

Sauti صوتي

Africa Young Feminist Blog

Call for Submissions

Sauti صوتي means “my voice” in Arabic and Kiswahili

The world is battling against a pandemic that is claiming many lives across nations and distorting global trade, travel and economies. The coronavirus disease, (COVID-19) has become a global emergency considering the effects on global growth.

As the pandemic is further affecting employment, education and the mental health of African youth, we acknowledge that COVID-19 is also bringing to light the profound gender disparity in the various sectors. Several studies have predicted an increase in cases of Gender-Based Violence as a result of the lockdowns as victims are trapped with their abusers without adequate assistance.

The voice of young African feminists must be a crucial part of the conversation. Particularly, those who are caught in the digital divide. Rural and marginalized young women are mostly not connected and therefore miss out on the empowerment of the digital revolution. This exclusion also impacts the development field, as young women may not have the opportunities to communicate how COVID19 is affecting their realities, and alternative solutions to this pressing global challenge. In addition, the mainstream narrative portrays the challenges and achievements of women without a critical insight into the intersection of barriers they face.

Therefore, we want to draw attention to Young African Women’s struggles, advocacy and achievements in fighting the global pandemic COVID19 and amplify their voices and actions.

The African Union Office of the Youth Envoy launched on International Women’s Day “[Africa Young Feminist blog](#) “Sauti صوتي”. Now it will be re-launched in collaboration with the [Forum for African Women Educationalists \(FAWE\)](#) to publish “Sauti صوتي” **Publication of 25 young women contributions** celebrating [Beijing+25](#) featuring untold

and underrepresented stories of young women from across Africa and the diaspora showcasing their innovation and impact in the community.

Young women across the continent and the diaspora are invited to express through writing, visual or audio/video or any other creative means and artistic expressions, to showcase the impact of women-led actions to address COVID19 and other interlinked issues as well as showcase the daily struggles and challenges young women are facing in the evolving COVID-19 pandemic situation.

25 contributions from the blog will be selected and published into a compendium that will be available in both digital and printed versions. Selected submissions will receive a remuneration of 200 USD each for their creative work in an effort to support young women financially in these difficult circumstances of coronavirus outbreak.

Themes:

1. Youth Silencing the Guns ([AU 2020 Theme of the Year](#))

Ending all wars, civil conflicts, violent conflicts and preventing genocide in the continent by 2020, sub-themes include;

- Free- conflict Africa
- Silencing Poverty & Hunger
- Silencing Gender Based Violence
- Silencing Youth Unemployment
- Silencing Corruption
- Silencing Climate Crisis

2. Youth Refugee Voices ([AU 2019 Theme of the Year](#))

Facilitate efforts to amplify refugee youth voices and call for strengthening responsibility sharing and protection of refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs);

3. Ending Violence Against Young Women

Advocate for gender equality, young women's rights and champion AU campaign to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Early Child Marriage

(ECM). Regarding this, the AU has designed the [Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#);

4. Employment and Education Match

Facilitate efforts for matching education with the future of jobs especially the transfer of skills and technologies and closing the digital divide. Support skills development in STEM;

5. Youth Health and Wellbeing

Call for universal health coverage ensuring that adolescents particularly women and girls are not left behind and advocate to address Ebola, sexual and reproductive health rights, mental health and disability rights and the growing burden of HIV besides the current COVID-19 pandemic;

6. Young Peacebuilders

Advocate for youth transformative and pan-African leadership and their participation as agents of peace in governance, political and social life.

Timeline

- 22 May - Call for submissions
- 31 May - Deadline for submissions
- 01 - 18 June - Blog posting
- 19 June - Digital Sauti Publication & Webinar (International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict)

How to submit

General Rules

1. Submissions are opened to African women aged 20 to 35;
2. Collaborative works are permitted, however, payment will be made per submission;
3. All submissions should answer one of the listed themes;
4. The selection will be on a rolling basis;
5. All submissions must be original works;
6. Plagiarised content will be rejected;
7. Work that has been previously published or distributed will be rejected.

Writing (Word doc.)

- The length should be 800 to 1000 words for English and Arabic, and 800 to 1200 for French for articles (prose) and max. 3 pages for poetry;
- The submissions must be professionally written and comprehensible with quality content and proper formatting; paragraphs, titles, subtitles, bullet points, etc;
- Make sure that your submission is clearly indexed and referenced.

Visual: Painting, Photography, Caricature etc (JPG, PNG, PDF)

- All photos submitted must have a minimum resolution of 1024x1024 pixels;
- Photos can be taken in color, black and white and the use of filters is authorized.

Audio/video:podcasts,news article, short documentary, etc.

- Recommended specifications for audio: Mp3, 320Kbps | Minimum: Mp3, 320Kbps;
- Recommended specifications for Video: Mp4, 1080px Full HD | Minimum: Mp4: 480p SD;
- The video/audio must be 2-4 minutes long;
- The image and voice must be clear and easy to understand;
- Video should be shot in landscape;
- Video should have the name & country subtitled - bottom right, throughout.

How to Submit?

Using this link <http://bit.ly/oyesauti>

FAQ

1. What is SAUTI blog ?

Sauti is the Africa Young Feminist Blog spreadheaded by the African Union Office of the Youth Envoy (OYE) in collaboration with the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) to publish the **SAUTI Publication of 25 young women contributions.**

2. Why this blog ?

SAUTI blog aims at amplifying the voices of African young women featuring untold and underrepresented stories from across Africa and the diaspora. **SAUTI blog** wants to draw attention to their struggles, advocacy and achievements, with special focus on the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Who can apply ?

If you are an African woman aged 20 to 35, living on the continent and in the diaspora and who has creative work related to blog themes, we welcome your submission. You can read all criteria under the section **How to submit**.

4. What will the SAUTI blog look like ?

SAUTI blog will be an online blog featuring the submitted works from June 1st to June 18th. Following this, the **SAUTI Publication of 25 young women contributions** will be published on June 19th on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

5. What type of work can be featured on SAUTI blog ?

We are accepting original works under the following categories;

1. Writing; articles (prose) or poetry.
2. Visuals; painting, photography, caricature, etc.
3. Audio/video; podcasts, news article, short documentary, etc.

6. When can I send my work ?

You can send your work anytime between May 22nd and May 31st. The selection will be on a rolling basis. Selected applicants will be notified by email.

7. What are the criteria of selection ?

Only works that respect the following will be accepted:

1. All submissions should answer one of the listed themes;
2. Submissions should be in arabic, french or english;
3. Submissions must be original works, free of plagiarism and have never been previously published or distributed;
4. Submissions must respect the mentioned rules regarding length, formatting, references and technical specifications
5. Submissions must be timely, creative and innovative.

8. Is it paid ?

Selected submissions will receive a remuneration of \$200 USD each. The payment will be made per submission, even for collaborative works.

9. Who is the Review Committee?

The Review Committee comprises of African Union departments including the Gender Directorate, Youth Division under the department of Human Resources, Science and Technology and the Silencing the Guns Unit under the Department of Peace and Security.