

**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**
**AU MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION, GENDER, AND  
 HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS ARE COMMITTED TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND  
 EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION**


**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 5 February**

**2019:** In line with the AU theme of 2019, the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology hosted a high level dialogue on protection of education in humanitarian settings. The meeting was organised by the Education Division, and the AU Centre for Girls and Women's Education in partnership with Save the Children International, with

support from Political Affairs Department and the Embassy of Norway.

The objectives of the meeting were to improve participants' understanding of impacts of humanitarian situations on education, especially for girls and women, and the role of education in peace building; share experiences among AU Members States and non-State actors policy frameworks and practice in protecting education during humanitarian situations through implementation of the Safe School Declaration and Guidelines, among other humanitarian instruments; and strengthen commitment on specific measures to protect girls, women and boys in education systems under all circumstances.

In her opening remarks, Her Excellency Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology of the African Union Commission appreciated the Ministers, officials and partners present for demonstrating the value they attach to the right to quality education, safe learning environments and inclusion of women and girls and ensuring that education is accessible under all situations. Her Excellency revealed that the Mwalimu Nyerere AU Scholarships for 2019 would be awarded to young people living as refugees, in order to assist displaced persons to access University Education so that they realize their potential and make meaningful contribution to our world. She expressed appreciation to the Government of Norway

for support. She also thanked Save the Children International for their strong partnership and contribution to the Safe Schools Initiative.

In his opening remarks, the Minister for International Development of Norway, H.E. mr. Dag Inge Ulstein underlined the importance of education as a human right and a tool for transformation, enabling boys and girls to shape their destiny. He Minister commended Member States in including refugees, IDPs and returnees in their national education systems, in spite of the attendant challenges.

Through presentations and Panel discussions with Ministers, experts and stakeholders, participants proposed ways of addressing the vulnerability of girls, boys and women IDPs, refugees and returnees in order to ensure their schooling in a humanitarian context. The participants committed in their various capacities, to mainstream gender, humanitarian issues, and protection of schools in education sector planning to end with the phenomenon of out-of school children living in conflict, post conflict and humanitarian crises. They called on Member States and relevant agencies to ensure that quality education is secured as a right for all displaced persons, returnees and refugees through effective implementation of Agenda 2063, the CESA 16-25, the Kampala Convention which recognizes state parties' obligation to provide education alongside necessary humanitarian assistance to IDPs and refugees, and the Safe Schools Guidelines.

All agencies working in the area of education in Member States were called upon to align their initiatives and work in a coordinated manner in order to ensure coherence of actions and maximum impact. Participants agreed that there is need to establish a culture of zero tolerance against peacekeepers, civilians and humanitarian personnel being involved in all forms of violence and abuse perpetrated against refugees, IDPs and returnee learners and teachers. Finally, they called on the AUC to spearhead the development of a mechanism for regular reporting on the situation of education in Member States taking into account the situation of girls and women, the safety and security of schools and the education systems, and the extent to which refugees are mainstreamed into local education systems.

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