

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: 011-551 7700 Fax: 011-551 7844
website: www.africa-union.org

CONCEPT NOTE

2nd SPECIALISED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN's EMPOWERMENT

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

4 to 8 DECEMBER 2017

I. Introduction

The African Union Commission is convening the 2nd Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Gender and Women's Empowerment which will be held in Addis Ababa from 4 to 8 December 2017.

According to the rules of procedures of STC on Gender and Women's Empowerment adopted during the 1st STC held in January 2016, the STC on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment shall meet in ordinary session once every year.

The 2nd STC on Gender and Women's Empowerment will consider among others, the new African Union Gender Strategy, the Evaluation of the 2009 AU Gender Policy, the new AU Gender Communications Strategy, the 2016 Member States and AUC Chairperson's reports on Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

1. The New African Union Gender Strategy

The AU Gender Strategy will be aligned to the Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), because there is convergence of the two agendas particularly at the level of the goals. It will encompass all key global, continental and sub-regional instruments for attaining gender equality. The gender strategy will also build on the AUC policy on GEWE including UN frameworks, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*- Maputo Protocol, the 2009 policy has, since, guided the AU's work in operationalizing its commitment to GEWE as set forth in Article 4L of the Constitutive Act. The gender Strategy is, however, needed to reflect changing social and economic realities, propel the pace of implementation of commitments and achieve the goals and objectives for GEWE defined in Agenda 2063 and SDGs-2030. The report will include: analytical brief, results framework, operational plan, branding plan and materials.

2. Evaluation of AU 2009 Gender Policy

Adopted in 2009, the AU gender policy equipped the organization with a clear road map and commitments. These commitments are found among others in Article 4(L) of the Constitutive Act, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development adopted by the Heads of State and Government in 2006. The policy also defined areas specific areas of responsibility for stakeholders (internal and external) with the recognition that achieving GEWE requires creating synergies, building strategic alliances and leveraging comparative advantages. This approach has become even more relevant in the context of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which now define how development is done and against which WGDD will align the AU's strategy to achieve GEWE. The evaluation will show information and knowledge on progress made in implementing the current policy; and

to use these findings and recommendations to inform the design of the new gender strategy.

3. The new AU Gender Communications Strategy

The African Union Gender Communications Strategy will enhance visibility as well as increase awareness and knowledge of the AU's gender agenda and Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD)'s work. This will ensure that WGDD gets into the public domain and strengthen political will in support of its mission and objectives, and which will further enhance its credibility and brand. The Communications Strategy will build a corporate culture on gender programming, messaging and communication and ensure that the AU communicates in one voice on all Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) issues. The communications strategy will also strengthen relationships with the media to improve the visibility of the AU gender agenda in continental, regional and national media reporting.

4. The 2016 Member States Reports and AUC Chairperson's Report on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

The African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government, during their third Ordinary Session in July 2004, adopted the *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)*. The Declaration is an important African instrument for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, as it strengthens the ownership of the gender equality agenda and keeps the issues alive at the highest political level in Africa. It therefore serves as a reporting framework for Member States on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE).

The SDGEA is divided into six (6) thematic areas of action, namely: Health, Peace and Security, Governance, Human Rights, Education and Women's Empowerment.

The SDGEA has two reporting obligations; namely Paragraph 12 in which the Heads of State and Government committed themselves to report annually on their progress in gender mainstreaming. This paragraph assists Member States to share good practices and identify areas in need of improvement to enhance the status of women. The reporting is also to serve as a form of peer review. The second obligation is in Paragraph 13, in which the Chairperson of the Commission is obliged to submit an annual report for the consideration of Heads of State and Government on measures taken to implement the principle of gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

Overall, 51 Member States have submitted their country reports to the AU Commission, while 6 countries are yet to submit their initial reports for analysis, as shown in the tables below:

Countries that have reported to-date	Countries that have not reported
Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Dem Republic, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe	Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Guinea Bissau and Morocco
51	4

II. Objective of the STC

The major objectives of the 2nd STC are as follows:

- To consider the New AU Gender Strategy
- To consider the report of the evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy
- To consider the new AU Gender Communications Strategy
- To consider the Reports on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

III. Expected Results

- The New AU Gender Strategy adopted by STC
- The Report of the evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy adopted
- The new AU Gender Communications Strategy adopted
- The Reports on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) adopted.

IV. Participants

The meeting will be attended by the AU Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs and their Experts as well as AUC staff.

VII. Date and Venue of the meeting

The meeting will be held from 4 to 8 December 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

VIII. Mode of Delivery

The meetings will be conducted in all AU languages - Arabic, English, French and Portuguese.