

40TH

GIMAC Pre-Summit CSOs Consultative Meeting

Theme: Educational
Transformation for Gender
Equity and Sustainability

**OUTCOME
DOCUMENT**





@GimacNetwork

Email: info@genderismyagenda.org



Africa will account for more than 90% of global external financing needs for education by 2030.

Preamble

We, the participants at the 40th GIMAC Network Pre-Summit CSOs Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 13-15 February 2024, under the theme ‘Educational Transformation for Gender Equity and Sustainability’ in line with African Union Theme of the Year on ‘Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning,’

CONSIDERING the heightened vulnerability of women and girls in Africa to trans-generational poverty due to various underlying factors including low literacy levels and skills development; underpaid and unpaid care work; harmful cultural practices; insufficient legislations; and limited legal protection against gender-based inequality practices that are deeply ingrained in society.

NOTE WITH CONCERN that The achievement of Aspiration 1 of Agenda 2063 for “A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development” requires that Africa makes significant investments in education with the aim of developing human and social capital through an education and skills revolution emphasizing innovation, science and technology.

ACKNOWLEDGE the Chairperson of the African Union Commission; H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat and the Heads of State and Government of the African Union for designating this year 2024 as the Year of Education. This timely and crucial initiative recognizes the fundamental role that education plays in unlocking the potential of Africa's people and driving sustainable development across the continent.

BUILDING ON THE MOMENTUM generated by the Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (STC-EST4) on 2nd September 2022, and echoing the request of Ministers in their Declaration, the Year of Education tackles the critical challenges highlighted by the 7 UNSG's High Level Panel on the Teaching Profession. It aims to address the burdens and disruptions caused by COVID-19 on education systems while promoting the systematic implementation of transformative education across Africa.

RECOGNIZE that within the Global Education Coordination Mechanism framework the African Union is a primary driver of regional coordination of Continental Education Strategy for Africa CESA and SDG4. Particularly given that Africa will account for more than 90% global external financing needs for education by 2030, to achieve SDGs for education and Africa's Agenda 2063.

HIGHLIGHT that the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981) is intended to promote and protect human rights and basic freedoms on the African continent. It contains a brief right to education provision (Article 17), together with an overarching prohibition on discrimination (Article 2). Article 25 provides for human rights education.

REAFFIRM the establishment of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) aims to eliminate discrimination against women and to ensure the protection of the rights of women as stipulated in international declarations and conventions. Article 12 provides for their right to education and training on the basis of the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunity. It calls for the elimination of all stereotypes and the integration of gender sensitisation at all levels of education

curricula. It refers to their protection against sexual harassment. It also recognises the need for specific positive action including promotion of literacy amongst women.

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE that the AU through the African Youth Charter (2006) Article 13 recognises the right of every young person to education of good quality, including non-formal and informal. Article 20 also provides for gender equality and the use of African languages in teaching.

REAFFIRM the Djibouti Declaration of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Refugee Education is a non-binding legal instrument produced by the IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) which outlines the actions member states have committed to undertake in order to ensure quality education and learning outcomes for refugees, returnees and host communities in the region.

COMMEND the African Union for the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) continental strategy which provides a comprehensive framework for the design and development of national policies and strategies to address the challenges of education and technical and vocational training to support economic development, creation of national wealth and contribute to poverty reduction through youth entrepreneurship, innovation and employment. Further recognize that the strategy includes the accreditation of training structures (informal, non-formal and informal sectors), evaluation and certification, quality assurance, and portability of TVET qualifications.

UNDERScore the positive impact of the various gender responsive normative frameworks of the AU and its predecessor on the lives of African women, if fully domesticated, namely, the Maputo Protocol, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), the Dakar Platform for Action (94), the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: the Role of Women in Africa in the 1990's, and the African Union Gender Policy.

EXPRESS DEEP CONCERN about the structural and institutional barriers that hinder women and girls access to education and skills development opportunities as well as shrinking of space and resources for the effective participation of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Africa's development agenda.

RECEIVE WITH CONCERN the statement from the women of Sudan on the continued devastating situation in their country and its impact on education, reaffirm their call for the cessation of hostilities and the full, equal, meaningful and safe inclusion of women and women's rights organizations in all peace and political processes and call for humanitarian support.

WE REAFFIRM our unwavering support and active involvement in the continued advocacy for women and girl's empowerment in all spheres of society. We believe in leveraging gender equality as a strategic means to achieve our overarching goal.

URGES African leaders to scale up actions for progressive gender inclusion towards sustainable development at the national, regional and continental levels. We therefore make the following recommendations to African Heads of State and Government:

1. Ensure 20% budget allocation for education or a minimum of 6% of GDP, as per the EFA Dakar Framework and Education 2030 Framework. Through gender-responsive budgeting and monitoring at various levels address gender disparities and promote equity through gender-transformative initiatives such as infrastructure development, teacher training, and fair remuneration to ensure decent working conditions for educators.
2. Guarantee the universal right to free, quality education for all learners, without delegating this responsibility to the private sector. Exercise regulatory control over all education entities, ensure accountability for delivering gender-transformative and high-quality services. This responsibility includes measures to ensure retention, implement back-to-school programs for pregnant and parenting adolescents, and eradicate child marriage.



Invest in digital education for all demographics, ensuring inclusivity and implement digital education programs.

3. In alignment with the African Union Agenda 2063, Continental Education Strategy for Africa (2016 - 2025), and the 2018 Nairobi Declaration by the African Union Ministers of Education, promptly implement these strategies by bolstering sustainable, gender-responsive domestic financing for education, leveraging fair and progressive taxation, and discontinuing austerity measures. Additionally, there is need to address the debt crisis and advocate for reform within the global debt architecture
4. Invest in digital education for all demographics, ensuring inclusivity and implement digital education programs. In addition, policies should optimize digitalization benefits, particularly for women and girls, with measures to enhance STEM participation and integrate gender-transformative pedagogy in education.
5. Recognizing cultural barriers hindering girls' access to education, take decisive action to eradicate pervasive gender-based violence and inequalities by promoting positive masculinity in alignment with commitments to the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls in Africa.
6. Promote peace education and conflict prevention and resolution at all levels of education and for all age groups. Recognizing that the youth represent 75% of the African population, and in accordance with the Continental Framework for Youth, Peace, and Security, as well as the African Union Agenda 2063 ensure equal representation of young people in the AU and its governance processes. Currently, at 15%, this representation must be increased to ensure their perspectives are fully reflected in decision-making.



Recognizing the vital connection between food security, education, and sustainable development, prioritise education on nutrition and sustainable farming for women farmers;

7. Ensure gender-responsive education access, offer comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education with free sanitary products and necessary infrastructure in schools, particularly in insecure areas. Education facilities must meet inclusivity standards, providing accommodations for marginalized groups such as people with disabilities.
8. Recognizing the widespread and enduring conflicts across Africa, increase investment in peace education and the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda; prioritise the maintenance of safe and accessible schools during conflict and in peace times.
9. Considering lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and existing challenges, establish minimum standards for education during emergencies. Recognizing the vital connection between food security, education, and sustainable development, prioritise education on nutrition and sustainable farming for women farmers; provide food for learners, especially in primary schools, ensure governance of education consider children's intersecting needs and rights.
10. In solidarity with representatives of civil society and women's organizations from Haiti we acknowledge the need for international support in addressing the challenges facing the country including governance and security, peace-building efforts, economic opportunities, sustainable development initiatives as well as humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Haitian people. We call on the African Union to leverage its diplomatic channels to raise awareness about the situation in Haiti, support initiatives to ensure good governance and call for increased international support and solidarity from the global community.

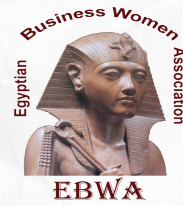
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