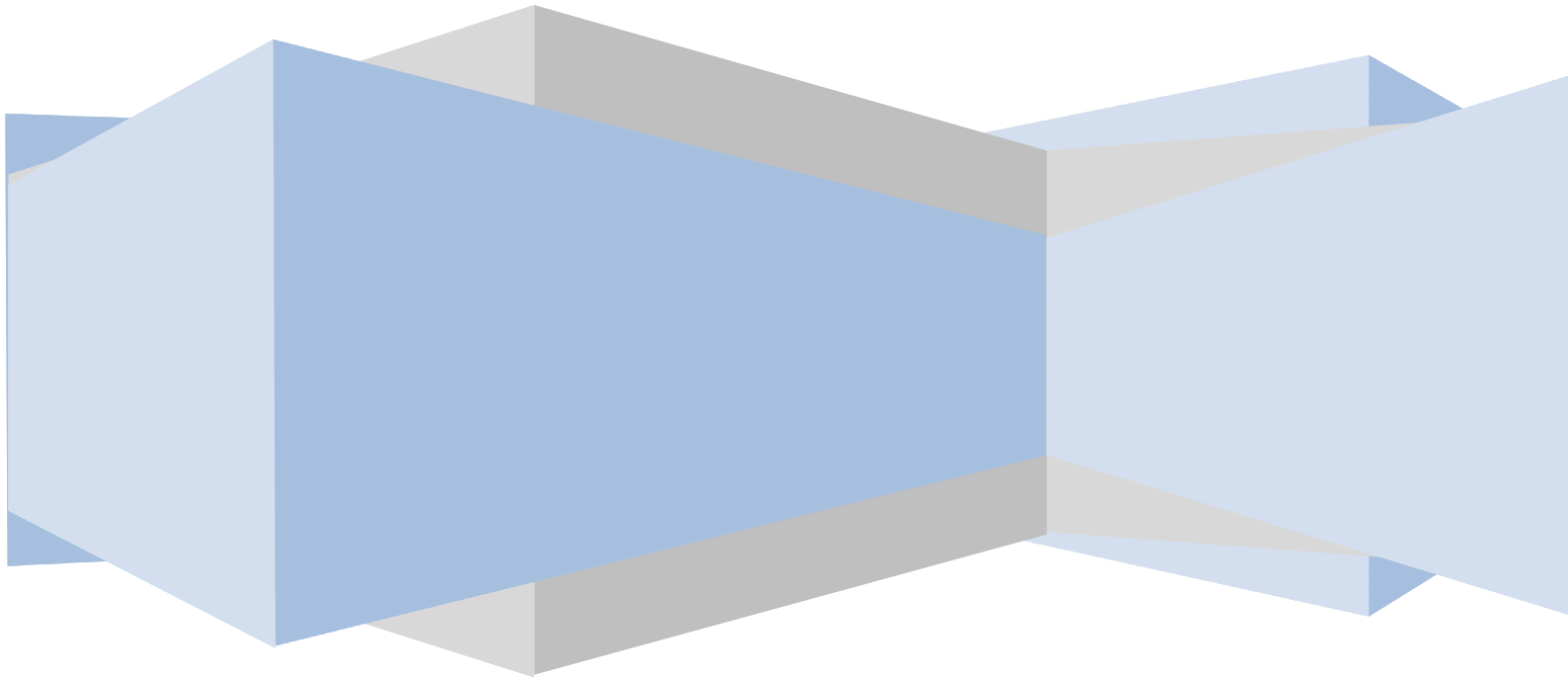




# **African Union Gender Policy**

**(Rev. 21-Sept-08)**



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### 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                      |
| APPRRW   | 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. They include the adoption of 4 (1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union which 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, among others

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

Indeed, this policy could not have come at a better time as its adoption will facilitate the operationalization of Assembly Decision AU/Dec.134-164 (IIIV) on the Establishment of the African Women Trust Fund. Furthermore, its adoption coincides with the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Beijing Conference and further, will pave way for implementation of the proposed African Women's Decade (2010-2020), thus providing a road map for the realization of the objectives for the decade.

**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 (2) 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 form COMESA, CEN-SAD, ECAS, ECOWAS, SADC and ECA, Parliamentarians including PAP, EU partners, CSOs who participated in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 the Director and staff members of the Women Gender and Development and Directorate of the African Union Commission, for their hard work during the entire process.

## Historical Background Africa Union Gender Policy Part I

I. Introduction Forces of globalisation are dissolving old boundaries in a network of dialogue, awareness, information and and global trade. Desire for localisation is bringing people back to their geographic, ethnic, religious and cultural roots. The reforms of decentralisation are moving decision-making and access to services closer to local people. Liberalisation is creating one vast global marketplace and democratisation is bringing more people into systems of participatory governance. Protecting human rights is becoming the common sense of humanity. The leadership role of women in all spheres of development including their active participation in the decision-making sphere is becoming more prevalent. This needs a robust Gender Policy of the African Union that would shape gender equality and women's empowerment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

The AU Gender Policy focuses on closing the gender gap in general and in particular tackling gender inequalities which have resulted to feminisation of poverty, and women's disempowerment among other things. The norms and principles of women's empowerment and the values that inform these principles are the bedrock of the modern notion of rights. Development, is about facilitating the meeting of these needs, and calls for a discussion centred on how these norms (rights) enable citizens to meet their needs, which in turn enables them to fulfil their potential. Fostering an enabling environment of a vast scale for women entrepreneurs, providing easily accessible reproductive services for women, putting in place legal measures to protect women and girls and enforcing them, adopting affirmative action policies, providing special quotas for women in decision making and tacking harmful traditional and cultural practices among others demonstrates that there is critical role to be played by everyone in society for gender equality to be realised. It is the result-based and purpose-oriented development process of any democratic policy that would envision secure, stable and sustainable livelihoods for all its citizens, men and women, boys and girls.

While Gender refers to the communally assembled tasks and duties designated to men and women of a socio-entity; as a basic organising principle of communities and polities in their daily interactions the way this affects both sexes is different. In all of their economic development actions, chores and relationships men and women contributions depend greatly on the roles and responsibilities society ascribes to them and this has a differential impact on their development. Indeed, gender concerns refer to conditioned behaviour that vastly diverge among cultures and radically transform itself in time adapting to political, social, economic and cultural stresses and shocks.

This has the effect and impact of opening up avenues for economic empowerment, security from violence and violations, participation and identity, which incorporates self determination and choice; and social capital development and participation in community duties, which allows for artistic expression of various kinds, information and transcendence. To achieve this, a paradigm shift is inevitable. The gender challenges facing the African continent require both a paradigm shift and a systematic approach as envisaged by the African Union Gender Policy and Action Plan. The Policy underpins the requisite need for identifying ways and means to foster women's focused interventions such as the proposed African Women Trust Fund, re-orienting existing institutions to pay special attention to gender equality and women's empowerment and building capacity for democratic governance on demand driven gender needs.

This Policy document constitutes four parts namely Part I which presents the historical background to gender issues in Africa, Part II which presents the policy goals, objectives, principles, values and targets, Part III which presents the gender policy commitments and Part IV which constitutes the Gender Policy Action Plan to implement the policy commitments.

## II. Background

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.

The United Nations through the DAW continued 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. Against this global background and informed by its civil society campaigns and advocacy on women's rights and gender equity, 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 land mark Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted in 1979. Implementation challenges still exist around CEDAW on the continent. 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. Progress must be made through valuable discourses between civil society and governments, reflecting in changing constitutional, legal and social platforms through which more women can exercise voice and accountability in decision-making that affects their well-being.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, women still face discrimination, exclusion, and marginalisation and do not share equally the benefits from production.

Formation of UNIFEM gave institutional recognition to the need for a focused approach to women's empowerment at global and local levels. Many of our African women occupied early influential positions in UNIFEM, many of our academics and activists in the diaspora actively helped UNIFEM and other UN agencies formulate powerful interventions around women's rights. Our contribution to global action has been immense and is reflected in the history of , for example the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO), still very active today.

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 by governments and civil society.

The Fourth World Women Conference on Women, Beijing (1995) was a real watershed conference. Of note on the African continent was the Dakar Preparatory Conference for the Beijing Conference that dynamically stimulated networking and solidarity around women's rights and gender equality. This was carried forward into the work at Beijing, consolidated into solidarity back home on the continent and indeed has led to an intergenerational transfer of knowledge and values in the women and gender movements and institutional formations in Africa today.<sup>ii</sup>

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 Nations (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.

Consultative representation remains an issue for civil society and policy is needed which allows pan-African and regional organisations with expertise and insight to help inform the AU institutional processes.

#### **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 equality for all African men, women, boys and girls.<sup>iii</sup>

#### **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.<sup>iv</sup>

#### **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.<sup>v</sup>

#### **VII. The Member States Level**

70% of 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 unfilled 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.

Member states vary in their involvement and mechanisms for consulting with National Women's movements. Some have barely considered the practice, others go as far as to include NWM's in their official delegations to conferences given problems around ECOSOC conditions for civil society observer and consultative status at official meetings. This should be harmonised by this policy using an examination of best practice for involving National Women's Movements.

ECOSOC provides an opportunity for an evaluation of the essential presence of women, gender and men's groups on gender issues to have voice and presence at the pan African level and regional level. Much valuable contribution is missing from policy and practice experience and knowledge that can better inform our AU processes.

### **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.*

## Africa Union Gender Policy Part II

### AU Gender Policy Commitments

#### 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 (I) 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 later, 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 remarkable contribution of grassroots African women (and men) through for example, their liberation and social movements in different countries and regions of Africa has radically informed UN pan-African and national governance transformations and positive actions around women's status, development and gender equality on the continent for decades. The rich history of struggle for women's rights and gender equity on the continent has enriched global policies and processes around gender and helped to contextualise the global efforts towards gender equality within frameworks most suitable for women in developing countries.

This has contributed to making gender equality a bottom-up process on the continent, infused with its own African identity and values and investing the global movement towards gender equity with the concerns of the majority of women who live in the developing world.

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 all MDG targets with a priority on goals set out in MDG3.

## II. 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 of gender mainstreaming into 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.

## III. 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

- |                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Equal economic independence                                                    | 7. Equal access to ICT infrastructure and Applications, global alliance for IT development and building a sustainable e-future                         |
| 2. Equal participation and access to globalisation opportunities                  | 8. Eradication of all forms of gender based violence                                                                                                   |
| 3. Equal participation in peace and security matters                              | 9. Elimination of high maternal mortality                                                                                                              |
| 4. Equal representation in decision making and good governance and politics       | 10. Elimination of stereotypes and sexism                                                                                                              |
| 5. Equal education, livelihood and decent work opportunities                      | 11. Promotion of gender issues in policies, programmes, budgets and accountability frameworks are underpinning's for AU Organs, RECs and Member states |
| 6. 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.

#### **IV. 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**

This gender policy will be guided by the values and principles stipulated in the AU's Constitutive Act as well as the commitments of its Organs, Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). These include:

1. The promotion of good governance and the rule of law, which guarantees 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. Strict adherence 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 made by the AU;
6. The promotion of regional integration as a vehicle for the advancement of the African continent and its peoples;
7. The application of the principle of subsidiarity to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the policy at all levels.

## Goal of the Policy

The overall goal of this policy is to achieve gender equity and equality as well as women's empowerment in Africa.

## Objectives of the Policy

1. To advocate for the promotion of a gender responsive environment and practices as well as the enforcement of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment commitments made at international, continental and Member states level;
2. To initiate and accelerate gender mainstreaming in institutions, policies, programmes, strategic frameworks and plans, HR and performance management systems, resource allocation and decision making processes at all levels;
3. To promote the development of guidelines and enforcement of standards against sexual and gender-based violence, gender insensitive language and actions in the workplace (this includes the AU Commission and other organs, the RECs and Member States);
4. To develop a Gender Management System (GMS) within the AU and promote its adoption within other AU organs, the RECs and member states;
5. To promote the removal of gender-based barriers to the free movement of persons and goods across borders throughout the continent.
6. To promote access to and control over resources, knowledge, information, land and business ownership, and services such as education and training, healthcare, credit, and legal rights.

## 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 (PHPRRWA) Targets:** Endeavour to 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. **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 operationalise the African Women Trust Fund by Dec. 2009
  - Articles 12. Report annually to the January Assembly
  - Articles 13. Report annually to the January Assembly

## 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

1. An enabling political environment
2. Legislation and Legal Protection Actions against Discrimination for ensuring gender equality
3. Mobilisation of different players for Gender Equality in African
4. Rationalisation and harmonisation of Regional Economic Communities Gender Policies and Programmes; and
5. Resource Mobilisation
6. Gender Mainstreaming Capacity Building
7. Gender Mainstreaming in priority sectors.

#### **Commitment 1:**

The AU Parity Principle represents the most advanced global commitment to equal representation between men and women in decision making. Adopted at the Inaugural Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union held in Durban, South Africa in 2002, its adoption demonstrated the commitment of the newly transformed African Union to address persistent gender inequalities in the continent. Cultivating political will is , therefore, necessary for sustaining an environment that enables the enforcement of the AU 50/50 Gender Parity Principle and the achievement of gender equality in Africa

#### **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 parity targets are met and gender perspectives incorporated within strategic thinking- vision and mission of the AU
- 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 by AU Organs RECs and Members States including 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, *gender experts* are available and utilised. Develop policies that support gender mainstreaming and support capacity building in gender mainstreaming 2015
- Provide political leadership and support for the launching of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) and hosting of the Decade's Secretariate to guide the implement Decade activities outlined in the Road map and mobilize resources for the advancement of Gender equality.

- 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 2:**

Legislation and Legal Framework is key in implementing protocols and instruments adopted by the AU to protect women's rights. 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 be 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, passing, popularizing and enforcing legislation for ensuring the elimination of all forms of gender-based discrimination, abuse and harmful practices;

**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 bases 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)***

- Ensure that Legal Counsel/Departments work very closely with the African Court on Human and Peoples Rights and the Pan African Parliament to review, amend and update current treaties, declarations, protocols and decisions, to ensure they are gender responsive.
- Draft instruments that are gender sensitive and recommend sanctions for non-compliance by 2011
- 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.
- Ensure Member States implement the Treaties, conventions and decisions immediately after ratification.
- Promote early domestication of AU human rights instruments into national legislation once they are ratified by 2011.

### **Commitment 3:**

The implementation of the AU Gender Policy and ten year Action Plan will require a broad spectrum of actors, partners and advocates. Facilitating strategic partnerships among different stakeholders promoting gender equality in Africa including governments civil society, women organizations, development partners, international organizations, other interest groups, the informal sector, the private sector, faith-based groups, etc. to foster dialogue and joint action;

**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 and foster engagement and dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment among Africa's societies and citizens.
2. Strengthen the inputs of civil society in the drafting of instruments proposed for adoption
3. 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***
4. Revitalise, by 2015, the **African Women's Movement**, building on existing experience to deal with old, new and emerging gender issues on the continent.
5. Create regular platforms for civil society engagement, especially among women organisations, for dialogue, consultations and harnessing women's indigenous knowledge to achieve sustainable gender equality.
6. Develop a communication and popularisation strategy to disseminate information on international and AU human rights instruments

#### **Commitment 4:**

The grand debate on the Union government calls for serious investment into the notion of Regional integration. The Constitutive Act of the African Union recognizes Regional Economic Communities as building blocs of the African Union. Without integration, scarce resource will continue to be wasted through duplication of efforts, resources and interventions. Promoting best practice on the continent by facilitating the alignment, harmonisation, and effective implementation of RECs and Member States' gender policies;

**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 and align sub regional and member states gender policies to the AU Gender Policy by 2010, where appropriate.
2. Develop capacity (*using, among others, expertise from the Commonwealth Secretariat*) to establish effective Gender Management Systems (GMS) by 2020
3. Build requisite capacity in member states, civil society and other interest groups for gender mainstreaming and women empowerment.
4. Collaborate with civil society to create forums on gender related thematic issues in the regions.

#### **Commitment 5:**

Mobilising and allocating financial and non-financial resources to implement this policy and the ten year Action Plan is critical and will among others include the establishment of the African Women Trust Fund as one mechanism to ensure the policy implementation as well as the effective mainstreaming of gender in policies, institutions and programmes at regional, national and local levels.

**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 for effective implementation of the gender policy by 2015.

2. Accelerate the implementation of commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment through increased resource allocation by 2015
3. Increase financial allocation for capacity development in gender mainstreaming, policies, strategies and action plans.
4. Develop an inter agency mechanism for ensuring accountability in the use of funds earmarked for promoting gender equality by 2010
5. Strengthen partnerships with international financial agencies/institutions to increase technical expertise and financial support for the implementation of the gender policy .
6. Establish, operationalise and resource the African Women Trust Fund

#### **Commitment 6:**

Gender Mainstreaming is a technical process. It requires indepth analysis, development of gender mainstreaming tools, capacity development of the technical teams, sensitisation, training and awareness creation of benefiting organs, institutions and sectors and skills for monitoring and evaluation as well as reporting. Building capacity for effective gender mainstreaming, through the development of practical tools and training programmes targeting all institutional and strategic stakeholders is crucial

**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 and promotion at key decision making levels if required as an option to bring in qualified women on board
- Ensure clear staff job descriptions with gender responsive 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 opportunities and non-discrimination on the basis of sex, HIV and AIDS status ethnicity, nationality or religion in employment and career progression at the AU, RECs and Member States.
- Promote the implementation of resolution 1325 on zero tolerance to sexual and gender based in the work place including prior recruitment
- Ensure equal treatment of men and women in accessing goods and services and rights including information, personal development opportunities, health and HIV and AIDS services –private, organisational health insurance; including paternity and maternity rights reproductive health and others
- Ensure equal treatment of men and women in delivering goods and services and rights including information, professional and technical skills.

Ensure that organisational and operational systems are sensitive 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 responsive to gender differences

- Ensure that staff performance appraisal for increments and/or promotions are fair, objective.
- Enforce gender responsive grievance procedures, in particular that sexual harassment and abuse will be conducted without discrimination, intimidation stereotyped language or bias.
- Ensure that young professional mothers enjoy their rights (such as the provision of child and baby care/ nursery facilities at the work place, Time off to take child for immunisation, breastfeeding breaks etc)

### Engender Staff Development by 2010

- Make gender training central feature of staff development program, moving beyond awareness to incorporate gender analysis, gender budgeting, 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.

### 3. Engender Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting by 2010

- Establish M&E framework and indicators that yield sex disaggregated data, to facilitate analysis of program / project impacts on women and men.
- Develop a framework and build capacity to include, participatory M&E methodologies
- 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)

### 4. 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 work 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 Mechanisms **for Gender Analysis** and Women's Empowerment in their plans, programming and budgeting.
- Develop and use gender **budgeting guidelines** and ensure its institutionalisation at all levels of AU and its organs;
- Institutionalise regular **gender capacity building make it** a central feature of human resource development strategy.

Ensure Gender Focal points track compliance to gender mainstreaming targets and ensure that reporting mechanisms reflect these targets.

**Commitment 7:**

In order to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in all AU Organs, recS AND member states require the implementation of a well planned gender mainstreaming strategy. The implementation of this gender policy builds on its ten year Action Plan builds on the findings of the AU Gender Audit and the 5 year Strategic Plan as well as Horizon 2004-2007. In order to implement one of the key prerequisites of gender mainstreaming, a multi-sectoral approach is necessary. Promoting a multi-sectoral approach to gender mainstreaming that cuts across AU Organs, RECs and Member States as well as all AU sectors including agriculture, peace and security, education, health, trade and industry, the environment and Infrastructure ICT and Energy is a requirement;

**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:**

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 peace keeping arena, with gender mainstreaming in peace keeping gaining attention globally at the UN and at the Africa Continent level. Given the major role of Africa is playing in peace keeping and particularly the African Union through the Peace and Security Council, Panel of Wise and the Assembly, some progress has been made since the adoption of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Of October 2000 On Women, Peace and Security. African Governments, the international community and civil society including women organisations are the driving force 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. Quick action is required to make gender equality permeate every aspect of peace, security as the continent tries to achieve the MDG targets among other key commitments.

**AU Organs, RECs and Member States will**

- Mainstreaming gender in conflict, peace policies, programs and activities using the UN Resolution 1325 and 1820 frameworks.
- 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 for programmatic interventions in Africa.
- Mobilise and include women leaders in peace mediation and think tank processes, as well as post conflict actions by working with effective networks on the continent
- Work jointly with relevant UN bodies and other AU organs to establish and manage *Truth and Reconciliation Structures* to highlight violations against women and girls in time of conflict and fast-track admission of human rights violations and find lasting solutions including provision of psychosocial support.
- Ensure that Country Assessment and Briefing Notes on conflict situations to ambassadors highlight issues affecting women and children, and that they are mainstreamed in the mandates of humanitarian and peace-keeping missions and interventions
- HARDP will facilitate gender sensitisation and training of peace-keeping troops and civilian humanitarian workers, paying full regard to issues of sexual violence and abuse of women and children

**2. Political Participation and decision making**

Over half of the African population (52%) are women who are still under represented in recorded history, decision making forums including public and private sector top management, the academia,

research, Science and technology, trade negotiations, and in many of the Global, Regional and National that determine the fate of the continent. African women still do not have easy access to political power, social-cultural avenues to decision making processes and are almost outside the formal economy. 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, African women continue to be under-represented in decision-making and political positions. While most governments have signed, ratified and submit regular reports on the implementation of the AU SDGEA and other international commitments including CEDAW which reflect an increasing number of women in the political space and a few in the top Executive, relatively low female representation is still evidenced in Cabinet positions, with exemption of Rwanda (47%) and Cape Verde (60%)\*\*. 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. However the AU has achieved gender parity targets at the Commission level and in one of its organ (ECOSSOC) has not only achieved parity but has ser-passed the parity target by 10% with 60% women in the decision making level. The under-representation of women constitutes under-utilisation of human resources, in addition to being a rights-based issue.

### AU Organs, RECs and Member States will

- Ensure that all good governance processes including electoral systems ,current and future political dispensation instruments adequately and other political structures address gender equality and equity issues.
- The Pan African Parliamentarians Institute will lead debates dialogues and create consultative platforms for accelerating and pushing the parity principle.
- Work with established task 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 strategic partners 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, in order to facilitate speedy access by women in Africa to gender equality and to their human and women's rights
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### 3. Social Affairs (Social, cultural and human development)

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.. The main challenges here include **Reproductive and Sexual Health as articulated in the** ICPD (1994) Conference and the AU Maputo plan of Action, **High maternal mortality** rates, reaching 1 in 12 in most African countries, consequence of deficient healthcare delivery systems., **HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB** which according to latest statistics published by UNAIDS/WHO Africa accounted for 74.2% of all AIDS deaths in the world with women accounted for 57% in Africa, **Malaria**

which a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in tropical Africa, **Tuberculosis** whose linkage with HIV is resurging and becoming a major public health concern in countries previously liberated from the disease, **Employment** which according to ILO reports reflect an increasing number of working women at , 1.2 billion women globally which is falls short of the growth of unemployed women over the same period, and **Labour Migration including international migration, human and drug trafficking** which is both a benefit as well as a challenge requiring urgent, collective, and continental response, **Gender based violence** and sexual violence including rape against women and children in Africa which is on the increase .

#### **AU Organs, RECs and Member States will**

- Promote the implementation 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.
- Promote health rights from a gender perspective, moving from primary care to address the socioeconomic determinants such as nutrition, poverty etc
- Ensure universal access to comprehensive and gender responsive sexual and reproductive health services and policies on sexual and reproductive health and women's total health in Africa.
- Promote sexual rights including women's ability to make informed choices
- Promote a gender responsive rights based approach to HIV and AIDS response
- Ensure gender responsive universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support on the continent
- Develop and implement gender responsive policies and programmes in recognition of care work, including allocation of resources and psychological support particularly to women and orphaned children of both gender
- Promote a culture of emergency preparedness and response;
- Promote increased allocation of resources and research on the gender dimensions of non-communicable diseases such as breast and cervical cancers, prostate cancer, diabetes, and stress related conditions.
- Continue promotion of girl child education, address child labour and adolescent health.
- Set up convenient structures with adequate programmes in order to address issues such as genital mutilation or child miscarriage, promote safe motherhood practices and access to comprehensive care including prevention of parent to child transmission of HIV, total health for women, control of Malaria and TB, occupational health and health of mother and child especially in conflict and emergency situations.
- DSA and WGDD will work with AU organs, RECS and Member States and relevant partners to review all AU strategies, decisions and programs around non communicable and communicable concerns ,to ensure that the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS and malaria are adequately addressed.
- Use the African Regional Strategy (ARNS) 2005-2015 as a model and support Member States to develop and implement comprehensive and effective National Nutrition Plans of Action (NNPA) for addressing the special nutritional needs of women and children and ensure women's involvement in food security policies, programmes and food utilisation decisions
- Promote and support the development of culture as a vehicle to empower women's equal access to and decision-making on national heritage resources and other cultural industries.
- Promote cultural development and identity and institutionalise best practices that strengthen women's dignity and their human rights in all spheres of life in compliance with national educational policies and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other United Nations actions.

- Promote gender responsive dialogue among the AU, RECs, Member states, CSOs and other strategic partners to develop roadmaps on migration, human and drug trafficking.
- Establish and use an expert group to work on gender perspectives of migration as a baseline document for advocacy
- Mobilise resources for technical cooperation and capacity building, to improve and upgrade livelihood skills for vulnerable migrants and facilitate their access to legal services and economic opportunities by 2015
- Develop a continental methodology and tracking tool for the prevention and eradication of violence against women and girls, with view to promoting an integrated approach to combat this scourge.
- Domesticise 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

#### 4. Human Resources, Science and Technology

Gender issues should be part of a package for the development of Human Resources and education and training agenda of the AU. The gender education gap at secondary school level and in tertiary and higher education continues to be a major concern, while parity at primary school level has almost been achieved, the challenge of school drop out by mostly girls is yet to be resolved. 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. While some gaps have narrowed in most countries, significant disparities remain. There is evidence that many countries are taking steps to redress the gap but more effort is required to scale-up progress at the continental level in order to bridge the education gap by 2015. Furthermore, **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.

#### AU Organs, RECs and Member States will

- 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

- WGDD will collaborate with other departments and relevant AU bodies on the validation of indicators pertaining to gender issues prior to the setting up of the Educational Management Systems (EMIS)
- Ensure that gender parity is taken into account at all levels of the education system .
- Mainstream gender issues in educational policies, plans and curricula

## 5. Economic Empowerment of Women

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.

### AU Organs, RECs and Member States will

- Publicise the AU Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa, and similar future instruments.
- Promote a gender sensitive enabling economic environment including economic policies that ensure equitable access to income, resources and social services particularly targeting poor women.
- Develop and use 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 and other good practice model
- Strengthen and operationalise the **Africa Women Trust Fund** as a mechanism for the economic empowerment of women.
- Work on socio economic growth initiatives for women enterprises and establish learning centres for entrepreneurship skill development including the use of Internet services.
- Develop national capacity in collecting and analysing gender disaggregated data in all economic spheres.

## 6. Trade and Industry

The environment under which global trade is taking place poses major gender challenges. Trade and Industry is a key engine to development and while the continent trade and industrialization agenda is still suffering from economic shocks introduced by globalization and liberalization policies, current trade negotiations may further marginalize the ability of the continent to chart a path to sustainable

economic growth and development. The emerging **Economic Partnerships** regimes are concerned with creation of free trade areas (FTA), among other agenda, continue to attract criticisms on their non-reciprocal, discriminating preferential trade agreements and their in compatible with WTO rules. While the EPAs are a key elements of the Cotonou agreement between the EU-ACP countries and expected to be operational in 2008, it is important that the AU Organs, RECs and Member States study thoroughly these agreement, gain deeper insights and fully understanding of what it takes to enter into the EPA's in regional grouping. Moreover, 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 including branding, new market opportunities particularly for women run SMEs and negotiate for specific quotas for women's products to included in these agreements. On Industrialization, efforts to build on existing African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) to propel the continents industrialization agenda should be explored, nurtured and piloted. Furthermore, African Governments need to invest in bottom up research and development using emerging technologies including ICT. The setting up scientific incubators at community level is highly encouraged as it would inspire creativity and lead to new innovations. Furthermore, adoption of new capital-intensive technologies should be discouraged with emphasis on the adoption new labour intensive technologies, which create jobs and produce goods, which can compete effectively at the domestic level with similar imported goods.

### **AU Organs, RECs and Member States will**

- 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 globally negotiated agreements with 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
- Build on existing African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) to propel the continents industrialization agenda through implementing recommendations from research findings on the potential of IKSs and exploiting indigenous knowledge for the continent

- Invest in bottom up research and development approaches using emerging technologies including ICT.
- The setting up scientific incubators at community level and encourage rural men, women and youth participation and inspire creativity and breeding ground for new innovations.
- Advocate for the adoption of new labour intensive technologies, which create jobs and produce goods, which can compete effectively at the domestic level with similar imported goods.

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## 7. Rural Economy, Agriculture and Food Security/Environment

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 negatively 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 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 managers 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 with bear the food bill including the cost inflation as the main decision makers on family food security. Logically they are not in the national budget allocation mechanisms yet women by virtue of their multiple roles as caregivers, mothers and consumers; have special needs. On **Women and Environment**, 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 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 on equal numbers as men. Furthermore, 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.

### AU Organs, RECs and Member States will

- 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
  - 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.

### **Infrastructure, ICT, and Energy**

**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 including provision and planning for of gender and disabled persons friendly physical infrastructure including easy access and usage, provision of feeder roads, sanitary availability and continence and good lighting and illuminated signs for public consumption. Moreover, social infrastructure should be taken care of to ensure there is mechanisms to track failure of physical infrastructure to deliver desired results to the consumers and also track down misuse of facilities, misconduct, abuse and unnecessary control for example at borders to enable women's involvement gainful. Without the necessary social infrastructure, 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. **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 equal. 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. Energy is an impotent component of industrial and household consumption and the provision of to electricity, solar and other forms of energy has to be decentralised to the rural areas. In rural Africa, women are the principal harvesters of firewood for household energy, collectors of water for domestic usage and utilisation of food. Concerted efforts to provide alternative energy sources and to ensure that the availability of water for industrial purposes takes into account household needs would contribute to better health and would also alleviate women's time burden, which is a major gender concern.

### **AU Organs, RECs and Member States will**

- 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

## 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 benchmarks.

### **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.

### **Assumptions**

The successful implementation of this policy is based on a number of assumptions, namely:

1. That AU organs, RECs, Member States and other stakeholders, will take ownership of this policy document and commit to translating it into action;
2. That the various stakeholders have or will acquire the capacity to successfully implement this policy;
3. That resources are or will be made available for the successful implementation of the policy;
4. That this gender policy must pay attention to crosscutting issues such as HIV and AIDS, poverty, conflict, disability etc. that exacerbate gender inequity and inequality.

### **Conclusion**

The AU Gender Policy is a continental policy which advances the principle of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE)) and as an overarching policy encourages 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 enshrining consensus of gender mainstreaming as a process of making equality concerns central to policy formulation, legislation, programming, resource allocations and monitoring and evaluation of programmes, this policy endeavors to add value to on going efforts to achieve gender equality. It subscribes to the 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.

## **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

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<sup>i</sup> For example, 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.

<sup>ii</sup> 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 inequality 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). The Beijing Conference also called for the involvement of men, stressing that gender was not just a women's issue but the responsibility of both men and women. Since the conference, men's campaigning and advocating for gender equity has grown in Africa organisationally and institutionally on the African continent. The diversity of issues they are tackling such as stopping violence and domestic abuse, promoting more committed, responsible and involved fatherhood and seeking to promote more caring and supportive roles for women and children demonstrates the lessons they have learned and continued to learn from the qualified and committed leadership in our African women's movements and many Ministries dealing with women's issues and gender equity. As this 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.

<sup>iii</sup> 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.

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<sup>iv</sup> **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.

<sup>v</sup> 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. At a regional level the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development represents a global first in co-operation between national states in agreeing benchmarks, monitoring and evaluation of progress towards women's rights and gender equity on the continent. This the best regional practice on the continent at the moment and is thus a desirable benchmark for what an AU policy should seek to achieve.