

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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Maputo Protocol Scorecard and index introduced to monitor implementation of Women's Rights.

The African Union Commission (AUC)'s Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) has kicked off a series of engagement on the validation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) Scorecard and Index (MPSI). The Scorecard and Index is an innovative contribution to the body of tools that seek to enhance accountability and assess the progress on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and the implementation of the Maputo Protocol.

The Maputo Protocol Scorecard and Index has been developed to support effective gender equitable COVID-19 response and recovery monitoring and implementation of the Maputo Protocol. It underscores the need to uphold women's rights obligations encapsulated in the Protocol during the COVID-19 crisis, to mitigate the harsh impact of the pandemic on women. This is especially important as women are disproportionately affected by the pandemic and responses that exclude gender equality and women's concerns might have long-term negative impact on women.

WGDD in collaboration with Africa Leadership Forum and Plan International organized a first review of the **"Maputo Protocol Scorecard and Index Framework: A COVID-19 Response and Recovery Monitoring and Implementation Tool"**, with representatives of the African Union, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), United Nations Agencies and civil society. The framework will be implemented in collaboration with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) to support national as well as regional monitoring and implementation efforts of the Maputo Protocol.

AU Commission's Women, Gender and Development Directorate, Acting Director Victoria Maloka, restated the commitment of the African Union to promote and protect women's rights and to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted the importance of Maputo Protocol Scorecard and Index framework in ensuring that the progress made in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) is not compromised, noting that the series of engagement for its validation will involve various stakeholders, including the AU Member States.. "The Maputo Protocol Scorecard and Index is important because it is a monitoring and evaluation tool that will be used not only as a safety measure against violations of women's rights during the emergency crises, but also to protect women's rights in the long run. This is a good milestone in enhancing accountability for how

Member States are implementing the obligations that they have committed to. The framework will be used as not only an emergency tool but also as a recovery tool," she stated.

The Maputo Protocol unequivocally reinforces women's rights in totality, while expounding on specific and unique experiences of African women and sets the standards for women's human rights in Africa that includes among others, elimination of discrimination against women; the right to dignity; the right to life, integrity and security of the person; the right to access to justice and equal protection before the law; the right to participation in political and decision-making processes; the right to peace; and the right to protection in armed conflicts, improved autonomy in their reproductive health decisions, and an end to female genital mutilation. Despite the significant number of ratifications to the Maputo Protocol, and the progress made in the implementation of the rights of women in Africa, the gains have been quite slow and low. Studies have shown that a number of factors including, among others, lack of accountability, absence of or limited access to verifiable data and limited capacity for data and information processing have contributed to these less than satisfactory levels of implementation.

The Commissioner of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa Justice Lucy Asuagbor, observed that the slow progress in realizing women's rights might also hold back the full implementation of Africa's development goals as encapsulated in Agenda 2063 adding that it is not enough to put in place policies to promote gender equality, but there is need for the policies to be backed by strong support frameworks to ensure that there is accountability for their implementation. "Adopting a legal instrument is one thing, but ratifying and implementing its content requires the same tireless women and men of the continent, who believe in its potential, to pick up their advocacy tools and convince State Parties to deliver on their commitments. I have no doubt that the Scorecard and Index will promote participatory and accountable institutions to reverse inequality trends, and push for action to accelerate greater change in the lives of African women and girls", she noted.

While forty two (42) Member States have ratified the Maputo Protocol, only nine member states have submitted reports on the implementation. Thirteen (13) Member States have not ratified the protocol yet mainly due to issues concerning women and girls' rights on sexual and reproductive health rights, especially in relation to marriage or access to safe abortion and some have put reservations while ratifying the Protocol. Plan International Regional Director for West and Central Africa Region Rotimyo Djossaya, on his part, noted that the Maputo Protocol Scorecard and Index creates a platform for transparency and accountability by the African Union Commission, and Member States on the implementation of the Maputo Protocol. He added, "this framework will open the space for identification of best practices across the continent that can be adopted by less-performing Member States and provide an evidence based

feedback Mechanism between the Member States and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. It would also provide advocacy opportunities for CSOs and other Non-State Actors in supporting Member States' efforts and holding them accountable on the commitments made."

The major thrust of this Scorecard and Index framework is to build accountability for gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights obligations under the Maputo Protocol. Africa Leadership Forum Executive Director, Dr Olumide Ajayi, elaborated that a total of 226 indicators were generated from the 25 articles of the Maputo Protocol. These indicators were grouped into nine themes in accordance with the Maputo Protocol Reporting Template provided by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The framework incorporates outcomes of the 2019 Africa Review Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 25 years since adoption.

The MPSI adopts an Assessment Question Approach. This methodology uses questions to evaluate the implementation of laws, legislative actions, policies, strategies, programmes and projects that Member States have developed and deployed in response to the demands of the articles of the Maputo Protocol. Binary Scoring Method (0 and 1) is adopted in the deployment of the assessment question with a threshold of 30% for articles that require proportional representation of women. To test the efficacy of the indicators, the MPSI selected six reports submitted to the ACHPR by the following Member States from the five regions of the continent: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Mauritania, Rwanda and Togo.

An online reporting platform has been developed for Member States to easily assess their progress in achieving equitable growth and transformative development for women and girls in Africa. A second validation meeting on the Maputo Protocol Score Card and Index Framework will be organized in July, 2020 for Experts from AU Member States.

[Read the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa](#)

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