



25th Pre-Summit Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union and Member States

20-23 January 2015, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



RECOMMENDATIONS

2015, year of Women's Empowerment and Development
Towards Africa's Agenda 2063 - What is the change we want to see?

INTRODUCTION

2015 is a unique opportunity for the acceleration and realization of the commitments made to African women's rights, gender equality, women's empowerment and inclusive development. 2015 marks the 5th year into the African Women's Decade (2010-2020), the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+20), the fifteenth anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, and the finalization of deliberations on the Post-2015 agenda.

In this context, on 20-21 January 2015, the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) held its **25th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender Equality in the African Union and Member States** under the theme "2015, Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063: What is the Change We Want to See?". Close to 200 participants working on promoting gender equality and women's rights in Africa reflected on progress, current gaps and emerging issues, and review implementation of existing commitments made by African Union member states to women's human rights, health, education, governance, women's economic empowerment, peace and security and climate change. A statement was adopted at the end of the two-day event by all the organizations participating.

The GIMAC was followed by a **stakeholders' consultation** from 22–23 January 2015 held by the African Union Commission, under the leadership of the Chairperson, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma at the African Union New Conference Center Mandela Hall. The consultation brought together Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs from across Africa, the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) members Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) gender focal points and other development partners to strategize on the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063". A Joint Communiqué was adopted by all participants.

The Gender is my Agenda Campaign, A unique network of African civil society organizations

GIMAC is one of the largest African women's platform on the continent. It is coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) and guided by a Steering Committee. Created to provide a space for civil society to formulate and promote a gender equality agenda for Africa, it brings together more than 55 organizations coming from diverse backgrounds and from all over the continent. It has campaigned tirelessly over the last ten years for the equal participation of African women in leadership and decision-making, and the acceleration of women's rights, empowerment and development.

Since 2005, the GIMAC members meet on the margins of the African Union (AU) Heads of State Summit for a Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the AU and Member States. The GIMAC members use this opportunity to examine cross-cutting issues in line with AU summit themes and to develop recommendations that are disseminated to the African Union Heads of State and Government and the international community to influence the ensuing high-level recommendations.



GIMAC STATEMENT

“Evaluate, Contribute, Implement”

We, women from civil society women’s groups, have met for the 25th GIMAC under the theme: “Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063: What is the Change We Want to See?” and have deliberated during the civil society consultation meeting on different thematic issues including women’s human rights, health, education, governance, women’s economic empowerment, peace and security and climate change,

Welcoming the invitation of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission extended to African women at the 50th anniversary celebrations of the African Union to contribute to the development of Agenda 2063 and the follow-up consultations jointly conducted by the AU and the GIMAC, including in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea,

Appreciating the opportunity to contribute to the strategy of Agenda 2063 towards its adoption and implementation,

We thank you for providing support and space to civil society organizations. We are delighted and committed to be part of this process and to support the realization of the vision of the Africa we want in 50 years,

We deeply applaud the designation of the year 2015 as the Year of Women’s Empowerment and the dedication of AU deliberations on this theme. We propose therefore that the year for women’s empowerment be seized as an opportunity with a focus on the implementation of practical solutions that will provide measurable results for women’s empowerment.

The African Union has made great progress in recognizing the importance of women’s contributions to development and has put in place the necessary legal frameworks for women’s empowerment. These frameworks and principles, in our opinion, are not open to renegotiation but should lead practice, monitoring and implementation. We want to focus on how these rights should be actualized. These include the Maputo Protocol, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In order to ensure the integrity of data and compliance with reporting requirements, we have worked with the United Nations Economic Commission (ECA) for Africa in developing a monitoring tool, the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI). It has been systematically refined and is now ready to be used on a wider scale to monitor progress on gender equality in the AU member states. This will inform Monitoring, Evaluation and Advocacy for the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality.

Our first overarching recommendation is that Africa is in dire need of a mindset change. Our perspective on culture and its role in our self-definition is critical. Culture is too often perceived as a constraint to women’s empowerment when in fact it should be considered as a driving force in the recreation of societies.

In the second instance, Africa must imperatively begin to learn to use its own resources for the continent's development. Homegrown solutions should be developed in order to respond to the realities of our communities.

And finally, Africa must reject the poverty mentality, which has been largely infused into the people's minds in all spheres and at all levels of the society. Africa is, by no means, a poor continent. It is one of the wealthiest continents in the world. For this to happen, we, African people, need to embrace big ideas, be audacious and strengthen our self-confidence, and the self-confidence of women in particular if women are to drive change.

We therefore propose practical solutions for the first ten years in the following sectors. Many of these proposals are already good practices in AU member states. They can be replicated or scaled up to promote women's empowerment.

Economic Empowerment

Women's economic empowerment and women's human rights go hand in hand. We need Inclusiveness of growth to ensure that no one is left behind and that job creation is targeted at women --- and the youth who are our present and the future.

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We need investment in science, information and communications technology, and innovative agriculture and financial systems for women for example MPesa and biometric credit cards, which will contribute to women's financial autonomy.

We are once again putting forth the request for a bank for women that will address the specific challenges that women face in navigating the financial system.

We are asking for more women in corporate decision-making and that percentages of government tenders go to women. The process of registering and doing business needs to be simplified and demystified.

Training for women on business compliance and trade is also a priority.

There should be strong partnership between women in the private sector and those in the public sector. GIMAC, AfDB and the AU should set up a task force to come up with an action plan, targets and a road map to accelerate women's economic empowerment.

Agriculture

Following last year's GIMAC specific recommendations on agriculture, we continue to request that women, the primary actors and contributors to agriculture, be present all over the value chain, and at all levels. They should be given

- Full access and control to land,
- Full access to markets.

We want women to be given access to the most recent technology to enhance their productivity, expand their business. They need to be trained to use modern equipment and benefit from latest innovations.

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We need to "retire the hoe to the museum."

- Recommendation from the 23rd GIMAC Pre-Summit Consultative meeting, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, June 2014.

The next priorities include: Encouraging women to work in associations, to scale up cooperatives and bring in the youth, and promoting linkages with the private sector, including for the production of equipment.

Peace and security

This is one of the most important sectors for required action. The Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission is preparing a framework with indicators to

(...) A framework with indicators to monitor the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.”

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We propose that each country be required to prepare a National Action Plan to accelerate implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including in particular

a focus on violence against women, rehabilitation and recovery programmes, child soldiers, preventative measures such as the Women's Situation Room in the context of elections, strengthen the judicial system to accelerate access to justice and end impunity, protection of refugees and displaced people. Human security is more sustainable than military security. We propose urgent attention to the disparities and inequalities and corruption and poor governance that are at the basis of unrest and instability in our countries

Education

The focus needs to be on quality education at two levels: the content and the infrastructure. On the content, curricula need to ensure that girls' rights are protected and that the history programmes reflect the tremendous contributions of African women pioneers and innovators and their role in building Africa. A special focus should be given to civic education and literacy.

Regarding infrastructure, the focus should be in building schools that will promote the retention of the girl child. Ending child marriage should become a priority. We also want to see the creation of centers of excellence on science and technology throughout the continent and we need to encourage and support mentorship programmes.

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Health

Drawing lessons from the Ebola crisis, we ask for the redirection of funds towards health infrastructure and access to healthcare from all part of the continent, and in particular for remote areas. We want that a special focus be given to public health policies, infrastructure, education, sanitation aiming at the protection populations.

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Sexual and reproductive health and rights must be aligned with the Maputo protocol. In HIV aids, women and young people are the most vulnerable. We need to bring extra support to identify innovative technologies that protect women and girls from HIV Aids.

Conclusion

We have decided that the Solemn Declaration Index should be linked to the agenda 2063 to help measure progress made towards its implementation. To this effect, we have decided that we will produce an alternative report of the civil society and that all our studies and research on good practice and solutions will be put on the ECA knowledge-sharing platform.

Finally, we welcome the opportunity to hold this consultative meeting with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the AU ministers, the Regional Economic Communities gender focal points, UN Women and UNDP. We would like to see that our position is strengthened at the national level to ensure that at international meetings such as meeting to review Beijing+20 or the post-2015 agenda, we have a coordinated and united position, allowing us to go into global negotiations on these agendas with confidence.

Done in Addis Ababa, on the 21st January 2015.

STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION ON THE "YEAR OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS AFRICA'S AGENDA 2063"

*22-23 January 2015
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*



JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. We, the Ministers of the African Union (AU) in charge of Gender and Women's Affairs, members of the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) network and other civil society organizations, gender focal points of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), UN Agencies and other development partners, meeting at the AU Stakeholder Consultation under the AU 2015 Theme ***"Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063"*** held from 20 to 23 January 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission (AUC) on the margins of the 24th AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

2. Utilizing the ***"Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063"*** and the African Women's Decade (2010–2020), the Stakeholders' Consultation provided an opportunity for stakeholders and women's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to reflect and propose concrete actions on the implementation of Africa's Agenda 2063, as well as the Beijing Declaration of Action, the Post-2015 Agenda, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, and other policies and frameworks and we:
 - a) Appreciate the commitment by AU Member States to declare 2015 as "the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063";
 - b) Congratulate the African Union Commission (AUC) under the leadership of the Chairperson H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma for the development of Agenda 2063 and its 10 Year Action Plan, which recognizes Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment as a critical driver for the transformation and development of Africa in all seven (7) Aspirations of Africa's Agenda 2063;
 - c) Reiterate and recommit to the *"Addis Ababa Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action - Towards a Transformational Change for Women and Girls in Africa"*;
 - d) Welcome the mandate of the AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security to promote the rights of women during conflict, their participation in the prevention and resolution of conflict, and their protection from sexual and gender-based violence;
 - e) Take note of the 2015 High-level Review and Global Study on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325;
 - f) Recall the civil society consultative meeting on Agenda 2063 in Addis Ababa in 2013, the meeting of Gender Ministers and Civil Society Organizations in Malabo 2014 and the 9th African Women Regional Conference in Addis Ababa in 2014;
 - g) Acknowledge existing frameworks on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment from the continent and beyond and recommit to the implementation and mutual accountability of those existing frameworks without renegotiating their content;

- h) Note that the implementation of existing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment frameworks has been painfully slow due to lack of financial inclusion and limited financial resources allocated for women's entrepreneurship, women's ownership and control of assets, women's financial literacy and women's agency;
 - i) Recognize the existing and emerging threats to Africa's development, including climate change, conflicts, terrorism and health pandemics (Ebola, HIV/AIDS) and the disproportionately negative impact they have on women's lives and well-being;
 - j) Realize the urgent need for a mindset change which allows culture as a driving force for change that does not serve as a constraint to women's rights and empowerment;
 - k) Appreciate the institutionalization of a joint Stakeholders' Consultation between Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs, RECs, CSOs, Gender Machineries, the UN System and other Development/Investment Partners; and,
 - l) Strive towards an integrated, peaceful, prosperous and dynamic continent, for all.
3. The Stakeholders' Consultation therefore commits to:
- a) Working hand-in-hand in achieving Agenda 2063 through engagement and coordination in the longer term, so that collaborative efforts and mobilization continue to bear fruits that accelerates transformation and resonates throughout the entire next 50 years;
 - b) Advocating for legislative instruments and policy tools to promote and protect access to, and control of, land rights for women across Africa;
 - c) Ensuring that national, and REC, policies are in line with Agenda 2063 and its 10-Year Action Plan;
 - d) Contributing substantively to development of indicators that build on the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI), that has been developed by the GIMAC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and monitoring progress of the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its 10-Year Action Plan;
 - e) Providing progress-monitoring systems, in order to ensure mutual accountability in achieving the Gender Equality Goals in Agenda 2063 and its 10-Year Action Plan.
4. Taking into account national and socio-cultural background, the Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs, the AUC, RECs, GIMAC and members of Civil Society Organizations, the UN System and development/investment partners recommend the following **Priority Actions** in implementing the 2015 Year for Women's Empowerment Towards Africa's Agenda 2063:
- a) Member States should popularize and implement Agenda 2063 to ensure broad participation at all levels, especially at the community level and in rural areas;
 - b) The AUC should take leadership in harmonizing implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and mechanisms for all years of Agenda 2063;
 - c) Heads of State to endorse the *Addis Ababa Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action Towards a transformational change for women and girls in Africa* (Beijing+20);
 - d) Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) should enhance efforts to promote participation of women in judicial processes and Institutions, especially in governance and at decision-making levels, such as the Supreme Court, Constitutional Courts, Regional Courts;

- e) Member States should take into account Women sensitive issues to emerging threats such as Ebola, Terrorism and other impediments to Africa's development;
- f) Member States should develop, implement and report on National and Regional Action Plans to accelerate the Women, Peace and Security Agenda referencing the continental implementation Framework on Women, Peace and Security;
- g) Member States should share high-impact best practices and solutions that can be scaled up and replicated to improve the lives of women;
- h) Member States should develop and implement the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Africa Agricultural Growth and Transformation (3AGT) for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, where gender is a cross-cutting issue of all seven (7) goals;
- i) Member States should develop a Plan of Action towards Silencing the Guns by 2020, to promote women's participation in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict rebuilding, and a particular focus on ending violence against women and girls eliminating impunity and ensuring access to justice, rehabilitation and recovery, especially for child soldiers, and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.
- j) Member States should ensure that women are part of the electoral machinery, including Institutions that address violence during elections;
- k) Member States should establish mechanisms to identify survivors of sexual and gender-based abuses and provide psychosocial and economic care during conflict and post-conflict situations;
- l) Member States should enhance women's contribution, and benefit from formal agriculture/agribusiness value-chains by improving their access to, and control over land, improving access to, and training in, new environmentally friendly technologies, which also reduce women burden of work, while also improving access to markets;
- m) Member States should establish mechanisms for business women to transition from small-, to large-scale corporations, with particular focus on women's innovative ventures and enterprises, that promote the economic empowerment and resilience of women;
- n) Member States should establish a Special Fund for Women and young girls in collaboration with the Africa Development Bank and the private sector; and a Trust Fund and supporting institutions, for investing throughout the five (5) stages of venture capital financing, in early stage, high potential and growth companies while paying special attention to enterprises that strengthen the capacity of women;
- o) Governments should allocate targeted and enhanced funding towards institutions working on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, including African headquartered Women's Organizations and UN Women;
- p) Member States should ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights of African women in the existing commitments to women's reproductive health and rights, as adopted by African Heads of State in the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol) in 2003, and the Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in 2006, are implemented and mutual accountability of those existing commitments, without renegotiating their content;
- q) Member States should ensure ending of the AIDS Epidemic by 2030, is part of the Agenda 2063, has an inclusive human rights approach that leaves no-one behind; including children, adolescents, women of child bearing age, female key populations, such as women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings;
- r) Governments should increase education and training investment that is accredited for quality, in science and technology (S&T), information and communications technology (ICT), engineering, mathematics and agriculture/agribusiness and nutrition innovation with a focus on young women;

- s) Governments should commit to ending child marriage in Africa through adoption of the Common Africa Position on Ending Child Marriage; development and implementation of comprehensive action plans, and inclusion of ending child marriage as an indicator for monitoring Agenda 2063 for the empowerment and well-being of girls;
- t) Member States should install a monument at the Africa Union Headquarters honoring women who have contributed to the African anti-colonial and anti-apartheid liberation movements, and the resolution of conflicts on the continent; and,
- u) The AUC Chairperson should share the outcomes of the Stakeholder' Consultation to the Council of Ministers and the Summit of Heads of State.

5. The meeting thanked the Chairperson of the AU Commission for convening this meeting and the support of the GIMAC, UNDP, UN Women, UNECA for their contribution, and the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia for the hospitality.

Done in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the 23 January 2015

Partners for the 24th GIMAC in January 2015:

