DRAFT TWO

African Union Gender Strategy

(2018-2027)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACHPR	Africa Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUWC	African Union Women's Committee
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GMS	Gender Management System
GPDD	Gender Policy and Development Division
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non- governmental Organisations
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STC	Special Technical Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VISION	An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially its Women and Youth, and caring for children (Aspiration 6, Agenda 2063)					
GOAL-	Full Gender Equality in all spheres of life (Goal 17, Agenda 2063).					
STRATEGIC PILLARS	1)Economic empowerment & Sustainable Development	2) Social justice	3) Women's rights	4) Leadership and governance	5) Women, Peace and security	6) Media, Communication, Sports
AGENDA 2063 ALIGNMENT	Aspiration 1 & 2 – Prosperity and Unity		Aspiration 3 – Democracy, Governance, Human Rights		Aspiration 4 – Peace and Security	Aspiration 5 & 7- Culture, Identity, Ethics, Global Player.

The African Union (AU) Gender Strategy provides a vision for the continent through to its centenary, and proposes specific actions for the remaining five years of the first Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063. Framed around the seven aspirations of the continent's bold agenda, the central focus of the strategy is that *gender equality can and must be achieved during this period!* Key definitions and approaches are found at *Annex B.*

The **mapping of normative frameworks for gender equality** (Annex C) and regional frameworks (Annex D) that accompanies this strategy shows that the AU's Agenda 2063 and all the African, global and regional instruments that governments have committed to make a powerful case for change. The strength of the strategy is *bringing together all the existing commitments and aligning them to Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Agenda 2030.* The strategy envisions a continent in which women and girls, boys and men have equal **voice, choice** and **control** over their lives. Key **priorities** include:

- A conceptual shift from the **practical** to the **strategic** needs of women; a **Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Women's Rights framework.**
- Ending child marriages, gender violence and harmful traditional practices.
- Eradicating preventable maternal mortality, HIV and AIDS and ensuring affordable, accessible, youth friendly SRHR services.
- Ensuring women's equal access to productive resources, including mining, land, credit, and ICTs, and training in STEM subjects.
- Guaranteeing equal pay for work of equal value; recognising and rewarding the unpaid work of women.
- Enhancing women's effective participation in and through public institutions, the media and new media.
- Engaging men and boys and the youth in the struggle for gender equality.
- Building strong Gender Management Systems including Gender Responsive Budgeting at all levels.

These priorities were identified at nine consultative workshops and a vibrant online discussion with (see schedule of meetings at *Annex G*). The strategy should be read together with the **Results Framework** that sets out the agreed gender targets and indicators of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, as well as the **Operational plan,** that identifies actions to be taken at continental, regional and national level. It is also accompanied by a **Capacity Needs Assessment and Communications Strategy** for ensuring that gender is reflected in and through Agenda 2063.

PART I: OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The AU recognises gender equality as a fundamental human right and an integral part of regional integration, economic growth and social development. The AU is therefore committed to removing all forms of gender inequalities at the regional and national levels through a series of policies, goals and actions derived from legally binding international, continental and regional instruments. The ultimate goal of the African Union is to be a peaceful, prosperous and integrated continent[1].

The analysis of the socio-cultural, political and economic situation of the continent shows that gender inequities still persist in every sphere. Women and girls face challenges in accessing legal rights, education, health and economic resources, amongst others. Despite efforts that have been made by Member States to improve their situation, several specific technical, socio-cultural and economic constraints account for this state of affairs. There have been improvements in national gender policies, structures, guidelines, action plans and programmes addressing gender inequities, raising awareness on gender equality, gender analysis, and mainstreaming at both national and regional levels. Despite these efforts, implementation falls far short of the stated commitments.

The adoption of the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calls for accelerated efforts to close the gender equality gap in light of persistent emerging threats such as climate change, appalling levels of poverty, HIV and AIDS, gender based violence and trafficking in persons.

Article 2 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights enshrines the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status. Articles 60 and 61 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights recognise regional and international human rights instruments and African practices consistent with international norms on human and peoples' rights as being important reference points.

Aspiration six of Agenda 2063 calls for:

- Including women in decision-making regardless of gender, political affiliation, religion, ethnic affiliation, locality, age or other factors.
- Fully empowering women in all spheres, with equal social, political and economic rights, including the rights to own and inherit property, sign contracts, register and manage businesses.
- Enabling rural women to have access to productive assets: land, credit, inputs and financial services.
- Eliminating gender-based violence and discrimination (social, economic, political) against women and girls.
- Attaining full gender parity, with women occupying at least 50% of elected public offices at all levels and half of managerial positions in the public and the private sectors.

[1] African Union website https://au.int/en

Objectives

The Gender Strategy seeks to:

- Affirm the African Union's continued commitment to advancing gender equality in the Continent.
- Align gender mainstreaming in the African Union with African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals
- Harmonise gender-related policies; initiate gender-mainstreaming strategies within the Commission and for AU organs and Member States.
- Define a hierarchy of priority of gender interventions by thematic areas and regional focus.
- Prepare gender-sensitive development response strategies through the AU Directorate of Women, Gender and Development (WGDD) and allocate resources for their implementation.
- Develop and review monitoring and evaluation tools for tracking progress towards gender equality within the Commission, Regional Economic Commission (RECs) and at Member State level.
- Improve communications and branding of AU gender mainstreaming efforts.

WHY A NEW GENDER STRATEGY – THE THREE "T"S

The Time is right to revisit the rationale which underscores the AU current policy (2009) and practice on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) within the AU. The 2009 Gender Policy is being evaluated. The new strategy takes account of key developments in Africa and globally. In September 2015 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including a stand-alone goal on gender equality (Goal 5). The SDGs built on their predecessor Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by expanding a human rights-based development framework under the theme "leave no one behind". The African Union (AU) reached its mid-term milestone of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) in 2015. In 2013, during its 50th anniversary celebrations, the AU adopted Agenda 2063, a roadmap for the next fifty years. Aspiration six provides for development that is people-driven, and goal 17 sets out the bold vision of gender equality in all spheres.

> **Strategic focus**: While priorities abound, a stronger focus needs to be placed on investing into actions that have a greater potential of yielding results within the desired timelines and present the clear opportunities for collaboration, innovation and transformation. – *Gender Strategy Concept Note*

Gender is integral to all the seven aspirations and twenty goals, even where these are gender neutral in their formulation. An important objective of the AU Gender Strategy is to ensure that gender aspects of Agenda 2063 are articulated, monitored, evaluated and resourced. Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 have advanced targets for development objectives in general, and for GEWE in particular, building on successes attained under the MDGs. Also, their results frameworks are bolder, more focused, yet inclusive and action driven. The narrative for GEWE is therefore rapidly changing.

TABLE ONE: KEY DATES AND MILESTONES

2009	2010	2013	2015	2020	2023	2030	2063
AU adopts a gender policy	**African Women's Decade commences**	**50th Anniversary of the AU**	**SDGs adopted**	**End of the African women's decade**	**First ten years Agenda 2063**	**Deadline SDGs**	**100 years AU**
		Africa Agenda 2063					
	African Women's Decade						
			Sustainable Development Goals				

Traction is needed to move from commitments to action witnessed by those most affected by inequalities. The AU is endowed with some of the most progressive legal and policy frameworks in the world. The mapping exercise showed that and governments have made over one hundred commitmens to attaining gender equality through regional, African and global commitments. But there is still a big gap between the rhetoric and the reality. While issues at hand are often very complex, a few simple steps can help catalyze greater motion. They include providing a strategic direction, focusing on a narrow set of actions, coordinating responses, addressing systems and not symptoms, leveraging off comparative advantages, the media, new media and allocating adequate and timely resources. Traction also means showing greater tolerance towards risks, accepting and learning from risks, celebrating gains, pushing the bar continuously higher and devising a mix of planning and implementation cycles. It also requires incentivizing synergies and action at regional and national levels and thereby ensuring that the voices, priorities and realities at that level are accounted for in any policy-making process is an essential step to accelerating the pace of implementation.

Transformation: Africa is ready for change and one that will relegate poverty and exclusion to history. At the 2015 AU Summit in Johannesburg, women from grassroots organizations demanded that the continent *"Retires the Hoe to the Museum".* Women are asking for solutions which not only increase their productivity but create wealth and enable them engage more actively in citizenry. Agenda 2063 is designed to respond to such calls for action. It has set ambitious targets and defined innovative strategies to support this vision, including 10 Fast Track projects to maximize the benefits of development, remove major hurdles to integration and endow the continent with essential support infrastructure. At the same time, Africa's population landscape is rapidly changing. The youth population is the largest in the world and set to double by 2040. There is also growing pressure from the realities on an ageing population and lifestyle induced diseases. These pressures and realities require that the GEWE is broadened and speaks to the needs of a multi-faceted landscape.

Table two summarises the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of this process. It reflects the creative tension between the time pressures for producing this strategy and the urgent need for implementation; the need for transformative agendas while making sure that no one if left behind; the participative processes and balancing competing demands.

TABLE TWO: SWOT OF THE GENDER STRATEGY PROCESS

	WEAKNESSES	THREATS	OPPORTUNITIES
TIMING			
Evaluation of 2009 Policy; Agenda 2030; African Women's Decade.	Policy not well known; insufficient time to engage with the two processes.	Policy and strategy become conflated.	Mid-Term Review; next five years of the first ten year plan.
TRACTION			
Strong political will.	Weak and under resourced gender management systems	Failure to implement existing instruments.	Global commitment to leaving "no one behind" provides a light house for all efforts.
Strategy anchored in other international, continental normative frameworks.	Multiple reporting demands on member states.	Failure to synergise and prioritise.	
Harmonizing of all existing frameworks; alignment to Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.	Limited resources within the AU to deliver their mandate.	Multitude of continental and global timelines may cause confusion.	The strategy allows for domestication at the national level, including clear indicators, reporting timelines and it is pushing for accountability by non-state actors
Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) strategically located.	Limited resources within the AU to deliver their mandate.	Multitude of continental and global timelines may cause confusion.	Harmonisation within the framework of Agenda 2063.
Specific funds - eg AU Fund for African Women, World Bank Gender Facility.	These funds are catalytic; main funding needs to come from Gender Responsive Budgeting.	Short term focus on women-specific funding rather than reprioritisation of budgets	Rethinking resource allocations for the attainment of gender equality.
TRANSFORMATION			
Buy in and participation by different stakeholders including faith based organisation and Women's Rights groups.	Despite aligning to the SDGs, the strategy may not be fully inclusive of all marginalised groups.	Political instability may weaken the strategy as a priority. Conflicting traditional values will threaten implementation.	Momentum to capture economic opportunities for women in male dominated sectors e.g. mining.
The demographic dividend offers an exciting opportunity to harness the energy of young women and men.	Capacity to harness this energy.	Insufficient inter-generational dialogue	Vibrant involvement by civil society and Women's Rights Organisations.

FIGURE ONE: THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE AU GENDER STRATEGY

CONTRIBUTE TO IMPACT

Aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African people; especially its women and youth, and caring for children.

GOAL 17: FULL GENDER EQUALITY IN ALL SPHERES OF LIFE.

KEY OUTCOMES

Aspiration 1
A Prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.
Aspiration 2: An Integrated Continent politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of African Renaissance

Aspiration 3
An Africa of Good Governance, Democracy, Respect for Human Rights, Justice and the Rule of Law

Aspiration 4
A peaceful and secure Africa

Aspiration 5
Africa with a Strong Cultural Identity, Common Heritage, Values and Ethics
Aspiration 7
Africa as a Strong, United, Resilient and Influential Global Player and Partner.

Economic and environmental justice achieved.	Equality in education and health; end to maternal mortality	Gender justice achieved; all harmful practices including GBV ended.	Equal participation in leadership; gender responsive institutions	WPS at the forefront of silencing the guns.	Gender equality in and through the media, communications and sport.

STRATEGIES

- Conduct bold and innovative campaigns and continuous dialogues to transform social norms.
- Remove the contradiction between statutory provisions and practices that undermine these.
- Enforce existing commitments to gender equality.
- Shift from practical to systemic solutions.
- Mobilise citizens; enhance political and social accountability.
- Adopt and advocate for temporary special measures
- Build strong gender management systems, partnerships and movements.
- Document and share what works; share innovation; affirm good practise.

APPROACHES

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – Women's Rights Framework GEWE-WR

Integrating Gender Analysis & Social Inclusion, Gender Responsive Budgeting **Targeting** women and girls and or men and boys

KEY ISSUES

Economic justice & SD

Social justice

Women's Rights

Leadership & Governance

Women, Peace and Security:

Media, Communication & Sport:

ROOT CAUSES

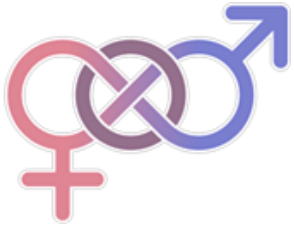
Weak implementation of progressive normative frameworks

Patriarchal norms, attitudes, mind sets, behaviour

"In order to break the cycle of poverty, hunger and exclusion, several priority and foundational areas of human development need to be finished. They include women's sexual and reproductive health, jobs, education, food security and nutrition. Africa and the world have committed to leaving "no one behind and achieving zero hunger" between 2030 and 2063. These unresolved issues must therefore be brought to closure to deflect risks of reversing the gains and harnessing the demographic dividends."- *Gender Strategy Concept Paper.*

The AU Gender Strategy Theory of Change (ToC) identifies root causes and how these are manifest (key issues). The main focus is on **how** to bring about change: what **guiding principles** can be drawn from the normative frameworks; what **approache**s have been tried and how these can be honed in the coming period; as well as cross cutting strategies for the **bold** change required in the coming period. The ToC also identifies the comparative advantages of the African Union and how these can be leveraged in the process.

Root causes



Social norms: Across the globe, patriarchal social norms (values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and practices) condone and perpetuate unequal power relations between women and men; undermining women's economic, social, legal and political rights; denying them **voice, choice and control** over their bodies; lives and livelihoods. Reinforced in formal and informal ways, gender inequality begins in the home; is perpetuated by the family; schools; work place; community, custom, culture, religion and tradition as well structures within society more broadly–the media, new media, popular culture, advertising, laws, law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and others. While society generally identifies other forms of inequality, gender inequality is so *normalised* that it often goes unnoticed, including by women who have been socialised to accept their inferior status. Gender inequality follows the *life cycle* of most women from cradle to grave. Despite changes in laws and Constitutions, many women remain minors all their lives – under their fathers, husbands, even sons, and as widows subject to male relatives. Gender inequality is a violation of human rights that for the most part goes unnoticed because it is so normalised.

In most African societies **men** enjoy the benefits of male privilege but they also share with women experiences of disenfranchisement, indignity and subordination as a result of diverse and persistent political, social and economic oppressions. Gender analysis of African masculinities exposes the myth of a singular African masculinity. Africa's colonial past, patriarchal cultural structures and a variety of religious and knowledge systems has created **masculine** identities that may seem strong but can also be limiting for men. In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD, Cairo) affirmed the importance of involving men in improving sexual and reproductive health, and emphasised the need to increase men's involvement in the care of children. The 48th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2004 recognised that men and boys can and do make contributions to achieve gender equality. Dismantling patriarchy is no longer seen by all men as a win-lose proposition. They look to the history and experience of the feminist and women's movement to inspire them in their own struggles.[2]

[2] GL Policy brief on Masculinities, Gender Links, 2013.

Weak implementation: There is now widespread African and global consensus that gender inequality is a violation of human rights, undermines development and progress. Table three summarises the key African, global and Regional Economic Commission (REC) normative frameworks mapped against Agenda 2063 and the Agenda 2030 (see *Annex B*).

Table Three: Key normative frameworks for achieving Gender Equality

African	Global	Regional Economic Commissions
Agenda 2063	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	East African Community (EAC) Equity Bill 2015; Gender Policy[3]
AU Gender Policy 2009	Framework Convention on Climate Change CP 21	Southern African Development Community (SADC) - SADC Gender Protocol
Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol)	UNSCR 1325 and subsequent Women in Peace and Security related resolutions	The ECOWAS Gender Policy. The Supplementary Act on Equality of Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS Region.[4]
The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa	Beijing Platform for Action and Beijing Plus Twenty	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Gender Strategy
	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW	IGAD Gender Strategy and Implementation Plan 2016-2020

These frameworks set international and regional norms and standards that countries have committed to and continue to progressively integrate into their domestic policies, legislation and programmes. They have also inspired the development of ground-breaking sub-regional instruments promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and should be cross referenced with other Declarations and instruments developed to facilitate regional integration. Even after the consolidation of all these provisions, Annex B shows over 120 commitments to achieving gender equality in all walks of life. A key cross cutting issue is **implementation:** the *rhetoric is not matched by the reality*, with the result that *the gains made on equality of opportunity are not translating to equality of outcome.*

Key pillars

The key issues paper that accompanies this strategy maps **performance** against African regional and global **provisions**. Key gaps, that inform the choice of strategic pillars, may be summarised as:

- ***Economic empowerment and sustainable development:*** Women in Africa remain the majority of the poor, the dispossessed, the landless, the unemployed, those working in the informal sector, and those shouldering the burden of care, especially where war, hunger and disease have weakened state capacity and responses. Women own less than 10% of the land, eek minimal earnings from cross border trade and still struggle to access credit as well as other support to run

[3] In progress and to be completed by December 2015.

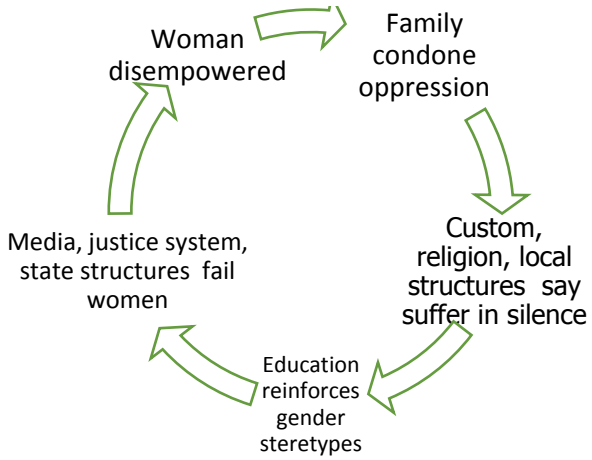
[4] Article 63 of the Revised Treaty is the specific provision on Women and Development, although there are other articles that deal with gender/women, particularly articles 3, 61, 64 and 82.

businesses. Women are key managers of the environment; bear the brunt of natural disasters and climate change yet are not meaningfully engaged in climate justice initiatives.

- ***Social justice:*** While there have been tremendous strides in achieving gender parity in primary and even secondary schools, teenage pregnancies, early child marriages, gender stereotypes in curriculum and career guidance limit the prospects of the girl child. Women lack access to quality health and SRHR services; water, sanitation and housing.
- ***Women's rights:*** Although many constitutions have been reviewed and laws amended to embrace gender equality over the last few decades, the daily lives of the majority of women (especially in the rural areas) are governed by customary laws, traditions and practices that often contradict these statutory provisions. Harmful practices undermine the bodily integrity, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of women. Gender violence, the most glaring indicator of inequality, remains unacceptably high. It is both a cause and consequence of the high levels of HIV and AIDS that has a disproportionate effect on women, especially young women who constitute the majority of those infected and affected by the deadly virus.
- ***Leadership & Governance:*** Women constitute less than 5% of CEOs in Africa. At 24% women in parliament, Africa mirrors the global average, but these figures vary widely, with over half the countries on the continent having less than 10% women in parliament. The situation is often even worse at the local level. Africa presently has only two women heads of state. Weak and under resourced gender structures at local, national, regional and global level, in government and civil society struggle to drive the change agenda.
- ***Media, Communication and Sports:*** The momentum for change is constantly undermined by patriarchal attitudes and mind sets, often reinforced by the mainstream and new media, popular culture and sports. Women are excluded on many fronts in these key visibility, agenda setting institutions. New media is a double edge sword: a tool for mobilising but also spawning new forms of GBV such as cyber stalking, bullying and trafficking.

How change comes about

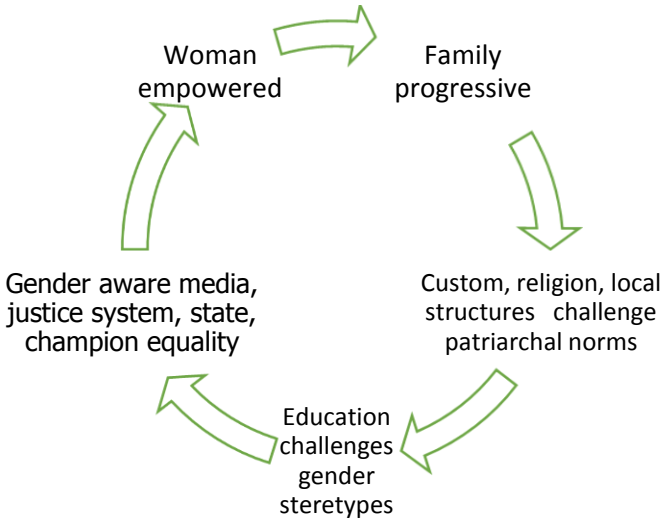
Vicious negative cycle of inequality



The ecological model often used in gender analysis illustrates the *vicious negative cycle* that reinforces gender inequality. For example, a woman who speaks out against violence she is experiencing in the home is often told by close family (including female relatives) to go back into the abusive relationship and make it work. The community, including religious and traditional authorities, at best turn a blind eye, at worst condone this violence within the private sphere. State structures and processes (such as the police and criminal justice system) fail women. Instead of becoming the "voice of the voiceless", the media denies survivors of violence their own voice, reporting their experiences through biased court reporting; often sensationalising and trivialising their experience.

Each one of these layers can equally become a *virtuous positive cycle* challenging these deeply entrenched values, attitudes, systems and norms. Unlike sex, a biological given, gender is a *social construct* that can be deconstructed. The media may be a part of the problem, or it can be part of the solution. State policies, laws and structures can be transformed to champion gender equality. Communities can be mobilised to reject negative practices, attitudes and tendencies. Women and girls can be mobilised to claim their rights. The growing men-for-change movement is testimony to the fact that boys and men can challenge social norms – hence the slogan, *"men of quality believe in equality."* The mapping of normative frameworks raises ten key principles for gender transformation.

Virtuous positive cycle of equality



Principles - Voice, Choice and Control[5]

1. **Women's rights are human rights:** Women's rights are integral to the human rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights of Constitutions and the rights-based approach to development.
2. **The right to bodily integrity and security of person:** Women are entitled to bodily, emotional and psychological integrity; to making decisions over their own bodies, including their sexual and reproductive rights.
3. **Customary, cultural and religious practices are subject to the right to equality:** Religious and cultural rights that contradict, undermine or have a negative effect on the attainment of gender equality must be outlawed and eliminated.
4. **Women's equal participation in decision-making** in the private and public spheres is vital to the realisation of their rights.
5. **Economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite to attainment of gender equality.** Women's ability to exercise voice and strategic forms of control over their lives is linked to being able to generate regular and independent sources of income.
6. **Structural discrimination**: Efforts to promote women's empowerment need to do more than give individual women economic or political opportunities. They need to tackle deeper-rooted structural constraints that perpetuate inequalities.
7. **Affirmative action or positive discrimination**, enshrined in the Constitutions of many countries, is a legitimate short- term strategy for redressing gender imbalances that should not result in tokenism or complacency.
8. **Women are not homogeneous**: Women differ according to such factors as race, disability, class, culture, religion, and geographic location. These differences need to be taken into account in designing programmes to promote gender equality.
9. **Movement building,** of the women's and men's sectors, is vital for achieving gender equality.
10. **Debate and media, changing attitudes and values:** Fostering public engagement and debate is essential to making policies that work for women's empowerment and gender equality. The media and popular culture have a vital role to play in this.

[5] Synethsised from the mapping of normative frameworks at Annex B.

Approaches – the GEWE-WR Framework

Strategies to advance gender equality, women and girls rights have gone through many iterations, from the Women in Development (WID), to the Gender & Development and current Women & Girls (W&G), Boys & Men (B&M) approaches (see *Annex D).*

Broadly these approaches fall into two categories: **Integrating** is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies of programmes; and integrating this into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. **Targeted** – or agenda-setting - strategies, on the other hand, can be defined as "strategic targeted initiatives or programme components to promote particular aspects of women's rights or address specific gender gaps."[6]

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment –Women's Rights (GEWE-WR)		
Gender equality	Women's empowerment	Women's right
Integrated	Targeted	

Through this strategy, and in line with its rights-based approach, the AU is expanding its original Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment framework to include Women's Rights (GEWE-WR). While gender will be integrated into all areas of work, the AU will also target women and girls through its work on women's empowerment and women's rights.

Gender equality: Agenda 2063 envisions a world in which full gender equality is achieved in all spheres of life. In practical terms, this means that men and women, boys and girls are equal in all respects including health, education, nutrition, access to economic assets and resources, political opportunities and freedom from coercion and violence. This is contingent on ending discrimination against women[7] and ensuring women access their basic human rights. Mobilising the **support of men and boys** is crucial for wider societal changes such as challenging discriminatory laws and practices.

Women's empowerment: Achieving gender equality goes hand in hand with advancing women's empowerment: the ability of a woman to control her own life. It encompasses the dimensions of social, economic and political empowerment. Interventions need to tackle the continuum of inequality in both the private and public spheres through both formal and informal mechanisms.

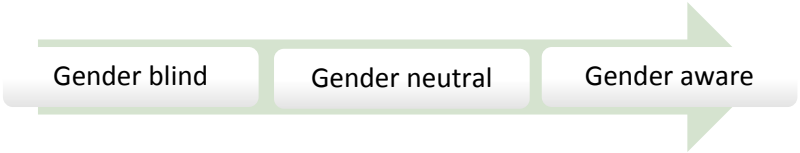
Women's rights: The empowerment of women and the realisation of gender equality is contingent on the full realisation of women's human rights. Where women and men have unequal power, women's rights

[6] a, N and Ahluwalia, L, [unpublished], Untangling Gender Mainstreaming: how to positively change organisations, p6.

[7] Defined in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as, "any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms on the basis of equality with men." (Article 1).

need to be specifically recognised and fought for. Africa has a strong women's rights agenda in the Maputo Protocol (see *Annex E).* The AU applies a rights based approach to development and the Maputo protocol guarantees women's rights in all key areas. UN resolutions and treaties address the needs of women affected by conflict and violence. It is an imperative to further compliance with these instruments to help women enjoy their basic rights and fulfil their potential.

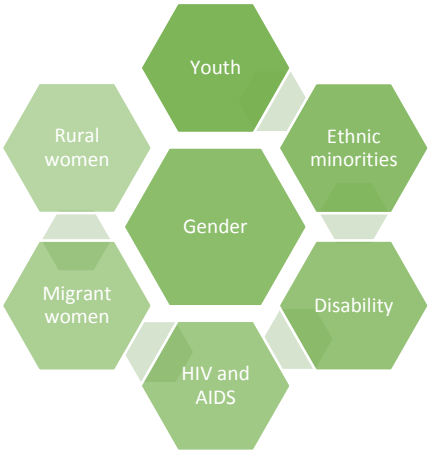
Making gender visible



A key motivation for this strategy is the need to make gender visible in all areas of endeavour. **Gender blind** policies, laws and strategies ignore the systemic formal and informal factors that perpetuate gender inequalities. **Gender neutra**l policies, laws and strategies assume that "people" refer to all people - women and men, boys and girls. This is a reasonable assumption, but in reality could lead to a perpetuation of the status quo in the absence of deliberate measures to ensure the views and needs of women, men, boys and girls are incorporated into planning. All of the aspirations of Agenda 2063, except for Goal 17, are gender neutral. By highlighting the gender dimensions of all 20 goals, this strategy aims to ensure that gender is given visibility in all the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063 (see *Annex B).*

Intersectionality

Intersectional theories show how many individuals experience multiple forms of oppression, as illustrated in the diagram. Gender is however, the common denominator in all cross cutting issues. In the spirit of the SDG "leave no one behind", it is important to acknowledge that women and men are not homogenous; that there is need in the strategy to disaggregate using a variety of variables and highlight certain target groups.



Specific target groups

Youth: The 28th African Union Summit declared *"Harnessing the Demographic Dividend Through Investments in the Youth"* as its theme. The demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older). Countries with the greatest demographic opportunity for development are those entering a period in which the working-age population has good health, quality education, decent employment and a lower proportion of young dependents. The AU recognises that without a special focus on the girl child, the demographic dividend will not be realised.[8]

[8] Source: http://www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend, accessed July 2017.

Rural women: Rural women play a key role in supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being. They contribute to agriculture and rural enterprises and fuel local and global economies. Yet, every day, rural women lack access to productive resources (land, credit, agricultural extension services), education and health. Their rights are often undermined by customary practices that go unchecked by formal structures.[9]

Disabled women: A Baseline survey found that women & girls with disabilities experience various abuses & violations and many other cases that go unreported. Among reasons cited are that People with Disabilities (PWDs) do not know where to report Exploitation, Violations & Abuses (EVA).[10]

Migrant women: Of the 150 million migrants in the world, one third are Africans; 50% of the internally displaced persons and 28% of the worlds refugees are in Africa. Recent years have witnessed a feminization of migration, with women forced to leave their homes due to conflict or economic circumstances. Trafficking of women and girls within and out of Africa, often under the guise of domestic work opportunities, is on the rise. These women and girls are especially vulnerable to the abuse of their rights with little legal protection.[11]

Cross cutting strategies

The section that follows sets out detailed sector strategies and priority actions. Key cross cutting strategies identified in the Theory of Change include:

- ***Undertake bold and innovative campaigns and continuous dialogues to transform social norms.*** Given that patriarchy is at the heart of gender inequality, a key focus in the coming period should be changing social norms.
- ***Remove the contradiction between statutory provisions and practices that undermine these:*** The dual legal system in most countries result in rights being given with one hand, and taken away with another.
- ***Enforce existing commitments to gender equality.*** In this era of moving from commitments to action, enforcement mechanisms should be invoked.
- ***Shift from practical to systemic solutions:*** Like the hoe, the WID approach needs in the coming period to go to the museum. Short term emergency solutions must have the long term goal of burying gender inequality for good.
- ***Mobilise citizens; enhance political and social accountability.*** Citizen mobilisation is at the heart of Agenda 2063. Women in the diaspora, consulted in this strategy, are an integral part of this strategy.
- ***Adopt and advocate for temporary special measures to level the playing field in social, political and economic spheres.*** Overwhelming evidence on women's political participation shows that this is the only way to change the status quo. Such efforts now need to move into other spheres, such as economic and social.
- ***Build strong gender management systems, partnerships and movements:*** Institutions require political will, human and financial resources to be gender responsive drivers of change.
- ***Document and share what works; find new and innovative ways of measuring success and affirming good practise.*** Invest in evidence- based research to ground decisions on how these services/programmes should look if they are to meet the practical and strategic needs of women, youth and vulnerable groups.

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[9] UNWomen Women Watch fact sheet http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/ruralwomen/facts-figures.html accessed October 2017.

[10] Study by Disabled Women in Africa, 2014. http://www.diwa.ws/?p=101 accessed October 2017.

[11] http://www.fasngo.org/assets/files/publicatons/Factsheets

PART II: STRATEGIC PILLARS

VISION: An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially its Women and Youth, and caring for children (Aspiration 6, Agenda 2063)

GOAL: Full Gender Equality in all spheres of life (Goal 17, Agenda 2063).

PILLAR ONE: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The narrative for GEWE is rapidly changing. Recent research shows that "gender is smart business". A 2015 McKinsey report found that by narrowing the gender gap, sub-Saharan Africa has the opportunity to add 12%, or an estimated $300 billion, to annual GDP by 2025.[12] The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports that closing the gender gap in agriculture can increase yields by 20-30%, raise agricultural output by 2.5% to 4% and reduce the number of hungry people by 12%-17%.[13] For women to be economically empowered, and contribute to sustainable development, they must have equal **control** over productive resources.

Key issues

Macroeconomic policy and environment: After years as the world's fastest growing continent, Africa registered its worst economic slowdown in almost two decades: growth declined from 3.7% in 2015 to 1.7% in 2016 (ECA, 2017). In most countries, ***poverty is on the rise and increasingly has a feminine face.*** Women aged 20-59 years are more likely than men to live in poor households in 31 of the 37 sub-Saharan African countries with data.[14] Only 55% of households are within 15 minute reach of a water source. Women take on 62% and girls 9% of the burden of water collection.[15] Women's and girls' carry an unequal share of ***Unpaid Care and Domestic work (UCDW);*** this poses a serious constraint to their empowerment.[16]

The African Development Bank (AfDB) estimates that ***Illicit Financial Flows*** (IFF) have drained in excess of one trillion dollars from Africa since 1980; 5.5% of the GDP; exceeding Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Official Development Assistance (ODA). The AU estimates that 25% of GDP of African countries is lost to corruption every year.[17] This affects tax revenue and has a direct impact on the provision of social services, care services and social protection.[18] Institutionalised corruption continues to contribute to IFFs. Corrupt police often harass women in the informal sector[19].

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[12] AU Gender Policy Concept note, p1.

[13] State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011 http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e00.htm

[14] UNWOMEN (2016-2016) Progress of the World's Women: Transforming Economies, Realising Rights.

[15] African Economic Outlook (2015)

[16] Our Voices, Perspectives and Experiences, Unpaid Care and Domestic Work. Oxfam, October 2017.

[17] Africa Union

[18] SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, 2017

[19] "What are the Gender Dimensions of IFFs? Strengthening African Women's Engagement and Contribution", FEMNET' (2017).

Productive resources: Nearly all AU member states have policies and legislation banning discrimination based on sex as well as programmes to promote access to, and control over, productive resources such as land, livestock, markets, credit, modern technology and formal employment. Yet, according to an FAO report, women own less than 10% of the land in most parts of Africa.[20] Young, disabled and migrant women face particular constraints in accessing land. Women's "access, control and ownership of land"[21] is a critical enabler of gender equality.

Agriculture is the backbone of most African economies, on average contributing 30 to 40% of GDP. Smallholder women farmers comprise nearly half of the labour force in Africa's agriculture sector. The bulk of agricultural practices are subsistence and rain-fed, and climate change has already significantly impacted agriculture and food production. Smallholder women farmers are being especially hard hit by these changes, due to their limited adaptive capacity and high levels of vulnerability. This is exacerbated by insufficient access to justice, particularly for rural women. Tackling the barriers that hold back agricultural production and productivity of smallholder women farmers could both enhance gender equality and usher in broader economic growth. Women and girls constitute the majority of those worst impacted by the effects of ***climate change and environmental degradation*** and are less likely to have access to environmental resources.[22] For women farmers to be more productive, they need equal access to ***environmentally and socially sustainable*** agricultural inputs, markets, and climate-resilient farming technologies and climate information.

Land appropriation for ***extractive industry projects*** put women's livelihoods and food security in jeopardy. Women in mining are typically paid less than their male counterparts, and without access or opportunities to gain technical skills, they are often relegated to some of the most dangerous jobs[23]. Violence against women, Sexual and Reproductive Health needs of women affected by extractives, need to be prioritised.

Trade and enterprise: The globalisation of supply chains and outsourcing of production to the cheapest locations is contributing to the feminisation of poverty, including increased in-work poverty.[24] ***Informal cross-border trade*** (ICBT), a sector in which women predominate, represents a significant volume of the total trade. In Southern Africa alone, ICBT generates an estimated $17 billion USD annually[25]. Although women are breaking into ***traditionally reserved industries*** like mining, maritime, aviation, construction, IT and processing, the vast majority still operate ***informally***.

Employment*:* In most of the countries in the continent, women constitute the highest proportion of the unemployed, while those employed are concentrated in low paying

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[20] Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development

[21] Women and Land in Africa, A Common Position. Oxfam and Partners, 2017.

[22] CARE International (2012) *More Equal, More Resilient: Why CARE International is making gender equality and women's empowerment a priority for climate change adaptation.* London: CARE International, available at: http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/CARE_Issue_Brief_010412_GenderFINAL.pdf

[23] Oxfam International (March 2017): Position Paper on Gender Justice and the Extractive Industries

[24] See discussion in Oxfam (2014) *Even it up: Time to end extreme inequality.* Oxford: Oxfam GB, available at: http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/cr-even-it-up-extreme-inequality-291014-en.pdf p.10

[25] African Development Bank, Informal Cross Border Trade in Africa: Implications and Policy Recommendations, 2012

positions. Most women work in the informal sector; in casual, part-time and non-permanent jobs. The gender pay gap in Sub-Saharan Africa is 30% compared to the global pay gap of 24%[26]. There are only 22 countries in sub-Saharan Africa that meet or exceed the ILO standard of 14 weeks paid maternity leave[27]. The ***privatisation of essential services*** is impacting both on opportunities for decent jobs for women as well as opportunities to reduce women's unpaid care responsibilities.

AU's comparative advantage

In spite of slow progress, the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) shows promising signs of accelerating growth. The AU places a particular emphasis on increasing skills in science and technology, trade, the blue economy, and manufacturing and high growth agricultural value-chains. The AU can leverage public-private partnerships to identify solutions, innovations and opportunities. AU Agenda 2063 is prioritising use of technology to improve agricultural activity especially for low scale farmers, the majority of whom are women.

Strategic objective: To ensure that women and men contribute equally to, and benefit equally from, prosperity and sustainable development.	**Agenda 2063 Alignment**
	Aspiration 1: A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.
	Aspiration 2: An Integrated Continent politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of African Renaissance
Specific objectives	
1. Develop economic models which recognise the impact of gender inequalities on poverty and influence related policies including care work.	
2. Design and lead a flagship *Women and Land Initiative* as part of the AU Land Policy Initiative to achieve the **30 percent target for women access to land by 2025** and to **"Retire the Hoe to the museum**" by 2030.	
3. Work with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) to ensure women's equal participation in agro-businesses and agro-value chains, including labour savings devices for women.	
4. Set standards and norms for ensuring that governments do not condone, tolerate or perpetuate discrimination against women or girls affected by extractive industries.	
5. Harness all African energy resources to ensure modern, efficient, reliable, cost-effective, renewable and environmentally friendly energy to all African households, businesses, industries and institutions.	
6. Devise a gender and CFTA programme to remove barriers to women's trade and work with the RECs to facilitate and enhance value from cross border trade.	
7. Promote the growth of women enterprises *from the small time to the big time* through a Women and Business programme to ease women's entrance in high return industries; go beyond micro-finance for women; and harness e-trade as part of the Pan African E Network (one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063).	
8. Promote women's equal employment through ensuring that AU Social Protection Policy and Informal Economy Framework is domesticated; work with industry leaders to set-gender targets in their firms; integrate gender into AU frameworks on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration and Public-Private Partnerships.	

[26] UN Women: Progress of the World's Women 2015 – 2016

[27] Ibid. South Africa, with 17 weeks paid maternity leave, had the highest.

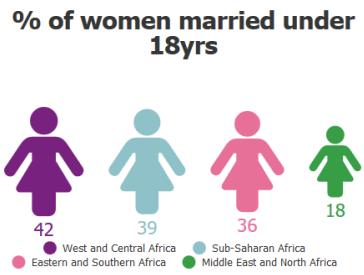
PILLAR TWO: SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Africa evaluation report of the Millennium Development Goals (UNECA, AU & AfDB) cited gaps in women's wellbeing among the "unfinished business" of our century and priorities for sustainable development. The report placed particular emphasis on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) due to its critical links with other development enablers and children's wellbeing.[28] Social justice is a broader concept than social development. It derives from the "right" to a better life. Given that the level of human development is 13% lower for African women than for men[29] this is a critical pillar in the GEWE-WR framework.

Key issues

Education enrolment and retention: Women make up two thirds of the 38% illiterate adults in Africa.[30] Despite its proven links to women's economic empowerment and lessening the burden of care work***, Early Childhood Development (ECD)*** gets less than 0.1 % of African government's budgetary allocations for education.[31] While Africa has successfully ***narrowed the gender gap at the primary level***[32], the gender gap at secondary school is narrowing at a very slow pace. ***Only a few countries have managed to attain 30% of girl's net enrolment in secondary school***[33].There are more men than women in tertiary education institutions[34].

SRHR and the youth: Roughly one third of all young African women become pregnant by the age of sixteen.[35] There is progress in allowing ***pregnant teenagers*** to continue with school but typically it is the girl child not the boy child who suffers the consequences. Sex education is not accompanied by adequate ***reproductive health facilities*** for young people in urban, let alone rural areas.[36] There are high levels of ***sexual violence and sexual harassment*** in schools that have a damaging effect on the performance of young women[37], often perpetrated by teachers.[38] Such basic factors as inadequate sanitation can affect the performance of girls.[39] In 2017, Botswana became the first African country to provide all schools with free sanitary pads.



% of women 20-24yrs old married or in a union before 18yrs old.

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[28] http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/mdg2007.pdf

[29] Ibid.

[30] Literacy and non-formal education, UNESCO available at http://www.unesco.org/new/en/dakar/education/literacy/ ,UNESCO

[31] Ibid

[32] Millennium Development Goals Report, 2015

[33] Unesco Statistics http://data.uis.unesco.org/

[34] Unesco Statistics, 2017 http://data.uis.unesco.org/

[35] Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children, 2014 UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia

[36] Expanding access to contraceptive services for adolescents,2012 World Health Organisation

[37] Global guidance: School-related gender based violence , UNESCO and UN Women,2016

[38] Violence against children ,United Nations Secretary General's Study 2006,available https://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/reports/SG_violencestudy_en.pdf

[39] Raising clean hands, Advancing Learning , Health and Participation through WASH in schools , 2010, UNICEF

Niger (76%), Central African Republic and Chad (both 68%) have the highest rate of ***child marriage*** in the world.[40] The Gambia and Tanzania have banned child marriage, with tough penalties for perpetrators.[41] In June 2015, the AU adopted *A Common Position to End Child Marriages* including establishing and enforcing laws which set the minimum age for marriage at 18. In June 2016 the SADC Parliamentary Forum adopted a model law for ending child marriages.[42]

Gender gaps, biases and stereotypes: There is a gender gap in the ***performance*** of girls and boys at secondary school in most African countries[43] due to the dual role of girls as learners and care givers. While women constitute the majority of teachers at primary school level, the gender balance shifts at secondary school level[44]. Research shows teacher biases towards encouraging boys to participate and answer questions more than girls - especially in maths and science.[45] Women and girls are scarce in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at secondary and tertiary level. However, countries are introducing incentives to encourage girls to take on STEM subject or courses.[46]

Health and nutrition: African governments spend $159 per capita on health compared to $1121 globally. Many rural women lack access to health facilities (as high as 69% in Mozambique).[47] One in six people on the continent are ***undernourished***;[48] this results in babies with low birth weight, perpetuating the cycle of under-nutrition and poor health. Africa continues to bear the brunt of ***communicable and non-communicable diseases.***[49] The continent faces the highest rates of HIV infections,[50] highest among young women who are sometimes forced into transactional sex for survival.[51] In 2016, SADC sponsored a resolution at the UN Commission on the Status of Women to commit governments to invest in ending new infections amongst women, girls and adolescents[52]. Despite great strides in reducing ***maternal mortality***, the lifetime risk remains at 1 in 38[53].

AU comparative advantage

The AU's campaigns on Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal Mortality and Ending Child Marriage Campaign have been acclaimed for refocusing attention and resources on these critical yet almost silent social inhibitors. The AU has the legitimacy and muscle to challenge the social norms that prevent change from taking place.

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[40] UNICEF State of the World's Children, 2016

[41] BBC Africa 8 July 2016 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36746174
Child marriage in Africa, A brief by Girls Not Brides, 2015

[43] Extracurricular and out of school factors affecting girls' participation and performance in SMT subjects : (home/community factors ; distance from school ; safety ; time use) : the experience of the pilot phase,1998, Forum for African Women Educationalists

[44] 2017/8 GEM Report - Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments,2017,UNESCO

[45] Addressing gender stereotypes in the classroom: how to achieve a conducive environment for adolescent girls' learning?, Wikigender online discussion: synthesis report available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002506/250613e.pdf

[46] SADC Gender Protocol MER Framework ,2017 ,SADC

[47] UNWOMEN Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016. Transforming Economies, Realising Rights

[48] The State of food insecurity in the world 2012 ,FAO,WFP and IFAD

[49] Africa 2030: How Africa Can Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,2017,The Sustainable Development Goals Centre ,Africa

[50] The Gap Report,2014,UNAIDS

[51] Understanding the data: The HIV epidemic in Eastern and Southern Africa http://www.saaids.co.za/Presentations%20AIDS%202017

[52] SADC (2016) UN CSW Resolution 60 on Women, Girls, HIV and AIDS

[53] Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth, World Bank Gender Strategy (2016-2023) p31.

Strategic objective: To ensure that all African women, men, boys and girls are "well educated, healthy and well- nourished citizens" (Goals 2 and 3 of Agenda 2063).	**Agenda 2063 Alignment** **Aspiration 1:** A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.
Specific objectives	
1. Elimination of all barriers to quality education, health and social services for women and girls by 2020.	
2. Declaring illiteracy "a traditional harmful practice", including mandating a requirement that all children have access to early childhood development enrolment, and all youth must complete primary through tertiary school.	
3. Giving the girl child the best possible chance of success through ending child marriages, policy reforms for continued schooling for pregnant school girls, provision of sanitary pads in schools and support for girls' access to STEM.	
4. Developing and leading a comprehensive SRHR programme and campaign that includes ending preventable maternal deaths; ending the unmet need for family planning and providing universal access to SRHR, achieving UNAIDS 90/90/90 targets, especially reducing new infections amongst youth and adolescents.	

PILLAR THREE: WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The AU applies a rights based approach to development and the Maputo Protocol guarantees women's **choice** in all key areas. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its article 14 on rural women, as well as the recently endorsed CEDAW General Recommendation 34 on rural women lay a firm foundation for women's rights and access to justice at all levels. UN resolutions and treaties address the needs of women affected by conflict and violence. Most countries in Africa have Constitutions that prohibit discrimination based on sex. But there is a big gap between the provisions for gender equality, and the daily reality for women. Gender-based discrimination in social institutions is estimated to represent income losses of USD $340 billion per annum across the continent[54]. *Now is the time to walk the talk of women's rights!*

Key Issues

Ratification and domestication of the Maputo Protocol: Of the **54** member countries in the African Union, 36 have signed and ratified, 15 have signed but not ratified while 3 have neither signed nor ratified the Maputo Protocol..[55] The Protocol guarantees comprehensive rights to women including the right to partake in political processes, social and political equality with men, reproductive health and rights, and an end to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). While cases of child rights violations are frequently taken up with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) the African Court on Human and Peoples Rights (AfCHPR) has not been challenged in the same way on women's rights. The domestication and enforcement of the provisions of the Maputo Protocol is a key priority.

Dual legal systems accord women some rights through general law and withhold others on the basis of traditional, customary and some religious beliefs and practices, denying

[54] Ibid

[55] African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, October 2017 http://www.achpr.org/instruments/women-protocol/

women their fundamental rights[56].These contradictions affect women's access to property, in particular land and housing as well as the domestic sphere of marriage, divorce and child custody. The systems also affect inheritance in cases of divorce or spousal death. Promoting gender equality in legislative frameworks, practices and attitudes fosters inclusive and dynamic economies, particularly important for the continent's development ambitions.

Access to justice: Agenda 2063 sets out a vision for "timely access to independent courts and judiciary that deliver justice without fear or favour." Most of the laws protecting women's rights ***lack proper enforcement*** due to lack of resources, political will, commitment and accountability. Additionally, legislative reforms need to be underpinned by budgetary allocations and monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure implementation. Realisation of women's rights is hampered by the ***high cost of legal fees*** for cases such as divorce, inheritance, domestic violence and claiming child maintenance. The DRC has started mobile courts to enable remote citizens to access justice. Free legal aid to women is rare, provided mainly by civil society organisations.

High levels of Gender Based Violence (GBV) are at odds with the Agenda 2063 vision of "human security and a sharp reduction in violent crime." According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) at least 46% women in Africa have experienced intimate partner violence (physical and/or sexual) or non-partner sexual violence or both, the highest prevalence in the world.[57] GBV has important public health dimensions because of the mental and physical consequences, and the public health sector provides a key entry point for survivors.[58] Women in conflict areas are especially at risk of displacement, violence and rape. New forms of gender violence, such as trafficking, are also on the rise.[59] Demographic health surveys show how GBV has become normalised in many countries. For example, 54% of women agree that domestic violence is justified on certain grounds.[60] ***Change of attitudes*** remains key in eliminating GBV yet programmes tend to be reactive rather than preventive.[61]

Harmful practices: Cultural practices which affect the status, dignity and health of women and which often constitute violence against women include *virginity tests*, *son preference, early marriage,* and *harmful widowhood practices* like forcing a widow to marry her brother in law.[62] ***Female Genital Mutilation*** (FGM) is practiced among certain communities in 29[63] countries[64]. In Somalia FGM/C prevalence stands at 98%, and in Mali at 89%. By 2050, nearly 1 in 3 births worldwide will occur in the 29 countries in Africa where FGM/C is concentrated, and nearly 500 million more girls and women will be living in these countries than there are today.[65]

Strategic objective: To ensure that the universal culture of good governance,	**Agenda 2063 Alignment**
	Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance,

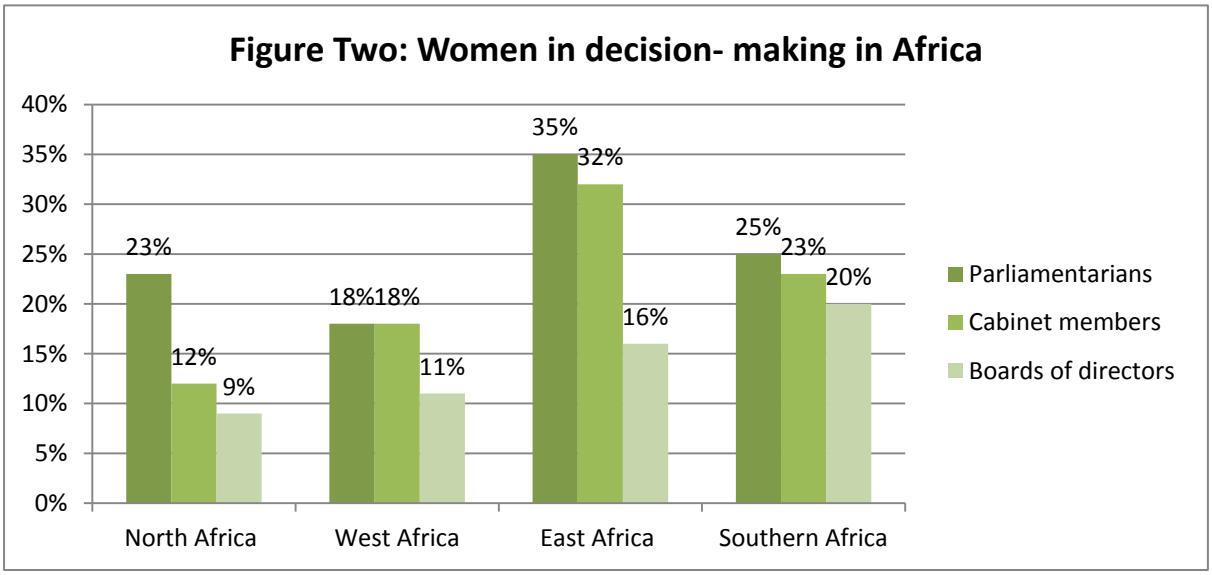
[56] African Union (2009) Gender Policy
[5757]Ibid
[58] World Bank Group Gender Strategy 2016-2023, p33.
[59] Ibid
[60]Ibid
[61] Ibid
[62] https://www.educationalresourceproviders.com/harmful-traditional-practices-in-africa/
[63] Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia
[64] Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: What might the future hold? Available at https://www.unicef.org/media/files/FGM-C_Report_7_15_Final_LR.pdf
[65] Ibid

respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law that Africa aspires to results in substantive equality for women and girls.	democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.
Specific objectives	
1. Ensure standard setting and accountability on women's rights, especially the ambiguity created by dual legal systems, through universal ratification and domestication of the Maputo Protocol by all AU Member States by 2020 accompanied by enforcement mechanisms involving the (AfCHPR) and the AU Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights.	
2. Develop standardised tools for measuring gender violence and mount a targeted campaign to reduce GBV by one third in 2023, in line with the key transformational outcomes of Agenda 2063.	
3. Design an evidence-based campaign for ending harmful norms and customary practices in line with the key outcomes of Agenda 2063, that includes men and boys, traditional leaders, the youth, disabled and other marginalised groups who are especially affected by such practices.	
4. Monitor progress in attaining women's rights through the establishment of a Gender Observatory that collects, connects, and collaborates in dynamic ways, especially with civil society networks monitoring the Maputo Protocol.	

PILLAR FOUR: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

For women to have a **voice**, they need to be equally represented in all areas of decision-making, at all levels, and be able to **participate with impact** through the removal of formal and informal barriers. This is a pre-requisite, but not only condition for **gender responsive governance**, which involves taking deliberate measures to transform institutions through **Gender Management Systems (GMS)**, including **Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB).** Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063 is concerned with democratic values and practices (Goal 11), as well as capable institutions and transformative leadership (Goal 12). This pillar responds to these key imperatives.

Key issues



Source: Women Matter Africa, McKinsey and Company, August 2016

Representation and participation: Despite the many provisions for gender parity in decision-making in global and African normative frameworks, overall women comprise 24%

of parliamentarians; 22% of cabinet members and 14% of Board of Directors,[66] with considerable regional variation as illustrated in Figure Four. East Africa leads the way in women's representation in parliament and cabinet, but is behind Southern Africa on women's leadership in the private sector. Women comprise a mere 5% of CEOs in the private sector in Africa[67]. Despite **local government** being the tier of government closest to the people, data on local government is patchy, ranging from close to parity (49% in Lesotho) to less than 6% in many African countries.

Pockets of good practice show that ***rapid change is possible*** in this area. For example, 13 African countries are among the world's leading countries on women's representation in national parliaments.[68] All of these either have a Proportional Representation (PR) or mixed PR and First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system combined with Constitutional, legislated or voluntary party quotas. This underscores the importance of ***temporary special measures*** in advancing gender parity in decision-making.

Gender responsive institutions: The world over, good intentions on gender and development have been hampered by failure to match these with strong institutional mechanisms for implementation. **The Women and Gender Development Directorate** which is located in the Office of the Chairperson leads the gender mainstreaming work of the AU Commission[69]. This portfolio emphasises **a twin track approach** to GEWE/WR. The first track is **internal mechanisms** to attain the African Union (AU) Parity Policy as embedded in Article 4L of the Constitutive Act and the **AU reform** agenda.

Table Four: Women's progress in AU structures (2013-2016)	% Women 2013	% Women 2016	Variance (2016-2013)
African Union Commission and Organs	50%	50%	0
Headquarters (D1)	29%	42%	+13%
Liaison Officers (D1)	8%	25%	+17%
Representational Offices	15%	25%	+10%
Professional Staff (P1-P5)	26%	32%	+8%
General Services (GSA-GSB)	36%	37%	+1%
Source: Dir Administration and Human Resource Management, Sept 2017			

Table Four shows that the African Union Commission and its organs have applied the gender parity principle at political level. But women constitute 35% of staff; 42% at the most senior D1 level. The AU has developed a draft Workplace Gender Policy (2016) that is an essential complement to this strategy, so that it *may lead by example on gender mainstreaming*. The capacity assessment that accompanies this strategy includes an AU Organisational Gender Score Card that gave the AU a score of 59%, with the highest scores on planning, and weakest on monitoring, evaluation and GRB. The assessment found that approximately half the Gender Focal Persons have formal training on gender, but 62% need in-depth training on gender analysis and GRB[70].

The second track is that the AU marshalling its convening power to achieve peace and prosperity through realizing GEWE/WR on the continent. At a sub-regional level, the AU has provided guidance to the **Regional Economic Commissions.** SADC has a Protocol on

[66] McKinsey & Company, Women Matter Africa (August 2016)
[67] Ibid, p4
[68] Inter Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments, June 2017
[69] African Union (2009) Gender Policy
[70] AU Gender Capacity Assessment 2017, accompanying document to Gender Strategy.

Gender and Development (2008, updated in 2016); the EAC has a Gender Equity and Development Bill (2015); ECOWAS has a supplementary Act on Equality and Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development (2015). IGAD has a Gender Strategy and Implementation Plan 2016 to 2020. These instruments form part of the **mapping** and prioritisation for this strategy. All the RECS report having limited funding and capacity.[71]

At **national level,** governments are expected to ensure that the responsibility for the advancement of women is vested in the highest possible level of government and ensure that there are sufficient resources in terms of budget and professional capacity[72].

Table Five: National Gender Machineries

	Stand alone women's ministry	Stand alone gender ministry	Combined with other "marginalised groups"	Unit within a ministry	No gender apex structure	Gender Commission	Gender structures in parliament
No. of countries	9	1	4	38	0	5	15

Source: AU Member state websites, accessed September, 2017

Table five shows that all Member States have Gender Machineries in place. Ten Member States have stand-alone women's or gender ministries; four have such ministries combined with other "marginalised groups"; 38 have gender coordinating units within ministries; and five countries have independent gender commissions in addition to government structures. Fifteen countries have gender structures in parliament. Most countries have or are developing National Action Plans on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Monitoring and evaluation: 12 of the 94 objectives of Agenda 2063 relate to the social and economic well-being of women. The WGDD, in collaboration with UN-ECA and the AfDB produces an annual African Union Gender Score Card on different themes (in 2017 the theme is the demographic dividend). Among the RECs, SADC has a Monitoring, Evaluation and Results Framework (MERF) for the SADC Gender Protocol that is aligned to SADC's overall MERF Framework. The ECA, COMESA, ECOWAS and IGAD have general M and E metrics and tools with specific gender indicators aligned to strategic goals and objectives managed by the data reporting centres of the RECs. A survey of 22 national gender action plans by WGDD found that only seven have specific targets and indicators.[73] The efforts at AU, REC and national level, on setting targets, indicators, data collection, analysis and dissemination need to be effectively harmonised.

Financing for gender equality: Launched in January 2010 by the AU Heads of State and Government as part of the African Decade on Women, the Fund for African Women (FAW) devotes at least 0.5% of the AU's operational budget to projects on women's empowerment (105 projects worth $1603977 had been funded by 2017).[74] While such targeted expenditure is symbolically important, it is a tiny fraction of what is required to close gender gaps through gender responsive mainstream budgets (see Part Three - Implementation).

AU's comparative advantage

The African Union has adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (APRM) base document, its Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance

[71] Focus group discussion, consultation with the RECs on the AU Gender Strategy, 25 October, 2017.

[72] African Union (2016) Journey to Gender Equality: Compendium of Reports on the Implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA): 2005- 2015

[73] National Gender Policies review of AU members states: for harmonization/alignment of NGPs with the Gender aspects of Agenda 2063

[74] Portfolio on Women, Gender and Development, p15.

which governs the APRM, the African Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, and the African Charter for Democracy, Elections and Governance. The AU's Parity Policy has ensured equal representation of women and men in most elected official positions of the Organisation, including the leadership of the Commission. The review of the AU led by HE President Paul Kagame of Rwanda envisages strong, capable institutions, with strong accountability mechanisms, and reduction in aid dependency.

Strategic objective: To ensure women's equal and effective participation in all areas of decision-making; the strengthening of gender management and gender responsive budgeting systems at all levels.	**Agenda 2063 Alignment** Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.
Specific objectives	
1. Lead a high profile initiative to achieve **gender parity** targets in all areas and at all levels *including at the local level* by 2063 that includes a dynamic data base on the AU website; involvement of *young leaders* in tracking progress and sharing between African countries on special measures that are bringing about rapid changes in many countries through an African Governance Architecture Women's Engagement Programme (AGA-WEP).	
2. Strengthen **gender management systems** internally and externally through harmonising of tools, targets and indicators; sharing of good practise (such as the UNDP Gender Seal); and awards based on an annual "State of Gender Equality Report in Africa"	
3. Make the case for **financing gender equality** through tapping into all new financial mechanisms being devised by the AU and its affiliates as well as promote gender audits of budgets at all levels to promote transparent, accountable, gender responsive governance.	

PILLAR FIVE: PEACE AND SECURITY

In 2014, Africa experienced more than half of worldwide conflict incidents, despite having only about 16 percent of the world population.[75] Armed conflict results in more direct deaths of men than women. However, research shows that in interstate and civil wars, especially ethnic conflicts and conflicts in fragile states, women are overall more negatively affected than men because of limited food and access to water, poor sanitation and hygiene, weak or collapsed health services, increased displacement, family dislocation, stress and gender violence.[76] These conflicts have a crucial bearing on efforts to achieve gender equality. The 2017 Global Peace Index ranks Mauritius and Botswana as the top two most peaceful African countries; showing that peace is possible and it is a top priority.

Adoption of UN Resolution 1325[77] Action Plans: 19 AU Members States that have adopted national action plans, mostly in West Africa where 13 of the 15 countries have adopted these plans. Southern, Central and Northern African countries are behind[78].

[75] http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-wars-ravaging-africa-2016-14993

[76] Thomas Plumber and Eric Neumayer, "The Unequal Burden of War:The Effect of Armed Conflict on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy." International Organisation 60 (3): 723-754 (2006).

[77] The Windhoek Declaration of May 2000 championed by Namibia led to this first landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security that has since been built upon by eight further resolutions.

[78] Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa, p13.

Women are still poorly represented in peace keeping processes. By 2011, only two countries had women signatories in peace keeping processes, only three had women as lead mediators, six had women witnesses in peace processes and five had women in negotiating teams[79].

AU comparative advantage

The AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is well established and has embraced the need for women's equal and effective participation in In 2014, the AU Chairperson appointed a special envoy for Women, Peace and Security. During the 25th AU summit in 2015, AU leaders resolved to accelerate the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In July 2016, the African Union (AU) launched the "Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa" report. This report "outlines member states and regional economic communities' implementation of UNSCR 1325 as an entry point to assessing the state of implementation of the broader Women, Peace and Security Agenda on the continent."[80]

Strategic objective: To ensure women's equal and effective participation in all areas of conflict resolution, peace prevention, building as well as post conflict reconstruction and development	**Agenda 2063 Alignment** 4. A peaceful and secure Africa.
Specific objectives	
1) To strengthen the Women, Peace and Security programme to ensure that all African countries adopt and implement UN Resolution 1325 including provision of Transitional justice and reparations.	

PILLAR SIX: MEDIA, COMMUNICATION & SPORTS

At its heart, Agenda 2063 is about re-writing the African narrative, and Africa claiming its rightful place in global affairs. This cannot be achieved when half the population is effectively silenced. *Now is the time to ensure that "her story" is effectively written into African history.* The AU Gender Strategy also needs to be accompanied by a high visibility drive and campaign. The media, ICTs and sport can either be part of the problem, or part of the solution, depending on how they are harnessed. They are also essential tools for engaging the youth, a key target audience of this strategy.

Representation and portrayal of women in the media: Nowhere is women's lack of **voice** more apparent than in their absence from media ownership and decision-making, as well as media content. The 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project noted that in Africa women's relative presence in the news increased by a mere one percentage point from 19% in 2010 to merely 22% in 2015.[81] Women are more likely to be seen (for example in images in advertising) than to be heard (for example as news sources). Numerous studies show that women are more valued by the media for their physical rather than intellectual attributes.[82]

ICTs: The gender gap in ICTs in Africa is 23%[83]. Key factors include availability; affordability; culture and norms (e.g. boys prioritised for technology use at home, online

[79] UN Women (2012): Women's Participation in peace processes in Africa (1992 – 2011)

[80] Ibid

[81] World Association of Christian Communicators.2015. Global Media Monitoring Project. Toronto WACC

[82] Lowe-Morna, C, and Ndlovu, S: Whose news, Whose Views, Gender and Media Progress Study (2015).

[83] International Telecommunication Union. (2016). ICT Facts and Figures 2016. www.itu.int/en/ITUD/Statistics/Pages/facts/default.aspx The gender gap estimated by the ITU represents the difference between the internet user penetration rates for males and females relative to the internet user penetration rate for males, expressed as a percentage.

gender-based violence, restrictions to movement and limitations on access to devices);capacity and skills; relevant content; participation in decision-making roles pertaining to the internet and/or in the technology sector; relevant policies (e.g. lack of policies with a gender focus and/or that address women's ability to access and benefit from the internet); and/or other systemic barriers[84]. Advances in the functionality and accessibility of social media are providing new opportunities for women's rights and equality movements to organise and campaign for change. But more than 70% of people who have reported being abused on the Internet during the past decade have been women.[85]

Sport: Women are also glaringly missing in almost all sports, sports administration and sports marketing. Prioritising gender in sport has the potential to contribute to promoting female leadership, female role models and access to resources; raise awareness on gender related issues including sexual reproductive health and gender based violence; positive impact on health and reducing the risk of chronic diseases later in life; fostering better mental health, self-esteem and well-being among women and girls; fostering community cohesion and inclusion of marginalised groups; engaging men and boys; as well as addressing discrimination and gender stereotypes of women and girls in the media[86]:

AU comparative advantage

As part of its drive for a strong African identity, Agenda 2063 aims to ensure that at least 60% of content in educational curriculum is on indigenous African culture, values and language. This is an excellent spring board for a "her story" initiative. The Pan African E Network is an opening for a gender and ICT initiative.

Strategic objective: To enhance gender equality in and through the media, communication and sport in their own right and to popularise this strategy.	**Agenda 2063 Alignment**
	5) Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics.
	7) An Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.
Specific objectives	
1. Ensure that women's views and voices form part of the new African narrative through high profile online and offline initiatives in the count-down to the end of the African Women's Decade in 2020 and beyond.	
2. Work with the ICT STC of the AU on a programme to advance gender equality in and through the media and ICTs including setting standards and norms for media regulation and self- regulation.	
3. Form alliances with sports and women in sport associations to use opportunities like the World Conference on Woman and Sport in Botswana in 2018 for profiling this strategy.	

[84] Research by the Association of Progressive Communications, May 2017.

[85] . Gurumurthy (2004),'Challenging gender inequalities in the information society', *Gender and Development in Brief*, Issue 15, September 2004

[86] Dudfield, O and M Dingwall-Smith (2015), *Sport for Development and Peace in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Commonwealth Analysis*,. Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

IV. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Figure three: Implementers and partners at a glance

<table>
<tr><th colspan="8">African Union and its Continent –Wide Partners</th><th>International Partners</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">The AU Assembly, Executive Council, STCs</td><td rowspan="3">UN Agencies including the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">AU COMMISSION (WGDD)</td><td>+</td><td colspan="2">ORGANS</td><td>+</td><td colspan="2">AFRICAN UNION & AFFILIATED BODIES</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Gender structures of the regional economic communities</td></tr>
<tr><td>COMESA</td><td>CEN-SAD</td><td>EAC</td><td>ECCAS</td><td>ECOWAS</td><td>IGAD</td><td>SADC</td><td>AMU</td><td>Multilateral Donors</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Gender Machineries in the African Unions Member States</td><td>Bilateral Donors</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Civil Society (Faith Based Organisations, Civil Society Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Young African Thinkers.</td><td>African Diaspora International NGOs</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Private Sector Organisations</td><td>Global corporations</td></tr>
</table>

<u>The Continental Level</u>

The Assembly: Comprises the Heads of State and Government of the Union. The Assembly will approve the Gender Strategy; provides broad policy guidelines on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Gender strategy; adopt monitoring, evaluation and all Gender Strategy reports.

The Executive Council: Current membership is made up of Foreign Ministers of the AU Member States. The council reviews all documents going to Heads of State.

The STCs, especially the STCs on Gender, Information and Communication Ministers will adopt the strategy and its related documents and submit them to the Executive Council; ensure the supervision, follow up and evaluation of the implementation of decisions taken by AU organs; ensure the coordination and harmonisation of AU Gender Strategy projects and programmes.

The Women, Gender and Development Division is the AUC's Department responsible for leading, guiding, advocating for and coordinating all efforts to achieve gender equality and promote women's empowerment within the Commission, Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Organs. WGDD is also a co-chair of the RCM cluster "Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Youth". WGDD was created in 2000 and is strategically located in the Office of the Chairperson as provided by Article 12(3) of the Statutes of the AU Commission.

The AUC/Technical Unit for Agenda 2063: Under the direction of the Chairperson of the AUC who reports to the Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063, this committee will ensure that the Implementation Plan of the Gender Strategy is integrated into Agenda 2063.

Regional Level

The Regional Economic Communities are part of the Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063. They all have gender focal persons.

- Gender Focal persons/ units in the RECs will be the focal points for the facilitation of the adoption, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Gender Strategy.
- At inception they will provide leadership in the Regional / National Consultative Process with respect to the preparation of the Gender Strategy;
- Participate in the continental operational oversight of the Gender Strategy and be the entry point for continental level initiatives for Member States in the region.
- Issue Gender Strategy guidelines to Member States;
- Coordinate the preparation and execution of regional projects / programmes as per the Gender Strategy.
- Coordinate the integration of Monitoring and Evaluation reports of Member States on the Gender Strategy into reporting on Agenda 2063.
- Lead in the mobilization of resources to implement regional projects and programmes as per the Gender Strategy.

National Level

The national gender machineries:

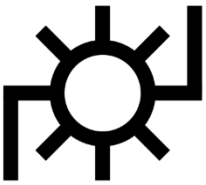
- Liaise with Agenda 2063 focal points in each country.
- Align national plans to the AU Agenda 2063 Gender Strategy;
- Lead / coordinate the resource mobilisation process and allocation efforts; and
- Ensure that gender is integrated into Agenda 2063 reporting.
- Ensure data harmonisation through adherence to guidelines issued at the continental level with respect to indicators and their measurement, methodology for data collection and analysis. In addition member states will ensure that their results matrix link process indicators to outcome/impact indicators.

Partners

The **UN and International co-operating organizations** have blazed the trail creating opportunities and raising awareness on unfinished business. The **African Diaspora, African Development Bank (AfDB)** the **UNECA Centre for African Women** and the **African Capacity Building Fund (ACBF)** are close collaborators. The **private sector** is emerging as a potentially reliable partner for GEWE. It influences consumer behavior, is present in the most remote locations, creates jobs and has increased investment in Corporate Social Responsibility activities. **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)** have pioneered some of the most difficult causes on the continent. They are a strong entry point and readily accessible to promote gender initiatives. The **Inter Faith group** played a crucial role in the consultations and will be a close ally in implementation. The **youth**, through forums such as the Young African Thinkers, and Shape Africa Forum, will be closely engaged. **Private foundations** are also tackle the world's pressing challenges. The **media** is a critical social change agent and partner. The launch of the strategy will include a **high profile online sign up to commitments and collaboration.**

> **Broadened partnerships**: The AU sits at the cross-roads of many high value partnerships. They are seeking opportunities for greater collaboration provided they are given the space for collaboration, including defining areas of mutual interest. – *Gender Strategy Concept Note*

CAPACITY BUILDING



As part of the Gender Strategy, WGDD has conducted a **Capacity Needs Assessment.** This primarily covers the AUC, but recommendations will span all structures tasked with implementing the Gender Strategy. The Gender Strategy will serve as the impetus for the implementation of the AU's work place gender policy. The **AU Academy**, which among others is dedicated to fostering change in the way business is conducted at the AU through promoting critical and independent thinking, will have a key role to play in the development, engagement and knowledge management of the Gender Strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

General

- There are five 10-year plans within the 50-years of Agenda 2063.
- The AU is mid-way through its first ten year plan of Agenda 2063. In order to align with these time frames, the Gender Strategy action plan covers the period 2018 to 2023.
- All RECs, Member States and AU Organs are expected to adopt Agenda 2063 and associated 10 year plans as a basis for their visions and plans.

- To ensure maximum traction, National Gender Action Plans should ideally align to the national development plans of their country, which in turn should align to Agenda 2063.
- To ensure maximum synergy at continental and national level, the AU Gender Strategy and Action plan are framed around Agenda 2063 (see figure six).

Figure Four: Planning framework

Aspiration	*Agenda 2063*						
Goal	*Agenda 2063*						
Strategic objectives	*Derived From African, global and regional gender frameworks*						
	Targets	**National**		**Regional**		**Continental**	
Priority area		Actions	Timeframe	Actions	Timeframe	Actions	Timeframe
Agenda 2063	*Agenda 2063 & SDGS*	*Ten Year Plan & Consultative workshops; existing gender work plans*	*Ten Year Plan & Consultative workshops existing gender work plans*	*Ten Year Plan & Consultative workshops existing gender work plans*	*Ten Year Plan & Consultative workshops existing gender work plans*	*Ten Year Plan & Consultative workshops existing gender work plans*	*Ten Year Plan & Consultative workshops existing gender work plans*

Figure four provides a snapshot of the planning framework that accompanies the strategy. This aligns to the Ten Year Implementation Plan so that gender actions can be integrated into existing and new Agenda 2063 action plans. For each aspiration/goal, the action plan lists strategic objectives derived from the African and global normative gender frameworks that governments have committed to. Actions to be taken draw from: the ten year plan, including the Mid-Term review currently underway; the Consultative Workshops and existing gender work plans – for example in the Office of the Special Envoy on Peace and Security.

Per the ten year implementation plan, the actions are identified at three levels:

- **National Level**: Member States are responsible for all programmes related to Agenda 2063.
- **Regional Level**: The RECs facilitate the adaptation / adoption of AU initiatives reflecting regional imperatives by Member States.
- **Continental Level:** WGDD provides the broad policy guidelines on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Gender Strategy; facilitates the integration of regional monitoring and evaluation reports into a continental report; facilitates resource mobilisation from a continental perspective;

MONITORING AND EVALUATION & LEARNING

The robust M&E framework of Agenda 2063 is one of its distinguishing features. The Gender Strategy works within and strengthens this framework. This ensures that gender is effectively mainstreamed in the work of the AU, the RECs and member states.

The AU is undertaking a mid-term evaluation of the 5 year period of the 10 year plan. This is a unique opportunity to strengthen the gender programming of all departments and divisions. The AU will undertake a final evaluation at the end of each 10 year plan. This will be a unique opportunity to evaluate the Gender Strategy 2018 to 2023.

Principles

- Evidence Driven
- Results Orientation
- Deepening Integration
- Encouraging participation and ownership:
- Knowledge and experience sharing.

Communication

Accompanying this strategy is a communication strategy reviewed by Ministers of Information and Communication in November 2017. The meeting included a discussion on the media, including new media, as both a target for transformation and a tool for disseminating the key messages in the strategy.

BUDGET AND FINANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Figure Five: Gender Responsive Budget categories[87]

Resources needed	Continental	Regional	National
Gender Management Systems	WGDD and gender focal persons in all AU structures	Gender structures and processes within the RECs	National gender machineries and action plans
	Gender analysis and capacity building in all institutions		
Employment equity	Resources required to achieve gender parity in all areas and at all levels within the institution.		
Targeted gender interventions $ plus data	Gender specific initiatives at continental level – e.g. campaign on child marriages, and CARMMA (Campaign to Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa)	Gender specific initiatives at regional level – e.g. model legislation on ending child marriages**.**	Gender specific initiatives at national level – e.g. enabling teenagers who become pregnant to complete school.
Making mainstream activities gender responsive.	For example, equal inclusion of women in peace building	For example, mainstreaming gender in trans-border water initiatives	For example, ensuring that women have equal access to state controlled land and housing initiatives**.**

Figure five provides a simple framework for undertaking gender audits of budgets to determine the extent of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). The strategy advocates that WGDD **build capacity for GRB at regional and national level** as well as undertake a **gender budget audit of AU** expenditure with a view to enhancing GRB within the organisation. This would enable the WGDD to cost and advocate for resources in the first three categories (Gender Management System, Employment Equity and Targeted Gender Interventions). The main thrust of the audit however will be to cast a gender spotlight on mainstream expenditure, in line with the actions proposed under each goal. This exercise will go hand in hand with the results framework as it will require sex disaggregated data to verify that the expenditure is indeed enhancing gender equality. Costing of the **processes** related to the strategy and the **Gender Management System and Employment Equity** within the AU form part of the action plan. The **gender budget audit** of the AU will determine the extent **of targeted gender interventions** and give direction on how **mainstream budgets** can be made responsive to gender programming.

[87] Adapted from work by the Australian gender budget expert Rhonda Sharpe