

OUTCOME DOCUMENT



39 GIMAC CSOs PRE-SUMMIT CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING AT THE AFRICAN UNION AND MEMBER STATES

DATES: 12 - 14 FEBRUARY 2023
HYBRID MEETING ADDIS ABABA

“WOMEN ACCOUNT FOR UP TO 70 PER CENT OF THE INFORMAL CROSS BORDER TRADERS IN AFRICA, AND THAT THIS DEMOGRAPHIC POSSESS THE POTENTIALS TO BOOST AFRICA’S ECONOMY IF THEY ARE PROPERLY INTEGRATED INTO THE AFCFTA.”

Preamble

We, the participants at the 39th Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC Network) Pre-Summit Consultative meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union convened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 12 - 14 February 2023, under the African Union theme: Acceleration of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Implementation.

NOTE WITH CONCERN the heightened vulnerability of women and girls in Africa to trans-generational poverty due to various underlying factors including inadequate trade facilities, and factors of production; inequitable labour saving technologies; underpaid and unpaid labour; harmful cultural practices; insufficient legislations; and limited legal protection against gender-based inequality practices that are deeply ingrained in society.

ACKNOWLEDGE the Chairperson of the African Union Commission; H.E.

Moussa Faki Mahamat and the Heads of State and Government of the African Union for designating the years of 2020 to 2030 as the new Decade of Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion, as it leverages legislative and institutional frameworks to boost intra-African trade under the AfCFTA framework.

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE the contribution of African women and youth in developing various initiatives within the context of the African Women's Decade on Financial and Economic Inclusion such as the WYFEI 2030 championed by H. E Monique Nsanzabaganwa, the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), and the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA), which is managed by African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Women Impact Fund (AWIF) and was initiated by the African Women Leaders Network (ALWN).

RECALL the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement and its accompanying protocols and annexes which entered into force on May 30, 2019 as a landmark document of the African Union which is instrumental for the actualization of an Integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.

HIGHLIGHT the governing principles of the AfCFTA which includes best practices of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), State Parties to the Agreement and other international conventions binding the AU Member States.

ACKNOWLEDGE the establishment of the AfCFTA secretariat by the African Union as a core component part of the institutional framework for the implementation and administration of AfCFTA pursuant to article 4(g) and 13(1) of the AfCFTA agreement.



RECOGNIZE that women account for up to 70 per cent of the informal cross border traders in Africa, and that this demographic possess the potentials to boost Africa's economy if they are properly integrated into the AfCFTA.

COMMEND the efforts of the AfCFTA Secretariat towards the development of the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade in line with the directives of African Heads of State and Government, in order to ensure their inclusion and active participation in the AfCFTA.

UNDERScore the positive impact of the various gender responsive normative frameworks of the AU and its predecessor on the lives of African women, if fully domesticated, namely, the Maputo Protocol, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), the Dakar Platform for Action (94), the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: the Role of Women in Africa in the 1990's, and the African Union Gender Policy.

EXPRESS DEEP CONCERN about the structural and institutional barriers that hinder women in Africa from engaging in economic activities as well as shrinking of space and resources for the effective participation of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Africa's development agenda;

REAFFIRM our support for and involvement in continued advocacy for women's empowerment in all spheres of society, utilizing gender equality in society as a means to achieve our goal.

URGES African leaders to scale up actions for progressive gender inclusion towards sustainable development at the national, regional and continental levels.



We therefore make the following recommendations to African Heads of State and Government to:



1. Implement the May 21, 2022 decision of the Fourth AU Specialized Technical Committee (STC) of the Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration, which called on the AUC, RECs and Member States to make SMEs, Women and Youth the key beneficiaries of AfCFTA. Particularly, by ensuring that 30% of Public Procurement is allocated to small to medium-sized enterprise (SMEs), women and youth-owned businesses; Additionally, member states should provide training and support to SMEs, women-owned businesses, and youth-owned businesses to help them navigate the procurement process and compete effectively for contracts.
2. Identify all gender gaps in the AfCFTA agreement and the provisions of the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade deals and involve CSOs in its development and provide capacity-building training for advocates to better understand the provisions of this Protocol and how to utilize it at the national level;
3. Implement Articles 13 and 19 of the Maputo Protocol on economic rights of women as the necessary minimum condition to guarantee their maximum participation and integration of women and youth into the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in trade whilst also working with CSOs in monitoring the progress in this regard and in the implementation of the AfCFTA protocol using appropriate tools and mechanisms;

“Invest more in the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda and recognize that peace and security are critical prerequisites for sustainable economic development.”

3. Implement Articles 13 and 19 of the Maputo Protocol on economic rights of women as the necessary minimum condition to guarantee their maximum participation and integration of women and youth into the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in trade whilst also working with CSOs in monitoring the progress in this regard and in the implementation of the AfCFTA protocol using appropriate tools and mechanisms;
4. Design and implement gender-responsive and transformative trade policies at the national level that is also buttressed with context-specific complementary measures that address the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women and youth in each country, grounded in evidence and promote women and youth inclusion in the transformative potential of trade expansion in key economic sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and services under AfCFTA;
5. Ensure youth inclusion in decision-making on AfCFTA and put in place policies that support the youth’s access and control to resources and investment capital in order to enable them to be globally competitive;
6. Leverage on regional integration efforts through the RECs in Africa and other regional instruments and initiatives, to realize the potential of the AfCFTA and expand intra-African trade;

7. Invest more in the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda and recognize that peace and security are critical prerequisites for sustainable economic development. Without peace and security, it is challenging to create the necessary conditions for trade and investment to thrive. Violence, instability, and conflict disrupt supply chains, create barriers to trade, and deter foreign investments and effective implementation of AfCFTA;
8. Ensure implementation of AfCFTA by incorporating human rights standards, establishing enforcement mechanisms, promoting capacity building, engaging with different stakeholders, conducting an assessment, fostering cooperation and prioritizing the protection of women, girls and young people throughout the continent within the AfCFTA provision.
9. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to improve women's access to quality public health services in maternal and reproductive health as well as prioritizing HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in Africa through the AfCFTA, which includes the involvement of relevant stakeholders, by addressing the root causes of these health challenges and strengthening the health systems to better meet the needs of women and youths and ensure they have access to the quality care they deserve;
10. Invest and promote the participation of girls and women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields through education, skilling, and reskilling in the use of digital technology and entrepreneurship education. This should be supported with progressive as well as immediate harmonization and standardization of education curriculums on the continent to facilitate smooth and



synergized movement of skilled women and youth. This should be done in order to provide services across the continent and be able to use their academic credentials without any hinderance and build the Africa we want;

11. Adopt the road map on the implementation of African Women's Decade on Financial and Economic Inclusion (FEI) and Women and Youth Financial and Economic Initiative (WYFEI) 2030 Country Acceleration Strategy in collaboration with the RECs and the Civil Society;
12. Encourage Member States to develop and promote locally-led climate just solutions, social protection, Africa's food sovereignty, agroecological practices and provide an enabling environment for smallholder women farmers and women in Refugees camps to enable them access markets control and access land, extension services, cheap credit, and appropriate post-harvest loss reduction technology and access to market; and
13. Provide legal and leadership training to officials of border agencies within the context of AfCFTA, Free Movement Protocol and Maputo Protocol including skills in complaint management, dispute settlement and prevention of discriminatory, obstructive, and arbitrary extra-legal decisions on border trade activities of women and desist from harassment, sexual exploitation and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) whilst reflecting the stated values of the proposed African Union Convention of VAWG.

Adopted this day of February 14th, 2023, in the city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.





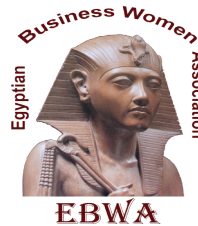
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