
African Union Commission Strategy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

Source: Culled from AUC: African Union Strategy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (2018 – 2028) https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195-doc-au_strategy_for_gender_equality_womens_empowerment_2018-2028_report.pdf

In line with Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063, The goal of the strategy is “full gender equality in all spheres of life.

Four Action Pillars are the result of a mapping of all the key provisions for gender-equality in global and continental normative frameworks against Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The gaps are used to determine priorities, consistent with the AU’s areas of comparative advantage. The strategy describe in detail the specific actions and interventions the AU and its partners will carry out and explain how and why they will generate the intended outcomes.

Pillar 1: Maximizing opportunities, outcomes and E-TECH dividends

For women to be economically empowered, and contribute to sustainable development, they must have equal access to quality education and control over productive resources. Three specific outcomes, to be achieved through targeted interventions and actions, are the foundation of Pillar 1:

Outcome 1.1 Education and care work: Compulsory and free education for girls and women from age 3-18; market-oriented vocational training and literacy programmes for youth and women.

Outcome 1.2 Economic empowerment and financial inclusion:

Income autonomy and social protection for more women and girls.

Outcome 1.3 Technology & E-inclusion: Women and girls become more active users and influencers of the technological space and gender enabling E- solutions are funded.

Pillar 2: Dignity, security and resilience

Dignity, security and resilience, and women peace and security are key to the attainment of gender equality. Sexual and Reproductive Health & Reproductive Rights link critically with other development enablers and children’s wellbeing.² Violence against women and related harmful traditional practices are symptomatic of the accepted social norms in many countries and communities. Human security and bodily integrity for women is critical for the attainment of gender equality.

Pillar 2 will strive to achieve the following outcomes as a result of specific interventions and

actions:

Outcome 2.1 Health, Sexual & Reproductive Health & Reproductive Rights (SRHR)³ Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP)⁴: Women and girls achieve higher chances of survival, improved nutrition and wellness and their rights are protected. **Outcome 2.2 VAWG & Peace Processes**: All forms of violence against women and girls is reduced, criminalized and condemned by society; women participate equally in peace processes.

Outcome 2.3 Human security: Commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian action, migration and Conference of the Parties (COP) Plan of Action for women to achieve higher levels of implementation.

Pillar 3: Effective laws, policies and institutions

The AU applies a rights-based approach to development and the Maputo Protocol guarantees women's choice in all key areas. Most countries in Africa have Constitutions that prohibit discrimination based on sex and recognize socio-economic rights. But there is a significant gap between the provisions for gender equality, and the daily reality for women.

Legislative reform is a pre-requisite, but not only condition for gender responsive governance, which involves taking deliberate measures to transform institutions through Gender Governance Systems including Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB).

Below are the outcomes for Pillar 3 and the interventions actions that will generate them.

Outcome 3.1 Maputo Protocol: National laws and judicial systems protect and fulfil women's ownership and inheritance rights, education, wage equality, civil liberties and physical integrity as provided for by the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol).

Outcome 3.2 Norm setting: National laws and policies protect and enable women's full access and enjoyment of the opportunities and benefits of Agenda 2063 Flagship projects and other continental transformational projects.

Outcome 3.3 Institutional Gender Governance Systems: Institutions and organs of the African Union, Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Civil Society Organisations have the requisite capacity to implement existing commitments, pro-actively forecast and address new challenges and demonstrate accountability.

Pillar 4: Leadership, voice and visibility

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. The AU Gender Strategy includes a campaign for high visibility. 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. 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 springboard for a "her story" initiative.

Pillar 4 will achieve its intended outcomes by carrying out the following interventions and actions

Outcome 4.1 Leadership: Equal participation and demonstrated influence of women and girls in all leadership and decision-making positions.

Outcome 4.2 Voice: Women and girls have equal voice and exercise agency in the home, community, and public spaces.

Outcome 4.3 Visibility: Women and girls are more visible and portrayed as equal contributors to society in the media, literature and cultural resources.