)
- Ensure that gender parity is taken into account in the Mwalimu Nyerere Scholarship Scheme
- Mainstream gender issues in educational policies, plans and curricula
- Set up convenient structures with adequate programmes in order to address issues such as genital mutilation or child miscarriage

7. Economic Empowerment Development

- Through the DSA, publicise the AU Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa, and similar future instruments, highlighting the provisions for the empowerment of women to increase their access to decent employment, innovative approaches to income generating activities, entrepreneurship, real business opportunities, and to productive resources and markets at the national, regional, continental and international levels
- Ensure provision of economic environments that promote more equitable access to income, resources and social services which accelerate poverty reduction programmes addressing Feminised Poverty. Women's contributions must be acknowledged in the African increased economic growth. True economic empowerment of women remains illusive due to policy inconsistencies and limited political will to translate policies into action in favour of women.
- Develop appropriate tools for gender analysis in economic policies and emphasise inclusion of women's unpaid work in national and regional budgets and accounts
- Forge sustainable *partnership* with the private sector, financial institutions (African Banking Systems) and other good practice models such as Grameen Banking Systems- a best Asian model to popularise Micro Credit as well as reaching out to Macro Credit ventures as strategies to take women out of poverty. Strategically work towards establishing an **African Women's Bank**.
- Strengthen and operationalise the **Africa Women Fund** as a funding mechanism for the empowerment of women and to advance gender equality, support women entrepreneurs and poverty reduction opportunity for women entrepreneurs and as a poverty *reduction strategy as stated in the SDGEA further, promote entrepreneurship among the disadvantaged and rural poor women and girls as a requirement for pro-poor agenda in Africa as well as work as a long term strategy.*
- Work on socio economic growth initiatives for women enterprises and establish learning centres for entrepreneurship skill development using internet services.
- Set up an advocacy and pressure group/voice on the continent to improve women's access to finance.
- National capacity in collecting and analysing gender disaggregated data in all economic spheres.

8. Trade and Industry

- Build on commitments of governments and address gender issues regional and international trade policy agendas, increased international trade as a result of liberalisation and globalisation can deliver economic and social improvements but the benefits are not distributed equally among the citizens/women and men of countries and the continent
- Take forward the gender perspectives of the African Market for Primary Commodities aimed at restructuring and re-organising the fragmented and land-locked African markets to promote regional and continent-wide production and marketing linkages. Contributions by women and men should be equally visible

- Urge the DTI to create a platform and form a continent-wide movement of women producers and traders, into a constituency/network for women producers/traders' enterprises to facilitate regional and continental production and marketing linkages for both traditional and emerging trade markets
- Engage African Women in dialogue in order to find solutions for improved cross boarder trade procedures and practices—the legal frame, security and protection
- Ensure that gender equality and women empowerment issues cover areas of actions on the continent including: fair Trade for African Commodities; protection of African Consumers; getting into Standardisation bodies in upgrading quality, management, certification accreditation and well developed investment codes for women entrepreneurs at continental level and organisation of African Commodities Producers and policy briefs
- African Women Entrepreneurs to be involved in the processes and consensus building forum for exporters of products in the African Growth and Opportunity act (AGOA) Act Legislation which is a shared effort to boost African economic growth and development through these women will build bridges across borders for investment of their products locally and internationally.
- Implementing the gender component of the UNCTAD Accra Declaration 2008

9. Human Resources, Science and Technology

- Gender issues should be part of a package for the development of Human Resources and capacities in all organs of the AU.
- AUC should take the lead in promoting gender issues in programmes of coordination and harmonisation of new ICT initiatives like telemedicine on the African Continent.

10. Rural Economy, Agriculture and Food Security/Environment

- The objective is to “Create enabling conditions and facilitate actions to enhance agricultural productivity and growth, reduce food insecurity and rural poverty”
- Tracking mechanisms for 10% Budget Allocation to Agriculture sector.
- Establishment of Early Warning Systems at Regional Level.
- Establishment of a Common Market for Agricultural Products.
- Integration of AMCOW, AMCEN and Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture as Specialised Technical Committees of the African Union.
- Creation and Federation of Trans-boundary Water Organisations/Authorities for the Promotion of the Integrated Management of the Resource and capacity building.
- Promotion of knowledge sharing on Land Degradation and Desertification for Food Security in Africa.
- Control of Trans-boundary Livestock Diseases by IBAR and implementation of PATTEC Initiatives.
- Land Policy Framework and Guidelines
- Establishment of an African Farmer's Forum.
- The African women farmer should be at the centre of the rural economy and African Agricultural transformation through policy and program strategies that strengthen their empowerment and influence on legal and cultural processes of land ownership in Africa, agricultural technology development and application and on the processing and marketing of agricultural products. To this end, the AU tasks the

11. To this end, the AU tasks the DREA to:

- Generate gender disaggregated data for all key program areas to facilitate gender analysis of pertinent issues and definition of gender explicit strategic objectives
- Develop indicators that facilitate analysis of progress towards gender equality and gender mainstreaming goals and objectives of the Rural Economy and Agriculture strategies of the AU take advantage of its (DREA's) lead role in the establishment of the African Common Market for Agricultural Products and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment issues are accounted.

- Ensure that the (proposed) **Land Policy Framework for Africa** is sensitive to and addresses the issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in respect of access to, ownership, control and utilisation of land and the benefits thereof.
- In issues of international agricultural trade, ensure that negotiations processes take into account factors that limit African Women farmers' access to information on trans-boundary diseases (Plant pests, Avian Flu and other Livestock diseases). These pests/diseases are the basis for some international agreements (e.g. Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Agreement) that facilitate trade.
- Bring African women farmers to the Agriculture Policy and Programme formulation agenda to enable them have a voice on their issues for income generation as regional solutions for food security.
- Position Gender issues in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. and between **AU- NEPAD , RECS. and Member States**
- Make climate change a core issue in **environmental** actions and reflect the gender issues and develop cooperation activities with relevant partners at continental level.
- Incorporate Gender issues in AU Disaster Risk Management /Reduction Strategy.

12. ICT, Infrastructure,

- Promote gender equality in existing AU Africa Partnership Projects for different sector and advocate for gender disparities in investments in physical infrastructure, capacity and training, policy reforms and dialogues, sectoral budget allocation needs.
- Ensure that gender perspectives, are reflected in policies, and implementation regional infrastructure priority projects in energy, transport and ICT. Gender parity will prevail in Infrastructure Consortium (women and men will be equally represented in all technical and governing structures to articulate gender issues
- Women should be included in decisions and be at negotiation meetings to raise funds for regional **flagship projects** and bring in women and domestic and social perspectives of the issues such as energy, , transport and ICT, and appropriate technology e.g. in Projects like the West Africa Power Pool Project in ECOWAS
- Women and girls must have access to computers and fill the digital gap knowledge, skills and ownership. Develop a friendly regional ICT policy that includes women and takes into consideration their needs and roles to meet priority needs.
- Promote positive images of women achievers, mentors and empowered women through electronic media.
- Kick start E-gender Watch News Letter to share information on topical issues

Commitment 2:

Enabling Political Environment

A commitment that reaffirmed political will and enabling environment exists for AU Organs, RECs and Member States to achieve MDG Goal 3 Gender Equality by 2015

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will (where applicable)

- Ensure that all political declarations and decisions are geared towards the elimination of persisting barriers that militate against gender equality and women's' empowerment.
- Understand implications of non-compliance in monetary and programmatic terms to gender mainstreaming policies and programmes as evidenced in international/UN socio economic indicators, standards and targets and make declarations to correct the situation
- Enforce AU 50/50 Gender Parity and representation in all structures, operational policies and practices and ensure gender perspectives within strategic thinking- vision and mission by 2010
- Ensure that all develop and enforce explicit gender policies (aligned to the UN and AU Gender Policies) emphasising gender justice, gender accountability and transparency principles reforms emphasising elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence

against women ,gender mainstreaming, and recognise differences in responsibilities between men and women at all levels by 2011

- Ensure that all AU Assembly Decisions to the SDGEA Implementation are enforced for example all AU Organs RECs and Members States make input in the establishment, operationalisation and sustainability of a Trust Fund for African Women as a flagship response to economic empowerment for African women within PRSP Framework. By 2011
- Ensure that competent, *confident human resource as gender experts* are available and can do the work. If not support capacity building in gender mainstreaming or have policy decisions for out-sourcing gender experts continentally or from the Diaspora by 2009
- Create regular High Level Policy Dialogues, consultations, **think tank reviews** and technical reviews on aspects of gender equality, gender justice and upliftment for African women ; encourage and support annual or bi-annual *African Women/Men Support Conferences on thematic issues for the next 3 years*

Commitment 3:

Gender Mainstreaming Capacity Building

A commitment that AU, Organs, RECs and Members States will institutionalise a Pan-African approach to gender equality and mainstreaming

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will (where applicable)

1. Engender Organisational Structures by 2009

- Review organisational structures to determine their suitability for implementing gender perspective of programs and/or projects and re-design appropriately
- Introduce an affirmative action/ quota system in staff recruitment if required as an option to bring in qualified women on board
- Ensure staff clear staff job descriptions with gender sensitivity considerations
- Ensure that staff performance appraisal incorporates gender specific responsibilities by 2010

2. Engender Systems and Procedures by 2010

- Ensure that all administrative systems and procedures will be reviewed to ensure they are gender sensitive,
- Ensure equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation including staff recruitment procedures, e.g. advertise equal opportunities, men and women will be allowed to apply for job position in the AU, RECs and Member States systems without prejudice, discrimination or stereotyping. Women will not be made to give sexual favours as pre-requisite to employment and hence, zero tolerance will prevail in the work place;
- Ensure equal treatment of men and women in the sphere of goods and services including information, professional and technical skills, personal development opportunities, health services –private, organisational health insurance; special women life cycle needs including reproductive health
- Ensure that organisational and operational systems are friendly to biological differences and gender roles between women and men in relation to basic/special and strategic needs.
- Ensure that staff induction on the organisation's values and culture will be done equally and if need be differently on different matters peculiar to males and females
- Enforce the practice of doing staff performance appraisal and assessment for increments and/or promotion based on fairness, objectivity and without prejudice and harassment.
- Ensure grievance procedures, especially on sexual harassment and abuse will be affected without discrimination, stereotyped language or bias.

- Have child and baby care/ nursery facilities in the workplace for young professional mothers.
- Have Equal treatment policies between women and men irrespective of living with HIV/AIDS. Women living with HIV/AIDS will have special care and support especially when they are pregnant or mothers in the workplace and will be covered with organisational health insurance or medical care .and ensure No Prejudice Culture in the work place.

3. Engender Staff Development by 2010

- Make gender training central feature of staff development program, and will go beyond awareness rising to incorporate gender analysis, gender audit and gender planning skills.
- Allocate time for regular reflection and learning on gender issues arising in the organisation's structures, procedures and program activities during organisational planning time. Knowledge development and transfer of skills will be enforced through staff development plans.
- Share resources –expertise, financial, infrastructure and material to achieve gender mainstreaming in Africa through Memorandum of Understanding and Technical Assistance plans.

4. Engender Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting by 2010

- Establish M&E systems to yield sex disaggregated data, to facilitate analysis of program / project impacts on women and men.
- Extent possible, participatory M&E methodologies among one another
- Develop quantitative and qualitative indicators, to enrich impact analysis in Africa
- Jointly conduct data collection to include women and men's voices and indigenous knowledge on issues (including experiences from indigenous women and men on livelihood issues)

5. Engender Gender Mainstreaming in Program Areas by 2010

Strategic Planning, M&E, and Resource Mobilisation

- Ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment goals are **mainstreamed** in departmental policies, strategic plans, programs, projects and annual plans and all work processes. Each department will develop results-based management frames that reflect the outcomes / impacts of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in their reporting frameworks
- Plan and implement training sessions for Heads of Divisions, Gender Focal Points and the divisions' focal points on Results Based Management, Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting
- Ensure that each department develops and uses **Gender Analysis**, Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms, Gender Indicator and Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment, to ensure that the department's plans, and program and project inputs and outputs embrace and explicitly reflect gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes in Programming, Budgeting, Finance and Accounting/ Gender Budgeting
- Develop gender **budgeting guidelines** and other mechanism and training for all institutions and organs to ensure equitable resources allocation to gender equality actions;
- Institutionalise **gender training** (awareness, analysis, planning and budgeting) as a regular and central feature of human resource development strategy and activities. Each and every department will ensure that its gender focal point (GFP) has the capacity in gender mainstreaming.
- Ensure Gender Focal points track compliance to gender mainstreaming targets and ensure that reporting mechanisms reflect these targets.

Commitment 4:

Legislation and Legal Protection Actions against Discrimination for Ensuring Gender Equality

A commitment that the AU Commission, other AU Organs, RECs and Member States will uphold the rule of law and comply with their Treaty obligations to ensure elimination of gender inequalities, gender discrimination and abuse at all levels. The legal basis include: matters of equal treatment of women and men in AU legal instruments, institutional practices, and at the workplace.

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will (where applicable)

1. Ensure that Legal Counsel/Departments work very closely with the African Court on Human and Peoples Rights and the Pan African Parliament to review current treaties, declarations and decisions, in order to identify those that are not gender sensitive and do not embrace women's rights with the sole purpose of amending them.
2. Draft instruments that are gender sensitive and recommend sanctions for non-compliance by 2011
3. Endeavour to ensure that once a human rights treaty has been approved, signed and adopted, all AU organs, RECs and Member States will ratify the treaty without reservations by 2015.
4. Endeavour to ensure Member States implement the Treaties, conventions and decisions immediately after rectification.
5. Further endeavour to promote early domestication of AU human rights instruments into national legislation once they are ratified by 2011.

Commitment 5:

Mobilisation of Different Players for Gender Equality in Africa (civil society, African women movement, interest groups)

A commitment that AU organs, RECs and Member States create policy environments that enable civil society organisations, women organisations and interest groupings dialogue and build bridges for addressing gender equality perspectives

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will (where applicable)

1. Implement Advocacy and Awareness campaigns among Africa's societies and citizens to highlight the provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment in all the relevant Protocols, Declarations, Charters and Treaties of the AU, RECs and Member States and further strengthen the inputs of civil society in the drafting of instruments proposed for adoption by 2011
2. Establish all inclusive, High Level Gender Advisory Group of qualified experienced gender experts from AU Organs, RECs, member states and Diaspora as a ***Steering Committee or Think Tank / Council of Female Elders (to serve as a Quick Response Group on Gender and African Women Empowerment Matters)*** on the continental gender policy, programmes, donor financing and partnership for gender equality and women empowerment in Africa. The committee will be given a mandate and **voice** to speak authoritatively on African Women Issues. ***(this is not a political group)by 2010***
3. Revitalise or establish a proactive **African Women Movement or Network** building on the FEMNET network experience after Beijing Conference in 1995 to deal with old, new and emerging gender issues on the continent by 2015.
4. Create regular platforms and engage civil society and women organisations for dialogue and consultations among interest groups and solicit women's indigenous knowledge to achieve gender equality and make it sustainable on the development agenda as required
5. Develop a communication and popularisation strategy to disseminate information on AU human rights instruments

Commitment 6:

Rationalisation and Harmonisation of Regional Economic Communities Gender Policies and Programmes

A commitment that AU Organs, RECs and Member states will work more closely together politically, programmatically and share financial and technical expertise. They will forge partnerships for enforcing gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes.

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will (where applicable)

1. Harmonise sub regional and member states gender policies and align them to the AU and RECs Gender Policy by 2010
2. Develop capacity (*using expertise from the Commonwealth Secretariat*) to establish active Gender Management Systems -GMS. by 2009
3. Build requisite capacity for member states, civil society and other interest groupings for gender mainstreaming and women empowerment with emphasis on strategies that address gender based inequalities, gaps and discrimination
4. Facilitate civil society meetings on gender related thematic issues in the regions.

Commitment 7:

Resource Mobilisation

A commitment to direct organisational resources towards the gender policy and project actions that reduce gender inequality and increase equal participation of men and women

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will (where applicable)

1. Include *gender budgeting principles* in annual budgetary processes and implement the Gender Policy
2. Reaffirm global call and commitments to bridge the gap remaining between policy and practice and provide funds to fast track gender equality, women's advancement and empowerment.
3. Make specific financial commitments annually to gender mainstreaming capacity building/training including core competence development and ensure that all gender equality policies, strategies and action plans include such commitments.
4. Develop a prototype inter agency mechanism for ensuring accountability in the use of funds earmarked for promoting gender equality
5. Develop linkages with International financial agencies/institutions including the World Bank, African Development Bank, AU Financial Institutions and development partners to increase technical/expertise and financial support to implementation of the **Gender Policy** and Gender Justice Actions in the system by 2015.

Africa Union Gender Policy Part III

Policy Delivery Strategies and Institutional Framework

Mainstreaming Of Gender Policy

Implementation strategies

The following strategies will be used for implementing the gender policy. These strategies are premised on the notion that AUC and all organs of the AU, RECs and Member States will use them effectively at macro and micro levels noting the cross cutting nature of gender issues.

- Advocacy for Policy change
- Capacity Building and skill development for Gender Mainstreaming in policies and programmes
- Legislation, Legal Reforms and Human Rights Protection
- Research/ sex disaggregated, Data/Evidence based planning
- Building Strategic partnerships /Outreach with International Regional Organisations/ EU Commission, UN Agencies, donors. financial institutions and development partners
- Resource Mobilisation
- Technical Assistance and Policy Advice
- Use ICT at various levels-SMEs
- Monitoring and Evaluation-- gender equality tracking and indicators Adaptation/adoption of ECA Gender Development Index Tool to monitor gender inclusion)

Strategic Partnerships:

The magnitude of gender mainstreaming is so challenging that no organisation or member state can do it alone. This calls for collaborative initiatives between the private sector, international organisations, development partners, philanthropists and civil society organisations.

Monitoring and Evaluation/Policy Indicators

The objective of a monitoring and evaluation system is to determine whether targets are being met and behavioural changes are visible. It is also intended to indicate whether resources are being used efficiently. It is a very important strategy for delivery of the policy.

- A Gender Management Information System will be established.
- A Gender Management System will spell out specific activities for a period of 3-5 years and assign priorities for gender mainstreaming based on existing skills, and financial resources available in-house or to be outsourced.
- A **monitoring and evaluation plan** will be developed that can be generally applied across all the organisations and AU member states. The use of a common tool would facilitate comparability of results. The plan will include performance indicators of gender equality, gender index, gender impact assessments of policies and programmes, accountability procedures, legal and administrative information data base
- Capacity will be built for staff on the **ECA African Gender and Development Index (AGDI)**

Resource Requirement

AU organs should make the organisational/ institutional adjustments to enable RECs and Member States to operationalise gender AU needs:

- **Institutional Commitment:** Strong and consistent support by senior management and Management decision makers to bring the policy into the mainstream and guaranteeing enabling environment. This should be done through sensitisation of staff to gain cooperation in mainstreaming gender, rationalisation of resources, assessment of the implementation of the policy and its review
- **Information and Knowledge:** Efforts must be made to build up in-house knowledge and expertise. There should be a way to gain capacities to learn from within, experiences and research. This will require facilitating staff access to database on gender – AU and others through the internet, systematic monitoring and reporting, gender auditing, knowledge acquisition, and knowledge sharing.
- **Learning Systems:** There should be efforts to create platforms for dialogue, information dissemination, staff training and so on
- **Exchange of experiences:** Systematic exchange of experiences is good for increased knowledge and responsiveness. Closeness to real programme realities for gender equality is effective
- **Additional resources:** means more time, financial resources, required from staff. A mechanism for direct funding is required if the policy targets are to be achieved in both short and long term.

Institutional Framework

Gender Mainstreaming is accomplished through the establishment of a Gender Management System (GMS) that puts in place structures, mechanisms and processes. Much emphasis is placed on the appropriate institutional structures as well as on the mechanisms for gender analysis, gender training, monitoring and evaluation GMS is intended to advance gender equality and equity through political will, forging partnerships of stakeholders, including governments, private sector, and civil society, building capacity and sharing good practices. AU Organs RECs and Member States will consider establishing GMS along the following broad guidelines which could be adapted to suit operational practices of the establishments and set up the structures below and make them interactive for results.

- The Executive Management Level (Political will)
- Gender Management Team (GMT)
- Gender Directorate/Division (the Lead Agency)
- Departmental/sector Focal Points
- Extra—mural Focal Points, Institutions/ Universities, Public sector Training Institutions
- Gender Technical Commission/expert committees/working groups/task forces

Roles and Responsibilities for AU Organs, RECs and Member States

AU Organs, RECs and Member States will share the coordination role especially relating to donor relations, use of infrastructure and logistics, resource mobilisation, expertise, programme financial and technical support as required to implement the AU gender policy. All AU Organs, RECs and member States will establish a GMS in their establishments. The AU WGDD Director will establish a mechanism to track implementation of the GMS and Gender Policy using a set of bench marks.

AU organs will

- Implement the AU Gender Policy and Action Plan by allocating AU/s minimum of 10%, of national, REC and AU budgets to gender equality and women empowerment program goals, especially measures to enhance women’s participation in programmes.
- Adopt action plan to promote implementation of decisions on AU Commission SDGEA based on CEDAW, BPFA and MDGs
- Create work friendly environments that enable women and men to balance work in the workplace taking in consideration the basic gender differences in their biological roles and needs
- Popularise the AU gender policy and work plan to ensure allocation of resources for its implementation
- Institutionalise continental gender training and find resources to support it;

- The AUC will provide the necessary coordination and leadership role in *kick starting* the implementation of the Gender Policy and focus on organising, consultative meetings, fund raising, technical briefings, popularising the policy among interest groups, reporting on progress and review plans;
- Popularise the gender policy and work plan to ensure allocation of resources for its implementation;
- Facilitate High Level Advocacy Platforms to speak to The Heads of State and Government Ordinary Session of the AU and make them reaffirm their commitments to acceleration of actions to achieve gender equality by 2015 especially in the areas of taking women out of poverty, increase women's participation in politics, removing socio cultural and legal barriers to gender as in SDGEA;
- Work with Heads of the various AU Organs, RECs to develop a regional gender training programme for different levels of people including Parliamentarians for funding;
- Establish measures to hold managers accountable for policy implementation and establish sanctions for non compliance to implementing AU Gender Policy
- Together with others, WGDD establish a mechanism for *celebrating African Women and Men Achievers in realising Gender Equality (details to be developed)*
- Develop joint programmes to introduce parliamentary debates on Gender and Social policy, Women's Care work in Africa and linkages to gender equality issues
- Ensure that together with the Office of Legal Counsel, Africa Court of Justice, Pan African Parliament, and other legal networks in civil society, form a link and develop all essential legal, legislative mechanisms/instruments, procedures including the AU Constitution reflecting the quest for gender equality and women's empowerment for AU and all its institutions and organs.

The Commission will

- Review organisational structures to determine their suitability for implementing gender perspective of programs and/or projects and re-design appropriately
- Ensure that all administrative systems and procedures will be reviewed to ensure they are gender sensitive,
- AU 50/50 Gender Parity and representation in all structures, operational policies and practices and ensure gender perspectives within strategic thinking- vision and mission by 2010
- Make gender training central feature of staff development program, and will go beyond awareness rising to incorporate gender analysis, gender audit and gender planning skills.
- Ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment goals are **mainstreamed** in departmental policies, strategic plans, programs, projects and annual plans and all work processes.
- Establish M&E systems to yield sex disaggregated data, to facilitate analysis of program / project impacts on women and men.

Regional Economic Communities will:

- synchronise and harmonise their gender policies with the AU Gender Policy and ensure that the policy content is included in their sub - regional policies;
- develop capacity for their member states government machineries and civil society in areas of identified needs in order to harmonise national policies with Regional and AU level Gender Policies and GMS;
- initiate innovative and regional *flagship best practice projects* and programmes in the sub regions especially advocacy and campaigns on acceleration of women's equal participation in development and in regional integration and a strategy for leadership development and mentoring of young women;

- develop capacity for staff and member states in gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, gender planning, gender budgeting and track gender equality issues in policy, programming processes and actions;
- work with gender tools developed by member states and development partners

Member States will

- Align/harmonise their gender mainstreaming policies, goals, objectives and programs with those adopted at the REC level and AU Gender Policy Commitments focusing on policy actions on government's compliance to domestication and implementation of international instruments. (redraft to remove the concept will)
- Adopt and domesticate policies those agreed and adopted by the AU and RECs; where gender mainstreaming policies, goals, objectives and programs do not exist,
- Set up Gender Policy Working Groups and enable them to harmonise national gender policies with those agreed and adopted by the AU and the RECs, through heads of the national machineries responsible for women and gender and development affairs
- Through Gender National Machineries, work with relevant national structures

Roles and Responsibilities of Civil Society

Civil Society Constituencies (peace and security, women economic empowerment, Micro Macro credit, Small Enterprise Development, African Women Development Funds, HIV/AIDS, Education, FAWE, Women's Health, Violence Against Women, Human Trafficking and Drug Control, Gender Action Groupings Law and Women's Rights, Women Parliamentarians, etc) will work within the context of ECOSOC, NEPAD Gender and Civil Society Unit and First Ladies Network to strengthen gender mainstreaming actions in AU Organs, RECs and Member States.

Conclusion

The AU Gender Policy is a continental policy on GEWE and as an umbrella policy it will encourage all stakeholders to implement a comprehensive regional action on GEWE. The AU Gender Policy Plan of Action details the actions that need to be taken by all stakeholders in the various commitments that the policy has underlined.

The main thrust of the AU gender Policy is to promote gender awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness in policy; programme activates operational systems and budgets in all Au Organs, RECs and Member States. The how/strategy to do it is Gender Mainstreaming to achieve gender equality. This means a total transformation and a paradigm shift in mindset, perception, and a change in culture in the organisation

By a UN global consensus gender mainstreaming is defined as a process of making equality concerns central to policy formulation, legislation, programming, resource allocations and monitoring and evaluation of programmes. It is an institutional and cultural transformation process that ensures that the perspectives of both men and women form the design, implementation and outcomes of the policies and programmes that enable them to end inequality and develop gender sensitive tools to monitor progress and ensure accountability. The ultimate goal is to achieve equality. Both women empowerment and gender mainstreaming good practices lead to Gender Equality. (ECOSOC 1997)

AFRICA UNION GENDER POLICY
PART IV
PLAN OF ACTION
(Circulated Separatly)

Appendix A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Assessment	Often used as a synonym for evaluation, and sometimes recommended for approaches that report measurement, without making judgements on the measurements.
Baseline data	The set of conditions that exist at the onset of a programme/project. Results are measured or assessed against baseline data and frequently related to the performance indicators.
CEDAW	The Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) provides the basis for realising equality between men and women through ensuring women's access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life; and state parties have agreed to take appropriate measures including legislation and temporary special measures so that women can enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms.
Development	A process with economic and social dimensions that entails quantitative changes in aggregates such as Gross National Product, as well as changes in institutional, social and administrative structures (Todaro, 1989), with the objective of effecting the material and social advancement of the population. It is also regarded as liberating people (Sen, in Saam, 2002).
Empowerment	The process of generating and building capacities to exercise control over one's life through expanded choices. Empowerment is linked with inherent self-confidence, knowledge, skills, attitudes and voice. It is a function of the individual's initiative that is backed up by institutional change.
Evaluation	A time bound exercise that aims to assess systematically and objectively the relevance, performance and success of on going and completed programmes and projects.
Gender	The socially and culturally constructed differences between men and women, boys and girls, which give them unequal value, opportunities and life chances (Kabeer, 2003). It also refers to typically masculine and feminine characteristics, abilities and expectations about how women and men should behave in society. These characters are time bound and changeable.
Gender Analysis	Qualitative and quantitative assessments to determine the differential impacts of development activities on women and men and the effect that gender roles and responsibilities have on development efforts and to trace the historical, political, economic, social and cultural explanations for these differentials (McGregor and Basso, 2001).
Gender Awareness	The recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in society and how they result in differences in power, status and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.
Gender Blind	The situation where potentially differential policy impacts on men and women are ignored.
Gender Budget	A budgeting method that analyses the incidence of budgets on men and women and girls and boys. Gender budgeting entails analyses of revenue and expenditure impacts so as to avoid or correct gender imbalances.

Gender discrimination	Differential treatment to individuals on the grounds of gender
Gender division of labour	Different work roles assigned by society to men and women. For example, women tend to be engaged in unpaid domestic work, low pay, low status and informal sector jobs, while men tend to be employed in higher paid and formal sector work.
Gender equality	The absence of discrimination on the basis of one's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits or in access to services
Gender equity	Fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between men and women
Gender Gap	A difference in any aspect of the socio economic status of women and men, arising from the different social roles ascribed by society for women and men
Gender Issues/Concerns	A gender issue/concern arises when there is a discrepancy, discrimination and injustice
Gender Indicator	An indicator that captures gender-related changes in society over time and in relation to a norm (Beck, in Taylor, 1999)
Gender Mainstreaming	The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all the areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (ECOSOC, July 1997)
Gender Neutral	The assumption that policies, programmes and project interventions do not have a gender dimension and therefore affect men and women in the same way. In practice, policies intended to be gender neutral can be gender blind
Gender Policy	An organisation's policy that integrates gender in the mainstream of its programme activities, where the policy also designates institutional arrangements, responsibilities, management functions and tools/guidelines for mainstreaming
Gender Relations	Relations between men and women in terms of access to resources and decision-making and the relative positions of men and women in the division of resources, responsibilities, benefits, rights, power and privileges.
Gender sensitivity	A mind set where people recognise or are aware of gender based discrimination which hinders enjoyment of human rights. It is an understanding and routine consideration of the social, cultural and economic factors underlying discrimination based on sex
Gender stereotyping	Constant portrayal in the media, the press or in the education system, of women and men occupying certain roles according to the socially constructed gender division of labour and expectations in behaviour (African Development Bank, <i>The Gender Policy</i>)
Gender Systems	Systems which define attributes, ways of relating, hierarchies, privileges, sanctions and space in which men and women are organised. In most communities in Africa, women are dominated by men via patriarchal power, that has been a traditional and indeed a historical privilege for men
Gender training	The provision of formal learning experiences and skills in order to increase gender analysis and awareness skills, which serve to recognise and address gender issues in the programming process.

	Training can include the three dimensions of political: introducing gender concepts and analysis, the professional: providing staff with “how-to” skills and the personal: challenging an individual’s gender attitudes and stereotypes
Practical Needs	Needs related to the roles, such as reproduction, production and community, that men and women currently have and which do not necessarily change their relative position in society
Productive work	Work carried out for the production of goods and services intended for the market.
Sex	The biological state of being a male or female. Sex is not equal to gender.
Strategic Interests	<p>Those that help society achieve gender equity and equality. The satisfaction of strategic gender needs improves women’s status in relation to the men</p> <p>Women’s Empowerment: Address discrimination and oppression against women by devising programmes and strategies that increase women’s s, capacities, opportunities, access and understanding of their human rights, create conditions for them to become agents of their own development and be able to find sustainable solutions for change at personal, family and civil society levels. Women can then contribute to reduction of poverty, improve nutrition and seek health care, monitor child survival, prevent HIV/AIDS, stop harmful cultural practices and go to school freely without coercion.</p>

Appendix B

CLUSTER I. Gender equality and women empowerment clusters: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT SECTORS ARE CATEGORISED IN 5 CLUSTERS THESE ISSUES FORM BASIS AND PILLARS FOR CRAFTING THE GENDER POLICY COMMITMENTS.

CLUSTER II.

CLUSTER III. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND DECISION MAKING, PEACE AND SECURITY, LEGISLATION

CLUSTER IV. SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES

CLUSTER V. EMPLOYMENT / LABOUR MIGRATION

CLUSTER VI. AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY, ENVIRONMENT (WATER, SANITATION AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS)

CLUSTER VII. ICT COMMUNICATION, TRANSPORT

CLUSTER VIII.

CLUSTER IX. CLUSTER I: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND DECISION MAKING, PEACE AND SECURITY, AND LEGISLATION:

Over half of the African population who are women are still under represented in books, board rooms, science laboratories, trade negotiations, and in many of the summits that determine the fate of the continent all over the African continent. African women still do not have easy access to political power, social liberation policy and decision making processes. They are not equally represented in decision-making and political positions especially in most Member States even though Beijing Declaration paragraph 1, UN 1996 states emphatically that ...”women’s empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society including participation in the decision making process to power are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. Indeed gender disparities exist in representation of women in managerial and political structures. Yet most governments have signed, ratified and submit reports on the AU SDGEA and other international commitments including CEDAW. The relatively low female representation is also evidenced in Cabinet positions – from 3 per cent in Nigeria to 47% in Rwanda. Data indicate that at the political level, Africa countries have not yet met the target, of at least 30 per cent female representation at decision-making levels, set by the United Nations. (Let alone the AU 50/50 gender parity targets) The under-representation of women constitutes under-utilisation of human resources, in addition to being a rights-based issue.

Peace and Security There is a growing awareness of the critical role of women in conflict, post conflict and peace building, reconstruction and reconciliation. There is also consensus on tackling the gender issues in the male –dominated world of peace keeping and gender mainstreaming in peace keeping is gaining attention globally at the UN and certainly at the Africa Continent level given the major role of Africa is playing in peace keeping. Progress has been made since the adoption of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Of October 2000 On Women, Peace and Security. Civil society organisations especially leading women organisations (such as --- Women, Peace and Security Network-Africa-WIPSEN –A and others) are driving forces for Women’s VOICES on policy issues. The 2007 Paris Principles recognise the situations of armed conflict and humanitarian needs based on the UN child rights principles. Specific situation for girls as armed soldiers and refugees is well articulated in the principles for action. A quick action is required to make gender equality permeate every aspect of peace, security as the continent tries to achieve the MDG targets.

Legislation and Legal Framework Whilst significant progress has been made in strengthening women’s legal and human rights at continental, regional and national levels, a lot still needs to done. Dual legal systems create contradictions on the rights of women by according women some rights through general law and withholding others on the basis of traditional, customary and religious beliefs and practices, denying women their fundamental rights. Weak Legal frameworks, institutional infrastructure and non compliance to adopt rights-based legislation continue to encumber progress, and empowerment of women in some countries in the continent resulting in failure to attain required gender justice and human development targets Legal education and knowledge,

affirmative action laws for gender equality are necessary to deal with discrimination and marginalisation of women. These laws when enforced will protect women and men regardless of class, **disability** or sexual orientation. SDGEA Women's Rights laws reiterate the need to accelerate awareness of legislation and in-depth legal education.

CLUSTER X. CLUSTER II. SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES

CLUSTER XI.

Gender disparities anchored on negative socio-cultural, religious, political, legal and economic values, frameworks and practices continue to permeate all aspects of human interaction in Africa in favour of men. Socio cultural beliefs, norms and practices within patriarchal systems also relegate African women to a low status in society, manifested in the exclusion of women in decision-making positions, and their marginalisation in access to, resources. The prevailing patriarchal system and conditions affect gender relations reflected in socio-cultural dictates some of which are detrimental and conducive to reproductive health especially spread of HIV. The Africa region is faced with huge problems surrounding cultural practices of widow inheritance, Female genital mutilation and child marriages continue to pose a threat and disempowerment to women in the continent and must be more seriously addressed politically and legally. All these issues need to be seriously acknowledged as concerns and obstacles to achieving gender equality. They need to be re-positioned on the development agenda at continental levels for solutions.

Gender Education Gap --The girl child. The AU MDG's report shows that significant gender gaps exist in access to education at primary and secondary levels, evidenced in enrolment and literacy rates in African countries. Discrimination in girl's access to education still persists in many African countries owing to socio cultural and customary attitudes (early marriage, unwanted pregnancies, harassment, lack of schools, physically handicapped, and poverty/low household incomes etc). Girls' in-decent work as domestic/household workers or in the informal labour earning small income poses serious gender disparities. Many girls still drop out of school because of one reason or the other. While some gaps have narrowed in most countries, significant disparities remain. There are cases for wide gender gaps and many countries are taking steps to redress the gap. These efforts have to be taken to scale in the continent in order to bridge the education gap by 2015. Persisting discrimination in girls education has to be removed.

High illiteracy rates among women, resulting from cultural practices and gender insensitive education systems limit women's opportunities to education thus exacerbating their economic vulnerability. Literacy of women is a key to improvement of health, nutrition, and educational upliftment of the family, communities and nations. Investing in girls and women's literacy is the right thing to do for social and high economic returns. Paradoxically illiteracy rates among women and men in Africa have widened on the continent in favour of men. A number of socio economic factors have contributed to both illiteracy and gender gap in education. The factors needing attention are economic hardships, paid and unpaid child labour, distance from school, access to transportation and other key socio cultural practices especially child marriage, and patriarchal /son preference attitudes.

Reproductive and Sexual Health

As part of a holistic approach that emphasises the health, education and empowerment of women and youth, ICPD (1994) Conference focused on increasing availability of broader package of reproductive health and sexual rights services. In 2006, Africa nations, 49 countries newly pledged to expand access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights through out the continent within the Maputo Plan of Action especially scaling up Mid-wifely in the Community and partnership for Maternal, New Born and Child Health reinforced commitments to improve maternal health and women empowerment programmes. The plan of action has an overarching goal for African governments, civil society, the private sector, and all development partners to join forces and redouble efforts so that together the effective implementation of the continental policy including universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2015 in all countries in Africa can be achieved. New strategies to enhance humanitarian relief

efforts, gender mainstreaming and youth involvement, not forgetting male involvement and support, integration of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS policies and programmes to meet the needs of women, men and youth.

High maternal mortality rates, reaching 1 in 12 in most African countries, are a consequence of deficient healthcare delivery systems. The fifth MDG calls for reducing maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters of their 1990 levels by 2015. It is estimated that women in Africa face 1 in 13 chance of dying in childbirth, compared to 1 in 160 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 1 in 280 in East Asia. In Africa, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel showed a very minimal change in the 1990s, from 40% in 1990 to 44% in 2000. At present rate, the targeted 85% coverage of births attended by skilled health providers will not be achieved by 2015. This is a gender concern

HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB

According to the latest statistics on the world epidemic of AIDS & HIV, published by UNAIDS/WHO in December 2004, the total number of AIDS deaths worldwide in 2004 was 3.1 million, and Africa accounted for 2.3 million or 74.2% of all AIDS deaths in the world. By December 2004 women accounted for 47% of all people living with HIV worldwide, and 57% in Africa. An estimated five million people in low and middle-income countries do not have the AIDS drugs, which could save their lives. It is noted, however, that even in the worst cases, the toll of AIDS related deaths is not expected to lead to declines of population, because fertility in these countries is high. In Africa, HIV/AIDS is deepening and spreading poverty, reversing human development, reducing labour productivity and eroding the capacity of governments to provide essential services. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, poverty, and high maternal mortality rates pose major threats to the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment. Women constitute the larger percentage of those infected and affected by the pandemic making up more than 60% of the adults and 75% of all young people living with HIV in Africa. They also bear the brunt of taking care of the sick and the ever-growing numbers of orphaned children with minimal state support and become vulnerable because of unprotected exposure.

Malaria is also a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in tropical Africa, and many countries have progressed in its prevention and control using impregnated mosquito nets. Estimates based on malaria cases reported to the WHO show that almost 90percent occur in Africa, with most of the deaths being among young children. Death rates are highest among children under five. In 2000, there were 906,000 deaths worldwide, 880,000 in Africa. Anti-malaria efforts now focus on reducing human exposure and reducing the health effects on those who become infected. **Tuberculosis**, because of its linkage with HIV is resurging and becoming a major public health concern in countries hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Cluster III. Employment / Labour Migration

ILO reports that in 2007, 1.2 billion women around the world worked, almost 200 million or 18.4 per cent more than ten years ago. However, the number of unemployed women also grew from 70.2 to 81.6 million over the same period and in 2007, women at the global level still had a higher likelihood of being unemployed than men. As for women who do find work, they are often confined to work in the less productive sectors of economies –sex work--and in status groups that carry higher economic risk and a lesser likelihood of meeting the characteristics that define decent work, including access to social protection, basic rights and a voice at work. Also, as a result of the type of work where women can find employment (in terms of both sector and status), they often earn less than men. Full gender equality in terms of labour market has not been achieved yet. The fact is, decent work for men and women are the only sustainable way out of poverty. In fact, a new target was recently introduced in the Millennium Development Goals calling for “full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

Decent work for women is a precondition for economic development since, in the long run, economies cannot afford to ignore an untapped resource such as that which could be offered by female labour. African government employment policies need to be engendered and redesigned for more inclusion, visibility and voices of women and men

in employment policies: active labour market policies, pay and career policies. There is a gender concern

Linked with labour issues are related issues of **international migration, human and drug trafficking** issues facing the continent, requiring urgent, collective, and continental response. Women and Child trafficking across borders and large scale migration of young people who are the labour force for countries pose a serious concern because they are indicative of the disparities surrounding poor public and private sector labour laws, violations and non-compliance to the standards of protection of human rights, child rights and women rights instruments. Support for gender perspectives of labour policy issue in AU is strategic and reinforces integration and cooperation for improving development in Africa. There is a real gender concern

Gender based violence and sexual violence/rape against women and children in Africa is on the increase and needing policy actions for prevention, eradication and services for care and support against women remains a serious problem in all African countries high incidence of rape cases, as well as other forms of physical and psychological abuse of women and girls, are evidence which have been reported and in most countries legal and parliamentary actions are being taken. At the regional level, the African Union (AU) has set up the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. African Heads of Government and State in their solemn Declaration of July 2004 have also agreed to launch within one year, a campaign for systematic prohibition of the abuse of girls as wives and sex slaves.

The criminal Justice, Safety and Security systems are now beginning to deal with this crisis in a gender sensitive manner. It will continue to be a major challenge especially as it is compounded by its interrelation with poverty and HIV/AIDS. Gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual-based violence (SBV) have deeper social roots, as they already exist in society and only exacerbated in war/conflict situations. It is becoming necessary to have evidence based information about the various pressures placed upon men that result in violent reactions as well as the need for men/boys to take responsibility for their actions. There is a gender concern.

Economic Empowerment, Trade/Informal Sector, Economic Partnership Agreements

The feminisation of poverty especially among poor rural women is a key factor constraining the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment. African women work hard but do not earn income because they are illiterate and unskilful. Yet education and meaningful participation in economic activities have been highlighted as some of the key elements necessary for poverty reduction. Unequal rights between women and men with respect to property rights reflected in women's limited ownership, control, access and exploitation of material resources and psychosocial benefits continue to disempower women. Feminised poverty emanating from policies and programs have marginalised women's human rights especially those in conflict situations. Since 1990s, poverty reduction in Africa generally has been hindered mainly by weak economic performance, political turmoil and civil strife, environmental and climatic changes, highly skewed income distribution causing inhibited economic growth and distress for people especially women because economies are gender structured and yet women's total work is not acknowledged in economic data. Economic empowerment of women is the poorest sector for national development programmes. The challenge for most nations in Africa is how to put value on women's work which is located in the informal sector and link it to macro economics data, Women have to be included in Investment Opportunities, get access to Global Markets to compete with their products for income.(UNCTAD, April 2008 Accra Declaration). There is a gender concern.

Economic Partnerships are public and private partnerships dedicated to facilitate economic development and business opportunities. They are a scheme to create a free trade area (FTA) between the European Union and the ACP countries. They are a response to continuing criticism that the non-reciprocal and discriminating preferential trade agreements offered by EU are in compatible with WTO rules. The EPAs are a key element of the Cotonou Agreement, the latest agreement in the history of ACP-EU

Development Cooperation and are to take effect as of 2008 AU Organs, RECs and Member States need more knowledge and insights to understand what it takes to enter into the EPA's in regional groupings (Annex...) The ACP countries are grouped into 6 six regional groupings in which they intend to enter into EPAs with the European Union. These agreements must be engendered and women entrepreneurs be included in the decision making processes and opportunities for building capacity, knowledge base on business environments, creating jobs and research information sharing on new businesses such as branding, new market opportunities such as African Growth and Opportunity act (AGOA) and latest SMEs opportunities. Women are not included in these agreements. This is a gender concern

CLUSTER XII. CLUSTER IV: AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY, ENVIRONMENT (WATER, SANITATION AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS), WOMEN AND FOOD SECURITY

Women account for the bulk of agricultural production, which is the backbone of most African economies. They have indigenous knowledge about farming systems, are responsible for food security, food utilisation and other welfare needs – water, energy/fuel, sanitation at household level that are necessary for reproduction and maintenance of Africa's human capital.

Women are also affected by discriminatory inheritance and property laws because of gender bias. Women farmers are just not in the mainstream agriculture agenda, they do not own arable land and other agricultural inputs that will make them competitive with their male counterparts. In fact, they suffer social exclusion and trapped in highly patriarchal systems that controls them and denies them opportunity to have power and make key life decisions. Evidenced based data confirm that African women own less than 1% of the African continent's landmass and women farmers receive only 1% of total credit to agriculture, and have fewer economic rights and lower access to economic opportunities, including land and credit facilities. Women farmers do not receive subsidies neither do they have appropriate technology. They do not determine food prices but are the mangers of the merger household finances and manage inflation in food prices. The most crucial gender gap is that women farmers are not included in commercial sector, nor in public policy making processes for their needs to be considered since they deal with food cost inflation and decisions on family food security. Logically they are not in the budget allocation mechanisms yet women by virtue of their multiple roles as caregivers, mothers and consumers; have special needs. This is a concern

Women and Environment

The gender issues related to the environment in Africa revolve around the utilisation and preservation of resources such as wood, water, land and sanitation/health of households and communities. In rural Africa, women are the principal harvesters of fire wood for household energy, collectors of water for domestic usage and utilisation of food. In the current division of labour, men are more integrated than women into the commercial exploitation of environmental resources. Women struggle to get water and house hold energy and they need policy and programmes on environmental degradation, forestation and protection that consider the needs of women as well as their inclusion in decision making boards based on the gender parity of 50/50 practice. Women need louder voice on issues of the environment. The existing Women advocates-leaders must have a louder voice on these issues on the continent. Environmental Impact Assessments must redress impact on women as users and beneficiaries of policies and programmes. There is a need for education programmes linked to environmental sustainability, as well as for policies and programmes to provide alternative energy sources and to ensure the availability of potable water, which would contribute to health, but which would also alleviate women's time burden. There is a gender concern.

CLUSTER XIII. CLUSTER V: ICT COMMUNICATION, TRANSPORT

Communication technologies telephones internet, are infrastructure for providing timely information and data in today's digital world. As such they play pivotal role not only in economic development but also as a catalyst in human and social development.

Communications technologies are also important for the distribution of alternative, balanced and equitable portrayals of women and their potential. One of the biggest challenges facing ICT policy-makers is to develop ICT policies so that they serve the social and economic needs of development for women, men and youth equally. But, this is not happening.

The question of gender perspectives in **telecommunications**, broadcasting and postal policies is one of the most important aspects of restructuring and planning in the communications sector. It is counter-productive to neglect the gender dimensions when planning and making strategic decisions on digital/IT policies for development. Allowing for gender perspectives of policies in communications means understanding fully how women and men have been socialised differently and, consequently, to understand the differential impacts of policy on women and men.

Women should participate in the ICT driven information and policy development. The goal of the ICT sector and gender equity advocates is the full participation of women as equal partners in the design and implementation of policies to reach out (especially the Media) to stop portraying negative and degrading images of African women and girls. This means promoting positive images of women achievers, mentors and empowered women through electronic skills. Development of Regional supporting policies; Competition policies; Telecommunication policies and Information and Intellectual Property Knowledge policies is highly recommended to take the ICT culture forward.

Transport is an essential physical infrastructure that facilitates harmonious and free movement of persons, goods and services on the continent. A common transport and communication policy, legal frame and regulations inter high way networking mechanisms, travel mode options---road, rail, air, and core preconditions for continental integration. The gender perspectives of these conditions is crucial....Mechanisms to track misconduct, abuse and unnecessary control at borders must be put in place to enable women's involvement gainful. Without this women become vulnerable especially to sexuality related abuse such as HIV/AIDS, Rape and even unwanted pregnancies. Regional transport systems are needed infrastructure for women's security.

These issues and others reflect what is happening in the African environment, and the need for a gender perspective by AU Organs. RECs and Member States in order to attain the vision for the 850 million citizens attaining human dignity, prosperity and peaceful Africa

Appendix C