

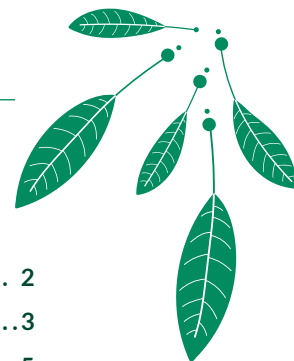


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LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD:

A REVIEW OF GIMAC NETWORK'S 20 YEAR JOURNEY OF IMPACT FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN AFRICA





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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGFA	African Gender Forum Award
AU	African Union
AWCPD	African Women's Committee on Peace and Development
AWD	African Women's Decade
CARMMA	Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa
CSO	Civic Society Organisation
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women.
FAS	Femmes Africa Solidarite
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GDIA	Gender and Development Initiative in Africa
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GIMAC	Gender Is My Agenda Campaign
GMS	Gender Management Systems
IFFS	Illicit Financial Flows
KII	Key informant Interviews
KII	Key Informant Interviews
OAU	Organisation of the African Union
PSOs	Peace and Security Operations
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SDI	Solemn Declaration Index
SEA S	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
STC	Specialized Technical Committee
UN	United Nations
UN	Women United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WGYD	Women, Gender and Youth Directorate
WROs	Women's Rights Organisations

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report on the advocacy impacts of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC Network) would not have been possible without the tireless efforts and unwavering commitment of many individuals and organizations over the past 20 years. As Chairperson of the GIMAC Network, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of our mission.

First and foremost, I would like to thank our member organizations, who have been the backbone of the GIMAC Network since its inception. Their dedication and hard work have been instrumental in advancing gender equality in Africa. I would like to acknowledge the important role that each member organization has played in shaping the direction of the network and ensuring that our advocacy efforts are grounded in the realities of the communities we serve.

I would also like to express my appreciation to our development partners, who have provided us with the resources and support needed to carry out our advocacy activities. In particular, I would like to thank UN Women, which made the development of this report on the advocacy impacts of the network possible. I look forward to our continued partnership in our shared vision of a continent where gender equality and women's empowerment are fully entrenched.

GIMAC Network extends sincere appreciations to Dr. George Zimbizi, the lead researcher, for his thorough work found in this publication.

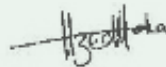
Our success would not have been possible without the support of African Union (AU) Member States and other key decision-making bodies. We are grateful for the opportunities we have had to engage with these bodies and for their willingness to listen to our recommendations and act on them.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the young women's networks who have been actively engaged in our advocacy efforts. Their energy and passion have been a source of inspiration to us all, and we are committed to continuing to work with them to achieve our shared goals.

I would also like to recognize the contributions of the GIMAC Secretariat, who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the smooth functioning of the network. Their expertise, professionalism, and dedication have been essential to our success.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have supported the GIMAC Network in various ways over the past 20 years. Whether through financial contributions, technical support, or simply by lending your voice to our cause, your contributions have been invaluable and deeply appreciated.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of the GIMAC Network to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa. We are proud of our achievements over the past 20 years, but we know that there is still much work to be done. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners and stakeholders to ensure that the vision of the GIMAC Network is fully realized.



Dr Helen Kezie-Nwoha

GIMAC Network Chairperson and Executive Director,
Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC)

FOREWORD

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) is a fundamental human right necessary for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world¹. Beyond being a technical exercise, it is a politically complex effort which shapes attitudes and policy decisions towards an equitable distribution of resources among men and women, girls, and boys. Gender Equality looks at how social norms and power structures influence the lives and availability of opportunities of different groups of men and women².

The UN system, since the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the 1997/2 agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC 1997/2), and subsequently, across all the

major areas of work of the UN system, has mandated Gender Mainstreaming as a strategic approach for achieving the goal of gender equality. The 1997 ECOSOC agreed conclusions defined gender mainstreaming as: "The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's, as well as men's concerns and experiences, an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."³

To realize gender equality, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been playing a critical role. They serve as an active source of ideas, collaborations, policy perspectives, and support towards gender mainstreaming efforts and the achievement of GEWE. Following the establishment of UN Women in 2011, the partnership with CSOs has been strategic and innovative, with the key objective of strengthening political solidarity and fostering strong feminist movements. Hence, UN Women support to CSOs includes- ensuring their participation in a number of intergovernmental processes such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and other major international conferences; continued partnership with grass-roots women and youth for the promotion of ongoing dialogue with key policymakers, ensuring that their voices are not left out of these crucial processes etc.⁴

The Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) Network, which was launched in 2002 with its over 55 member organizations, advocates tirelessly to ensure women are part of, and benefit from strategic and policy influencing convening. In 20 years of its existence GIMAC has implemented instrumental initiatives aimed at achieving its strategic objectives. The Network has created advocacy platforms to engage key decision-making bodies of the AU, RECs, Member States and UN in a conversation with CSOs and young women networks. The network worked diligently and systematically to ensure each advocacy effort garnered specific outcome statements and called for action, outlining key recommendations, which were shared with key decision-making bodies for integration and endorsement. It is evident that these efforts have led to key results which you will find richly illustrated in the report underscoring the continued impact and success of GIMAC as a strong feminist network. Thus, we have established long standing relation with women's movement such as the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) Network bringing their voices, capacities, and contributions in support of GEWE.

These partnerships are built on the principle of leaving no one behind with the premise and/or reality that women and girls experience intersectional discrimination based on their gender, race, class.

Bearing in mind the importance continued tracking and monitoring of the network's contributions holds, UN Women, as part of its prolonged partnership with GIMAC, eagerly supported the development of this comprehensive systematic analysis through its Liaison Office to the AU and ECA (LO). The report set out to fully assess the 20 year long results of GIMAC's advocacy efforts including recognition, adoption, and endorsement of the recommendations in creating the desired policy changes and the extent to which the aforementioned recommendations have been integrated within the decisions of the African Union, Member States and RECs.

LO, over the past few years, has notably established itself as a knowledge hub bearing fruit to numerous knowledge produce across an array of thematic areas, and thus, recognized the pertinence of the 20-year report. This is not the first of LO's partnership with GIMAC as just the previous year, it supported the publication of the amazing GIMAC book co-authored by Madam Bineta Diop and Dr. Thelma Awori, and it will not be the last. We are happy to announce that our partnership successfully aided the development and endorsement of the report.

CSOs, specifically women-led organizations, play a pivotal role in advancing GEWE and realizing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They play significant roles in holding governments accountable ensuring commitments are followed by actions, they respond to the needs of the most marginalized, those who are sidelined from using their voice for change. Yet, CSOs continue to experience many challenges in rapidly changing environments subject to unforeseen circumstances such as the most recent COVID-19 as well as incoming of new actors and decision makers. UN Women, thus, is committed to continue and strengthen its partnership with CSOs and ensure their voices and leadership influences progress on GEWE at the National, Regional and Global level. In Africa, UN Women commits to establishing continental forums, to ensure CSO actors have strengthened capacity to influence and build infrastructures that support Women's CSOs to have enhanced access to AU policy platforms.



Mme. Awa Ndiaye Seck

Special Representative to AUC&UNECA, UNWomen

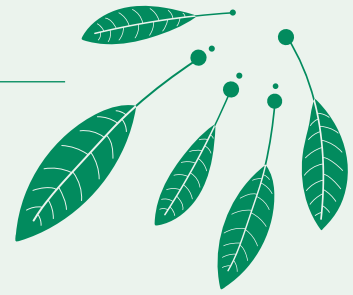


¹ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

² <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

³ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming#:~:text=The%201997%20agreed%20conclusions%20of>

⁴ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/partnerships/civil-society>



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report documents the advocacy impacts of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC Network) at continental, regional and national levels over the past 20 years. The GIMAC Network is a pan-African continental network of African women's civil society organizations seeking to empower women and girls in Africa particularly through the implementation of key regional and international gender equality instruments. The Network has over 55 member organizations spread across the African continent and has been working with support from UN Women.

The GIMAC Network was officially launched in 2002 during the transformation of the Organization of the African Union (OAU) to the African Union (AU) to ensure women were part of and benefited from the transformation process and realize the gender equality agenda. For the past 20 years, the GIMAC Network has been implementing advocacy activities aimed at achieving its vision of "An Africa where gender equality, women's and girls' empowerment are fully entrenched, promoted, supported and implemented in every AU Member State and institutions". The GIMAC Network uses the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) as its guiding principle. Strategies adopted by GIMAC Network over the past 20 years include: Creating advocacy platforms to engage key decision making bodies such as AU, RECs, Member States and

UN in a conversation with CSOs and young women's networks; Holding over 37, uninterrupted, consultative meetings on the margins of the African Union Summit meetings and organising campaigns and projects focusing on targeted thematic areas, through adopting the thematic focus of the AU themes; and producing GIMAC Solemn Declaration Index (SDI) reports and other knowledge products. The Network has ensured that every advocacy effort is accompanied by specific outcome statements and call for action, outlining key recommendations, shared with key decision-making bodies of the AU and Members States for integration and endorsement. Through the support of WGYD, the recommendations are shared with key decision-making bodies of the AU and Member States for consideration in major policy spaces.

Rationale and Objectives for Documenting GIMAC Network Advocacy Impacts

Although the outcomes and impacts of GIMAC Network advocacy efforts have been evident over the past 20 years, they had not been systematically analysed, tracked and monitored to be able to fully measure the impacts. There was need to provide a comprehensive analysis of the activities of the network, including the various campaigns, projects, engagements in advocacy spaces, advancement in membership and partnership as well as linkage and reflection in the works of its members. To further advance the impact of the network, it is important to analyse the achievements of the Network and the factors that influenced those achievements as well as the gaps and challenges in order to translate them into more effective advocacy strategies.

The specific objectives of the assignment were to: To carry out a comprehensive systematic analysis to measure the impact and achievements of the overall activities and dimensions of the network towards creating the desired policy changes; To track

and monitor uptake of the GIMAC Network recommendations in continental and regional policy decisions and; To develop a tool to track and monitor the integration of the GIMAC Network recommendations in AUC Assembly Decisions and outcomes of other continental policy platforms.

Methodology

The documentation of GIMAC Network achievements was informed by a review of AU and GIMAC Network documents including: AU Summits Concept Notes; AUC Assembly decisions; GIMAC Network Annual Narrative Reports; GIMAC Network Outcome Documents and Recommendations; GIMAC Network Handbook; and SDI Reports. In-depth key informant interviews were also conducted with thematic focal persons in the GIMAC Network Steering Committee.

Key Achievements and Impacts of the GIMAC Advocacy Work Since 2002

The following are the key achievements and impacts of the GIMAC Network advocacy work over the past 20 years.

a. GIMAC Network Recognised and Accepted as a Strategic Partner of the AU

Since 2002, the GIMAC Network lobbied for a high level mechanism and platform for dialogue between women's organisations and networks and key decision making structures of the AU to ensure that gender and women's rights issues and concerns are discussed and considered during Heads of State Summits decisions and resolutions and in the work of the AUC. The Network further lobbied for: space for regular appraisal and evaluation of performance of the Member States and civil society in the implementation of SDGEA; an opportunity to consider and adjust strategies related to gender mainstreaming across the continent; a forum to explore emerging issues affecting women across Africa; a policy advocacy platform to strengthen the advancement of women and youths; and a platform to deliberate the issues of women and girls living in the rural areas

The AU has recognised and accepted GIMAC Network and its network members as key partners in promoting gender mainstreaming within the AUC, RECs and member states. The GIMAC network has been afforded bi-annual platforms to present their recommendations to Heads of States during AU summits. Since 2002, the GIMAC Network has contributed to the AU Theme of the year by issuing civil society statements to the AU Summit. Most of GIMAC Network recommendations have been adopted in the final Heads of States Declarations and recommendations regarding gender in Africa.

The GIMAC Network has produced over 37 outcome statements on issues discussed by the Heads of State Summit which have influenced the outcome of the Heads of State decisions and resolutions since 2002.

GIMAC Network has also been incorporated into the decision making structures of the AU and its Commission. The Women Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD) regularly organises joint consultative meetings with GIMAC Network. In addition GIMAC Network representatives attend AU thematic meetings such as the Women Peace and Security meetings where crucial decisions are jointly made. High level delegates such as the AU Chair, Ministers of Gender and the WGDD also attend GIMAC Network consultative meetings that come out with recommendations for the AU Heads of State.

b. Influencing the Policy and Normative Framework of the AU

From its formation in 2002, GIMAC Network's objective was to influence the AU's Policy and Normative framework so that it could be gender sensitive and responsive by providing guidelines for mainstreaming gender at all levels of the AU, RECs and member states. Key achievements of GIMAC advocacy influence include: Adoption of the Gender Parity Principle by the AUC; Adoption of Gender Mainstreaming as a strategy for gender equality within the AUC and MS; Adoption of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA); Adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol); Adoption of the African Union Gender Policy; Adoption of Policies aimed at Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Women and Girls; and Launch of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020).

c. GIMAC Network's Role in Implementation of Commitments and Institutionalising Gender Mainstreaming in the AU

The GIMAC Network played a key role in creating accountability mechanisms for the implementation of gender equality commitments and institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming in the AU. Following recommendations from the GIMAC Network and the women's movement, a number of the recommendations were implemented by the AU to strengthen the AU gender mainstreaming machinery and these included: creation of the directorate of gender within the AU; convening of the first meeting in 2005 of the African Ministers of Gender and Women Affairs to develop implementation strategies of the Solemn Declaration; creation of the African Union Women's Committee in 2005 responsible for safeguarding and representing the interests of women within the AU; creation in 2010 of the African Women's Fund for the purpose of specifically supporting and accelerating the implementation of all commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment on the continent; establishment of Special Mandate Positions and Institutions including women mediators and special envoys on peace and security; creation of positions within the AUC with special mandates for gender and women and youth specific issues within the institution; appointment of the African Union Goodwill Ambassador on Ending Child Marriage; and Special Rapporteur on Women's Human Rights to ensure that gender equality, women's rights and empowerment remain high on the political and policy agenda of the African Union and its member states; and the appointment of the President of Ghana as an AU Champion on Gender and Development. With support from GIMAC Network thematic leads, all the STCs of the AU adopted the gender equality agenda and set up gender mainstreaming priority actions for their sectors.



WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The GIMAC Network put forward a number of recommendations on WEE that included the following: Member States should ensure women's access to land and to resources or profits obtained from extractive industries; and Member States should promote good governance and create a conducive environment to protect women's rights. In response the AU declared 2014 as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security in Africa and through the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, the AU Member States made a commitment to create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth through agriculture value chains and to support and facilitate preferential entry and participation for women and youth in gainful and attractive agri-business opportunities. The AU Members States also committed to allocate at least 10% of public expenditure to agriculture. In all the seven aspirations of the AU Agenda 2063 and its 10 year Action Plan, women's empowerment is recognised as a critical driver for the transformation and development of Africa.



HEALTH

In response to the GIMAC Network recommendations the AU Member States committed themselves through the Heads of State Summits to, among other commitments; Enact legislation to end discrimination against women living with HIV/AIDS and for the protection and care for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly women; Accelerate the implementation of gender specific economic, social, and legal measures aimed at combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and effectively implement both Abuja and Maputo Declarations on Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases; Ensure that treatment and social services are available to women at the local level and making it more responsive to the needs of families that are providing care; and to increase budgetary allocations in these sectors so as to alleviate women's burden of care. By 2012, a total of 37 Member States had launched the Campaign for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) as an advocacy strategy for the promotion of maternal, new born and child health.



EDUCATION

The AU adopted a number of measures in response to GIMAC Network recommendations on the education sector. In 2015, AU Member States committed to enhancing women's and girls' access to education, science and technology and resolved to end child marriages, also referred to as defilement, in Africa through adoption of the Common African Position on Ending Child Marriages and developing and implementing comprehensive action plans as an indicator for monitoring Agenda 2063 for girls' empowerment and well-being". The AU authorised the establishment of an African Education Fund in 2008 whose main purpose was to promote access to education, particularly among girls and young women. In 2010, the AU Member States resolved to work with GIMAC Network in the implementation of her Science and Technology agenda and programmes. At Member State level, countries such as Seychelles and Zimbabwe have introduced the GBV curricular in primary and post-secondary education while other countries including Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe have introduced re-entry policies for girls and young women who will have dropped out of school due to pregnancy or early marriages.



YOUNG WOMEN, GIRLS AND YOUTH

GIMAC Network recommended AU Member States to invest in young women, girls and youth to enable them achieve their full potential through the promotion and protection of their rights which include participation in decision making; economic empowerment, education, employment, access to information, sexual and reproductive health; and prohibition of child marriages and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). GIMAC Network also urged Member States to urgently provide necessary support towards achieving the demographic dividend for Africa recognising the dividend is time limited. In 2011, GIMAC Network recommended for the appointment of a commissioner responsible for Gender and Youth Affairs to ensure a specific focus by the AU on issues affecting women, girls and youth.

The AU appointed a Special Envoy for youth in 2018. In 2017 the AU declared 2017 as the year of youth, with the theme “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investment in Youth”, which falls within the Decade on Youth Development in Africa (2009-2018). The AU endorsed the establishment of the African Youth Fund to support activities focused on the socio-economic and political development of youth in Africa. The AU also agreed there should be allocation to the African Youth Fund of an amount at least equal to 1% of the Programme Budget of the African Union Commission. In 2018, the AUC also resolved to take specific measures to ensure that by 2025, 35% of the AU workforce will be made up of youth. The AUC further resolved that from 2018 onwards, Member States shall fully finance the Youth Volunteer Program and the Junior Professionals Program from the regular budget of the Union. The AU made a commitment that Member States shall accelerate the payment of their contributions to the African Youth Fund in line with the July 2017 Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.661(XXIX) on the Establishment of the African Youth Fund. The women, girls and youth agenda has remained firmly on the AU agenda in the last 10 years largely because of the consistent lobbying by the GIMAC Network.



GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION

GIMAC Network made several recommendations aimed at improving governance and eradicating corruption within AU Member States. In response to the above GIMAC Network recommendations, the AU Heads of State and Government declared 2018 as the year of Anti-Corruption. The AUC established an 11-member African Union Advisory Board on corruption mandated to provide advice on strategies to effectively address the scourge of corruption. Despite these efforts, many of the GIMAC Network recommendations remain unimplemented and corruption remains one of the cancers hindering development on the African continent.



d. GIMAC Network's Role in Ensuring Accountability for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Commitments

The GIMAC Network played a critical role in ensuring that the AU and Member States remain accountable for their gender equality and women empowerment commitments. The network produced the first civil society shadow report on the SDGEA in January 2010. GIMAC Network with the support of UNECA in 2012 developed a monitoring index called the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI). The SDI was adopted by the AU Assembly through a declaration made during their 25th Ordinary Session on 14-15 June 2015 in Johannesburg. It was agreed that the SDI survey would be undertaken after every three years. GIMAC Network developed the Index to monitor the SDGEA based on the thematic indicators of health, education, women's rights, gender parity, land and housing rights, peace and security and reporting. GIMAC Network produced the first SDI report in 2016 based on submitted SGEA reports of Member States and has since used the indicators in this instrument to identify countries that have performed well in the implementation of the Gender Agenda and recognize them through the African Gender Forum Award (AGFA). GIMAC Network has supported the adoption of the Solemn Declaration Score Card (SDSC) which captures the qualitative aspects of SDGEA such as policy, legislative and institutional commitments made by the AU Heads of State.

e. GIMAC Network Membership and Partnership Building

The membership of GIMAC Network grew phenomenally from 14 founding Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) in 2002 to the current 55 member organisations across 23 countries.

This represents close to a 400% increase in organisational membership over the past 20 years. Individual participation in GIMAC Network summits grew from around 11 in 2002 to more than 250 by 2020. Membership has diversified to include organisations representing youth and young women; rural women; women farmers; women with disability; and elders. A total of 20 strategic development partners have supported GIMAC Network's work across the continent.

f. Good Practices from Member States

The 2019 SDI Report identified good practices from Member States in terms of implementation of gender equality commitments.

Some of the good practices identified include the following: high level of participation by women in WPS in Rwanda; an inclusive and gender sensitive peace agreement document in South Sudan; legislation against recruitment of child soldiers and rehabilitation of rescued child soldiers; enactment of several child protection laws and an action plan to end recruitment of child soldiers in DRC; criminalisation of domestic violence and stiff penalties for child trafficking in Seychelles; Introduction of special courts to prosecute and fast track SGBV offences, including rape, in Liberia; special measures to promote women political participation and women economic empowerment in Ethiopia; special quota system for land allocation to women in Zimbabwe; establishment of regulations for the allocation of at least 30% of government contracts to women; and adoption of re-admission of girls who get pregnant back into school policies in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Gaps and Challenges

Although the GIMAC Network has scored important successes over the past 20 years, the network faces some gaps and challenges that need to be addressed to strengthen the impact of its work. They include the following:

- **Inadequate implementation of commitments:** Although the majority of the AU Member States have made commitments and adopted key gender equality and women empowerment instruments, implementation of the same has been a key challenge owing to a number of factors that include inadequate commitment and political will, weak gender national machineries, pervasive patriarchal attitudes and practices resulting in resistance to change, inadequate human and financial resources, and low technical capacity by stakeholders at AU and its organs, RECs and MS to mainstream gender.
- **Limited Funding:** From inception in 2002, GIMAC Network has been operating without long-term sustainable funding. The funding has been mainly for the bi-annual meetings and very little has been channelled towards ongoing advocacy and gender mainstreaming activities outside the bi-annual pre-AU Heads of State meetings. The limited funding has also resulted in: a lean secretariat of two staff members, not adequate to meet the secretariat needs of a membership that spans across the African continent and with diverse interests and goals; the GIMAC Network relying on voluntarism, which though indicating commitment on the part of the members, might not be sustainable in the long term: challenges in tracking implementation of recommendations at RECs and national levels.
- **Non-registration of GIMAC Network as a formal organisation** limits its capacity to attract funding.
- **Informal membership structure:** this makes it difficult to determine the exact number of committed members of the Network. The members are also not organised into thematic clusters.



Recommendations on the way forward

- a. **Formal Registration:** the GIMAC Network needs to accelerate current efforts for formal registration as a WRO in order to attract more sustainable funding from donors who prefer funding formally registered organisations for accountability purposes.
- b. **Resource mobilisation and funding:** GIMAC Network needs long-term sustainable funding to be able to expand advocacy activities beyond just the bi-annual pre AU Summit Meetings and be able to monitor implementation at RECs and member states level. GIMAC Network needs to develop a Resource Mobilisation Strategy and engage a specialist to spearhead the resource mobilisation process.
- c. **Secretariat Human Resources:** there is need to engage more support staff to support the activities of the GIMAC Network. Specialist positions, such as Resource Mobilisation Officer, need to be created to mobilise resources for the sustainability of the organisation.
- d. **Increased advocacy efforts and monitoring of implementation of commitments and reporting:** implementation of commitments by Member States and reporting has been weak and these are areas that the GIMAC Network needs to concentrate on going forward. For effectiveness, the GIMAC Network needs more long-term resources and adequate human resources at the secretariat.
- e. **SDI Reporting tool:** the tool needs not only capture activities at AU and Member States level, but at RECs level as well for a holistic picture of the implementation process and achievements on the continent to emerge.
- f. **Structured Membership and Database:** there is need for a more formalised membership structure and data base to be able to track recruitment of new members and maintenance of the current members.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About this report

UN Women Liaison Office to the AUC&ECA engaged an independent international consultant to document the advocacy impacts of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC Network) at continental, regional and national levels over the past 20 years. In this report, the background and context to the conceptualization of GIMAC is highlighted; the methodology that was used to document the impacts is described; and the key advocacy achievements and impacts of the campaign over a 20 year period are documented.

1.2 Background

UN Women has a long standing track record of working with CSOs and women's movements in pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment goals. In this regard, UN Women has worked with the GIMAC Network to support the network's mandate to empower women and girls in Africa particularly through the implementation of key regional and international gender equality instruments. GIMAC is a pan-African continental network of African women's civil society organizations with over 55 member organizations spread across the African continent. The Network aims at advancing African women's rights, women empowerment and gender equality through holding AU member states to account for their international, continental, regional and national commitments on the same. Each year GIMAC Network work mirrors and elaborates on the African Union theme of the year.

The GIMAC Network was officially launched in 2002 during the transformation of the Organization of the African Union (OAU) to the African Union (AU) to ensure women were part of and benefited from the transformation process and realize the gender equality agenda. GIMAC's vision is "An Africa where gender equality, women's and girls' empowerment are fully entrenched, promoted, supported and implemented in every Member State and institutions". Its mission is "To create a platform for the promotion of gender equality, the protection of women's and girls' rights and the participation of women and girls' in all decision-making processes through engagement with state actors, policy makers, CSOs and influencers across the globe". GIMAC uses the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) as its guiding principle.

For the past 20 years, the GIMAC Network has been implementing advocacy activities aimed at achieving its vision and strategic objectives. The strategies that the Network has embarked on include the following:

- Creating advocacy platforms to engage key decision making bodies such as AU, RECs, Member States and UN in a conversation with CSOs and young women's networks.
- Engaging in advocacy spaces organized by the same and pushing for specific recommendations.
- Network members fostering the discussions and monitoring the upholding of the commitments at country level through engagement as part of key stakeholders.
- Holding over 37, uninterrupted, consultative meetings on the margins of the African Union Summit meetings,
- Organising campaigns and projects focusing on targeted thematic areas, through adopting the thematic focus of the AU themes,
- The production of GIMAC Solemn Declaration Index (SDI) reports and other knowledge products;
- Holding CSO consultations to engage on the content and validate the development of legal instruments speaking to the gender agenda such as the AU Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy (GEWE)
- Strongly organising and mobilizing for CSOs, women farmers as well as young women and girls' active engagement and participation in major decision-making spaces, affecting their interest, at the continental and international level.
- Expanding the membership base with various CSOs and grassroots constituencies from around the continent and building a stronger partnership with strategic decision-making bodies



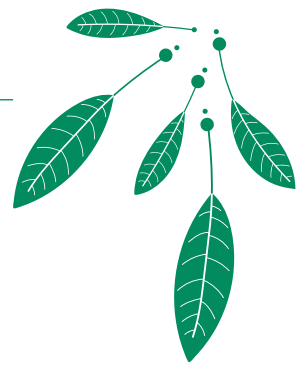
The Network has ensured that every advocacy effort is accompanied by specific outcome statement and call for action, outlining key recommendations, shared with key decision-making bodies of the AU and Members States for integration and endorsement.

The GIMAC Network has shared over 37 outcome statements with African Union Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD) for deliberation at the Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (STC on GEWE) meetings, which is the statutory organ that adopts and decides on AU's work on gender equality and women's empowerment. Through the support of WGYD, the recommendations are shared with key decision-making bodies of the AU and Member States for consideration in major policy spaces.

GIMAC members have also participated and contributed in a number of policy development meetings at the African Union.

Throughout its engagement and participation in various advocacy spaces, the network has advocated and called for implementation of the proposed recommendations. In addition, members used these recommendations as advocacy tools and consistently called for their integration in various decision-making spaces including AU Summits, AU- RECs Coordination Meetings and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

There is evidence that all the above efforts of the GIMAC have yielded significant results in terms of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Some of the key results to date include: the adoption of the SDGEA by the Heads of State at their July 2004 Summit which has remained the most strategic reporting instrument deployed by the AU in the promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa; advocating for the appointment of the first female chair of the African Union Commission in 2013; advocating for the appointment of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security in 2014; and advocating for the AUC Envoy for the Youth in 2018.



1.3 Rationale for the Documentation of Advocacy Impacts

Although the outcomes of the advocacy efforts of the GIMAC over the 20 years are evident, there was need for a systematic analysis, documentation, tracking and monitoring of the substantive contributions of the network to fully measure the results of its advocacy efforts. It was pertinent to assess the level of recognition, adoption and endorsement of the recommendations in continental and regional policy decisions. There was also a further need to provide a comprehensive analysis of the activities of the network, including the various campaigns, projects, engagements in advocacy spaces, advancement in membership and partnership as well as linkage and reflection in the works of its members. Measuring their impact in creating the desired policy changes and analysing the extent to which they have been integrated within the decisions of the African Union, Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and trickled down at national level is of significance to evaluate the effectiveness of the network's advocacy efforts. To further advance the impact of the network, it is decisive to analyse gaps and challenges and translate them into more effective advocacy strategies.

To further advance the impact of the network, it is decisive to analyse gaps and challenges and translate them into more effective advocacy strategies.

1.4 Scope of the Assignment

The documentation of advocacy impacts spanned 20 years, to cover the period that GIMAC has been in existence. The impacts of the advocacy efforts were tracked and documented at continental, regional and national levels through extensive desk review, engagement with GIMAC membership and key stakeholders at these levels. The longitudinal documentation of the advocacy impacts was timed to coincide with the GIMAC 20th anniversary celebrations where key achievements of the network will be showcased.

The scope of the assignment extended from the network's campaigns to membership, partnerships, participation in advocacy spaces and reflection in the works of its members. The documentation highlights the uptake of GIMAC recommendations in various AU, RECs and Member States policy decisions, follow-up strategic plans and actions as well as impact of the advocacy efforts in creating the desired policy changes. Furthermore, the network's progress in terms of membership and partnership building was also reviewed. In addition, the scope of work included the development of a tracking tool that will enable the network to monitor and track the integration of its recommendations in AU Assembly decisions and outcomes of other key continental policy platforms. The knowledge product will be an important tool in ensuring advocacy efforts of the network are result oriented.

...the scope of work included the development of a tracking tool that will enable the network to monitor and track the integration of its recommendations in AU Assembly decisions and outcomes of other key continental policy platforms.

1.5 Objectives of the Assignment

The following were the specific objectives of the assignment as outlined in the Terms of Reference:

- To carry out a comprehensive systematic analysis to measure the impact and achievements of the overall activities and dimensions of the network towards creating the desired policy changes.
- To track and monitor uptake of the GIMAC Network recommendations in continental and regional policy decisions.
- To develop a tool to track and monitor the integration of the GIMAC Network recommendations in AUC Assembly Decisions and outcomes of other continental policy platforms.



2. METHODOLOGY



2.1 Design

The documentation of the GIMAC Network advocacy impacts was conducted through a highly consultative and participatory process, where key stakeholders were engaged from the thematic focus areas of GIMAC. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the consultant engaged with key stakeholders remotely using communication platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Whatsapp and phone calls.

2.2 Data Collection Process & Methods

The documentation was conducted through the following processes and methods:

a. Desk Review

A review of all relevant documents on GIMAC Network advocacy activities was conducted to document the type of advocacy activities that the network members engaged in at continental, regional and national levels and the impacts and achievements of these advocacy activities in contributing towards the desired policy changes and implementation of regional and international commitments on gender equality. The review of documents enabled the consultant to track the extent to which recommendations made by the network were considered in policy decisions of the AU, RECs and national governments.

The list of documents reviewed included the following:

- Summit Concept Notes
- GIMAC Network Annual Narrative Reports
- GIMAC Network Outcome Documents and Recommendations
- AUC Assembly decisions
- GIMAC Network Handbook
- SDI Reports

All the data in the documents were analysed using thematic content analysis where the data was arranged according to the thematic areas of inquiry before the content was reviewed and key issues emerging picked up and highlighted in the report.

b. Key Informant Interviews (KII)

A total of seven key informants were interviewed. KIIs were conducted with the following stakeholders' thematic focal persons in the Steering Committee:

- Governance: Akina Mama wa Africa (1)
- Women Peace and Security: ACCORD; Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC); Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS) (3)
- Education: Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) (1)
- Young Women: Rozario Memorial Trust (RMT); GIMAC Young Women Network Chair (2)

The list of key persons interviewed in the annex of the report.

2.3 Deliverables

The following were the expected key deliverables of the assignment:

- A GIMAC Network Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning tool to track future Pre-Summit and other stakeholder engagement recommendations
- A 20-year anniversary report that assesses the 20 years achievements, the impact of the network, lessons learned and proposed way forward for strengthening the network. A strategy paper on impact and achievements of the overall activities and dimensions of the network
- A presentation on the findings of the report on the launch event during the 20-year anniversary celebrations

2.4 Limitations

The main methodological limitation was that not all the targeted stakeholders for Key Informant Interviews were available during the period of the assignment. There was a poor response from some GIMAC Network members, who despite several reminders being sent out to them, could not make themselves available for the interviews. In total, 7 Key informant were interviewed during data collection.

3. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS OF GIMAC NETWORK SINCE 2002

3.1 Introduction

In this section, the key achievements and impacts of the advocacy efforts of GIMAC Network over the last 20 years are presented. The broad objective of GIMAC Network's work was "Mainstreaming Gender and Effective Women Participation in the AU".

This broad objective was to be achieved through a series of advocacy efforts aimed at influencing: the Policy and Normative Framework of the AU, RECs and Member States to become more gender sensitive and gender responsive; institutionalisation of Gender Mainstreaming and implementation of gender equality commitments; recognition of Women's Rights Organisation (WROs) as partners of the AU in the pursuit of gender equality and women empowerment; and accountability for gender equality commitments by AU, RECs and Member States through monitoring and evaluating implementation of SDGEA commitments. GIMAC Network aimed to achieve these outcomes through creating a robust and well capacitated network of women's rights organisations and advocates whose role is to ensure that women's gender equality concerns and recommendations are presented to the AU bi-annual Heads of State and Government Summit for consideration and adoption.

Prior to the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into AU in 2000, the Pan-African organisation was largely regarded as a "male club" with key leadership positions male dominated. Although there had been previous attempts by women's organisations to ensure that women's issues were considered in the OAU deliberations, policies and development efforts, for example through formation of the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO) in 1962 and the African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD) in 1998, gender equality within the OAU remained largely regarded as a private and domestic issue governed by the social and cultural norms of each individual country. Women's issues and women themselves remained marginalised and socially excluded from the socio-economic development processes spearheaded by the OAU and within the structures of the organisation and its organs.

The transformation of the OAU to the AU provided an opportunity for the women's movement to ensure that the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda is accorded top priority by the new AU. To make use of this window of opportunity, several consultative meetings were convened in 2000 by Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS) in collaboration with African Women's Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD) and other women's networks to come up with strategies to effectively push forward the agenda of increasing the inclusion of women in decision making positions of the new AU.

A "Strategic Consultative Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender and Women's Effective participation in the African Union" was held on the eve of the inauguration of the African Union. A total of 38 subsequent consultative meetings of the women's movement, under the auspices of GIMAC Network, were convened prior to each AU Heads of States and Government Meeting for the past 20 years.

After each consultative meeting, an outcome document was produced with a set of recommendations for consideration and adoption by the Heads of State and Government in line with the theme of that particular summit.

The GIMAC Network has been recognised by the AU Member States as a strategic partner for gender equality and women empowerment in Africa. Several of the recommendations put forward by the GIMAC Network have been adopted by the AU. The AU also regularly invites the GIMAC Network members to participate in its strategic meetings and attends the Network's pre-AU summit meetings where crucial recommendations are put forward. In the sub-sections below, the key achievements of GIMAC Network's advocacy work are highlighted.

3.2 GIMAC Network Recognised and Accepted as a Strategic Partner of the AU

The achievements and impacts of GIMAC Network advocacy work on gender equality and women empowerment have to be understood in the context of its partnership framework with the AU, its organs and member states. Since 2002, the women's movement lobbied for a high level mechanism and platform for dialogue between women's organisations and networks and key decision making structures of the AU to ensure that gender and women's rights issues and concerns are discussed and considered during Heads of State Summits decisions and resolutions and in the work of the AUC. The GIMAC Network further lobbied for: space for regular appraisal and evaluation of performance of the Member States and civil society in the implementation of SDGEA; an opportunity to consider and adjust strategies related to gender mainstreaming across the continent; a forum to explore emerging issues affecting women across Africa; a policy advocacy platform to strengthen the advancement of women and youths; and a platform to deliberate the issues of women and girls living in the rural areas.

“Our recommendations to the Heads of State Summits from our pre-summit meetings are placed directly in the files of Heads of States so that they can see and discuss them”

GIMAC Network Member

Since 2002, the AU has recognised and accepted GIMAC Network and its network members as key partners in promoting gender mainstreaming within the AUC, RECs and member states. The GIMAC network has been afforded bi-annual platforms to present their recommendations to Heads of States during AU summits. Since 2002, the GIMAC Network has contributed to the AU Theme of the year by issuing civil society statements to the AU Summit. Most of GIMAC Network recommendations have been adopted in the final Head of States Declarations and recommendations regarding gender in Africa. The GIMAC Network has produced over 37 outcome statements on issues discussed by the Heads of State Summit which have influenced the outcome of the Heads of State decisions and resolutions since 2002. For example, the Banjul Call for Action and the “Africa We Want” which were adopted by GIMAC Network formed part of the AU Resolutions on Gender adopted by the Heads of State in 2006. To formalise its partnership with the AUC, GIMAC Network signed several Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the AUC organs including WGDD and the AU Anti-Corruption Body.

The fact that the GIMAC Network has been accorded recognition and provided with a platform to bi-annually contribute to the decisions of the Heads of State through outcome documents and recommendations is a huge achievement for the women's movement. This has resulted in gender and women empowerment being mainstreamed in the decisions and programmes of the AU.



Besides being able to participate and contribute during the bi-annual AU summits, GIMAC Network has also been incorporated into the decision making structures of the AU and its Commission. The Women Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD) regularly organises joint consultative meetings with GIMAC Network. In addition GIMAC Network representatives attend AU thematic meetings such as the Women Peace and Security meetings where crucial decisions are jointly made. High level delegates such as the AU Chair, Ministers of Gender and the WGDD also attend GIMAC Network consultative meetings that come out with recommendations for the AU Heads of State. In October 2017, the GIMAC Network in partnership with WGDD and Action Aid International also organized the African Union Commission Consultative Meeting on the New Gender Strategy 2017-2021 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The GIMAC Network was also part of the evaluation the African Union's 50 Years' Anniversary in June 2013 in Addis Ababa and contributed to the Agenda 2063 of the AU. GIMAC Network also made contributions during Maputo Protocol Commemorations where the network was asked to make a presentation. GIMAC Network was further invited to participate in the development of the new Gender Strategy for the AU as well as the Digital Strategy (Education) and SDGEA which was born out of the Maputo Protocol. Beyond the AU meetings, GIMAC Network representatives have been invited to attend RECs meetings on gender mainstreaming and women empowerment. Globally, GIMAC Network has attended CSW meetings where its representatives have made important submissions and presentations.

Since 2002, the GIMAC Network has seen a phenomenal rise in influence and convening power within the AU, RECs, UN and member states. This has been one of the key achievements of the GIMAC network over the past 20 years.

3.3 Influencing the Policy and Normative Framework of the AU

A gender sensitive and gender responsive policy and normative framework is critical for effective gender mainstreaming within an institution's structures and programming work as the framework articulates the organisation's gender equality commitments and provides guidelines and milestones for the gender mainstreaming processes. Right from the beginning, GIMAC Network's objective was to influence the AU's Policy and Normative framework so that it could be gender sensitive and responsive by providing guidelines for mainstreaming gender at all levels of the AU, RECs and member states.

Below, some of the key advocacy demands and recommendations put forward by GIMAC Network over the last 20 years to make the policy and normative framework of the AU more gender sensitive and gender responsive for effective gender mainstreaming in order to achieve gender equality and women empowerment goals of the AU are highlighted. An overview of the uptake of the recommendations by the AU Heads of State and Government and the outcomes and impacts of the adoption of the recommendations is also provided.

a. Adoption of the Gender Parity Principle

Realising that there was no gender parity within the AU as occupation of the top positions of the organisation and its organs was male dominated, GIMAC Network strongly advocated for the adoption of the Gender Parity Principle and application of the principle across all organs of the AU to achieve a gender balance within a reasonable timeframe. Minimal representation of women in top positions of the AU implied that the strategic interests of women and their needs were not adequately represented as decisions and prioritisation of AU work was determined by male dominated structures. In its outcome document in 2002, the women's movement demanded that the AU should *"Guarantee a gender balance in all the organs of the African Union within a reasonable timeframe"*.

Following strong advocacy presentations and recommendations by the women's movement, the AU Heads of State and Government made far reaching decisions at their summit in Durban in 2002. The Gender Parity Principle was formally adopted and gender equality was accepted as the basic legal framework for the African Union Commission. In line with the adopted gender parity principle, up to 50% of decision making positions within the AUC were to be allocated to women.



b. Adoption of Gender Mainstreaming as a strategy for gender equality

In order to achieve gender equality and women empowerment within the AUC and its programmes, the women's movement advocated for the adoption of gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality in line with the Beijing Platform for Action Recommendation of 1995. The Beijing Conference formally adopted gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality and this resolution was signed and adopted by international development agencies, governments and CSOs across the globe. The AUC, in 2002, adopted the gender mainstreaming approach in all its work programmes, internal processes, policies and strategies.



GIMAC @20

c. Adoption of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)

GIMAC Network and the Women's Rights movement advocated for the adoption of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) by the Heads of State as an instrument for the AU to promote Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in Africa. SDGEA was adopted by the Heads of State and Governments of the AU at their July 2004 Summit. The SDGEA has remained as one of the most strategic reporting instrument deployed by the AU in the promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa. GIMAC Network pressed for the domestication and implementation of the SDGEA.

The SDGEA reaffirms the AU's commitment to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4 (I) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, as well as other existing commitments, principles, goals and actions set out in the various regional, continental and international instruments on human and women's rights. It further reaffirms the AU's commitment to: expanding the gender parity principle to all the other organs of the African Union, including its NEPAD programme, to the Regional Economic Communities, and to the national and local levels in collaboration with political

parties and the national parliaments in member states; full and effective participation and representation of women in peace process including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa as stipulated in UN Resolution 1325 (2000); appointing women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union; initiating, launching and engaging within two years sustained public campaigns against gender based violence (GBV) as well as the problem of trafficking in women and girls; signing and ratifying the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa by the end of 2004; reporting annually on progress made in terms of gender mainstreaming; and reporting annually on measures taken to implement the principle of gender equality and gender mainstreaming at regional and national levels. The SDGEA, which GIMAC Network advocated and lobbied for its adoption and implementation, remains one of the key foundational guiding documents on gender equality and gender mainstreaming within the AU and is thus one of the key achievements of GIMAC Network's advocacy and lobbying efforts.

d. Adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol)

To strengthen the gender responsiveness and gender sensitivity of the AU policy and normative framework, the women's movement in 2002 advocated and lobbied for the adoption by the Heads of State and Government of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol) and urged member states to sign and ratify this important instrument aimed at confronting the continual discrimination, abuse and marginalization of women and girls. In response to the recommendations of the women's movement, the AU Heads of State Summit in 2002 requested the Secretary General to take the necessary action in order to complete as soon as possible, the elaboration of the Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights relating to the Rights of Women in Africa and to make sure that all Member States are fully involved in the process.

The Maputo Protocol was ultimately adopted by AU Member States in July 2003, eight years after the commencement of the drafting process in Lomé, Togo in March 1995. GIMAC Network members participated in the drafting, monitoring and evaluation of the Maputo Protocol. At the summit, an appeal was made to all Member States to sign and ratify this important instrument in order to ensure its speedy entry into force. Before entering into force, the Protocol required ratification by fifteen member countries (Article 2).

GIMAC Network continued to advocate for the ratification of the protocol and on 26 October 2005, Togo became the fifteenth country to ratify and deposit the Protocol before the Commission of the African Union. The Protocol went into force on 25 November 2005. GIMAC Network encouraged all Member States that had ratified the protocol with reservations to remove those reservations and urge all others to ratify the protocol without delay and without reservations to enable all African women to benefit from this instrument which would ensure their full accomplishment and participation in national development.

In response to GIMAC Network appeal, the Republic of The Gambia removed the reservations previously placed on the Protocol. To date, 49 countries out of 55 Member States have signed the protocol and 42 have ratified and deposited the protocol before the AUC.¹



The Maputo Protocol is a comprehensive document wherein AU Member States have committed, among other commitments, to the following:

- Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legislative, institutional and other measures
- Ensuring that the right to dignity is enjoyed by every woman and girl through the adoption and implementation by States Parties of appropriate measures to prohibit any exploitation or degradation of women.
- Every woman shall be entitled to respect for her life and the integrity and security of her person.
- Prohibition and condemnation by State Parties of all forms of harmful practices which negatively affect the human rights of women and which are contrary to recognised international standards.
- States Parties shall ensure that women and men enjoy equal rights and are regarded as equal partners in marriage.
- States Parties shall take specific positive action to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other necessary measures.
- Protection of women in armed conflicts
- Right of women to education and training
- Right to health and reproductive health
- Special protection of women with disability and women in distress
- Provision of appropriate remedies to any woman whose rights or freedoms have been violated

The ratification and adoption of the Maputo Protocol, with far reaching commitments, remains one of the key contributions of the GIMAC Network advocacy efforts. However, for African women and girls to fully enjoy their rights, there is need for universal ratification of the protocol and hence further advocacy remains a priority to ensure that the thirteen remaining countries get to finally ratify the Maputo Protocol.

¹ AU Website: <https://au.int/>

e. Adoption of the African Union Gender Policy

GIMAC Network recognised the need for the AU to have a gender policy that will provide a guiding framework for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. At its April 2003 meeting, GIMAC Network recommended to the Heads of States summit that the AU should develop a gender policy to provide a guiding framework for the AU to mainstream gender within the institution and in its programmes. GIMC continued to lobby for this policy at subsequent meetings and AU summits. The first ever Gender policy for the AU was thus launched in 2009 and the policy was underlined by the gender parity principle.

The Gender Policy provides a framework for accelerating the realization of gender equality, fairness between men and women, non-discrimination, fundamental rights in Africa and gender mainstreaming. The policy also guarantees that gender issues are included in the African agenda on development. The desired effect and impact of this Policy is to offer opportunities for empowerment of women, guarantee their protection against violence and rape, as well as ensure their participation in public and economic life.



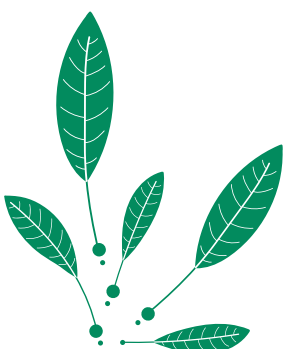
The policy has the following eight commitments:

- Creating an enabling and stable political environment
- Legislation and legal protection actions against discrimination, for ensuring gender equality
- Mobilising stakeholders for implementing the AU Gender Policy
- Rationalisation and harmonisation of Regional Economic Communities' gender policies and programmes
- Mobilising resources for implementing the AU Gender Policy
- Capacity building for gender mainstreaming
- Implement gender mainstreaming in all sectors
- Maintaining peace, security, settlement of conflicts, reconstruction and promote the effective participation of women in peacekeeping and security including efforts aimed at reconciliation in post conflict reconstruction and development.



At the time of the launching of the AU Gender Policy in 2009, about 70% of the AU member states had developed gender policies in line with the 1995 Beijing Conference recommendations. However, despite having gender policies, implementation of the policies was a major challenge owing to a number of challenges including lack of political will and commitment, limited resources and inadequate Gender Management Systems (GMS) among other factors.

The adoption of the first ever AU Gender policy remains one of the key contributions of GIMAC Network as this has provided a normative basis and framework for mainstreaming gender within the AU.



f. Adoption of Policies aimed at Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Women and Girls

Over the years, GIMAC Network continued to note with concern the continued and intensifying violence and sexual abuse of women with impunity, including within AU peace keeping missions. GIMAC Network, in 2006, called for the African Union, the RECs and Member States to prioritize human security, with special attention on the elimination of Sexual and Gender Based Violence including violence against children during peace times and in conflict situations. In response to this call, steps were taken by the AUC to investigate the allegations of sexual misconduct by some soldiers of the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS). A number of policies were put in place to address the issue of sexual violence and exploitation.

African Union Policy on conduct and discipline for Peace Support Operations was adopted in 2016. The policy clearly defines sexual exploitation and abuse as well as sexual violence. In the policy, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA); Child Sexual Abuse; and Sexual Harassment are categorised as serious misconduct warranting prosecution and imprisonment. The policy condemns sexual violence in all its forms and seeks to eliminate impunity in sexual violence. This Policy applies to all AU Peace and Security Operations (PSOs) and their Mission Personnel for all cases of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse committed in the PSO mission area whether the individual was on official duty at the time of the offence or not. This Policy complements the AU Gender Policy (2009), the AU Harassment Policy (2016), the AU Code of Ethics and Conduct (2016) and other documents and guidelines aiming to protect victims and whistle-blowers.

The adoption of a number of policies aimed at prevention of sexual violence and exploitation by the AU is one of the key achievements of the GIMAC Network advocacy efforts. In its meetings, GIMAC Network repeatedly highlighted the need to have a policy framework for addressing sexual harassment, sexual violence and exploitation. That such policies were eventually adopted can be attributed to the relentless advocacy efforts by GIMAC Network and members of the network.

In 2006, GIMAC Network recommended that Heads of State and Government, the AU mechanisms and the International Community to take urgent action to punish perpetrators of rape, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse of women and children in all conflict areas. In response, the AUC took steps to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct including by some soldiers of the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS).



g. Launch of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020)

Prior to the launch of the African Women's Decade in October 2010, GIMAC Network had made recommendations to the AU Heads of State and the AU to organise the second Heads of State Summit Debate on Gender to review and further strengthen African leaders' commitments to gender equality as provided for in the SDGEA and other related instruments in January 2010. GIMAC Network had also made a call on the African Union, through its member states, to implement the Action Plan from the 6th African Development Forum (ADF) which emphasised three priority actions, including an Africa-Wide campaign to eliminate violence against women.

At their Extra-Ordinary Meeting of Ministers of Gender and Women Affairs in Maseru, Lesotho in December 2008, the Africa Union Ministers for Gender and Women's Affairs called on the AU to declare 2010 – 2020 as African Women's Decade and to undertake wide consultations to ensure that the Decade is a success. The Ministers' proposal was adopted by the Assembly and the period 2010 – 2020 was declared as the African Women's Decade (AWD). The purpose of the African Women's Decade was to advance gender equality by accelerating implementation of the Dakar, Beijing and AU Assembly Decisions on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), through dual top down and bottom up approach, inclusive of grassroots participation.

A Road Map for the rolling out of the Women's Decade was developed with the full participation of GIMAC Network members. GIMAC Network also participated in a planning meeting in March 2010 on activities to be carried out in preparation for the launching of the AWD. GIMAC Network members thus had significant influence in the declaration of the AWD and in shaping its activities. Through participating in the processes that led to the declaration and the subsequent activities, GIMAC Network played a key role in creating a normative framework that guided the work of the AU on gender equality and women empowerment. Throughout the decade, GIMAC Network lobbied for increased visibility of the AWD and increases support for its effective implementation in the AU, RECs and Member States. The AWD is thus one of the key normative achievements of GIMAC Network's advocacy work.

3.4 GIMAC Network's Role in Implementation of Commitments and Institutionalising Gender Mainstreaming in the AU

After lobbying for the adoption of a gender responsive and gender sensitive AU policy and normative framework, GIMAC Network went a step further to advocate and lobby for the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming and implementation of the gender equality and women empowerment commitments that the AU Member States have committed themselves to. Specific measures were taken by the AUC to institutionalise gender mainstreaming within the organisation. These measures included the following:

a. Strengthening the AUC Gender Machinery

(Effective gender mainstreaming requires a formally constituted and well-structured gender machinery with a clear mandate and resources to spearhead the mainstreaming process. In this regard, GIMAC Network made several recommendations aimed at creating and strengthening the AUC gender machinery and its related structures.

At its June 2002 meeting, the women's movement recommended to the AU the appointment of a "Commissioner with an exclusive mandate on gender issues, equipped with adequate financial, human and material resources, for effective gender mainstreaming in the African Union".

GIMAC Network also called for the establishment of a specialised Technical Committee on Gender in accordance with Article 14 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Following recommendations from GIMAC Network and the women's movement, a number of actions were implemented by the AU to strengthen the AU gender mainstreaming machinery and these included the following:

Gender Directorate

The Gender Directorate was created within the Office of the Chairperson of the African Union in 2002. The Gender Directorate was tasked with mainstreaming gender in all the portfolios of the AUC. The fact that the directorate was located in the Office of the Chairperson of the AU gave the office great leverage and positional power to coordinate implementation of the AU's gender mainstreaming efforts. The Directorate is responsible for sharing the recommendations of the GIMAC network with the decision making organs of the AU.

AU Conference of Ministers

Following a GIMAC Network recommendation in 2005 for the AU to organise a meeting of the African Ministers of Gender to develop implementation strategies of the Solemn Declaration, the First AU Conference of Ministers Responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs was convened in October 2005. Together with the AUC-WGDD, GIMAC Network established the High-Level Ministerial meeting on Gender as a multi-stakeholder platform for sharing information, creating strategies and joint monitoring of the continental agenda on gender. The platform provided a solid foundation for building the gender mainstreaming work of the AU and member states.

African Union Women's Committee

In 2005, GIMAC Network recommended to the AU that the AUC needed to accelerate the process of putting in place the African Union's Committee (AUWC) responsible for safeguarding and representing the interests of women within the AU. The AUWC was established in 2005.

African Women's Fund

Following recommendations by GIMAC Network for the AU to establish the African Women's Fund for the purpose of specifically supporting and accelerating the implementation of all commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment on the continent, the fund was officially launched in 2010.

Special Mandate Positions and Institutions

GIMAC Network lobbied for the nomination of women mediators and special envoys to on-going peace negotiations and conflicts situations in line with the gender parity principle and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. GIMAC Network further lobbied for the creation of positions within the AUC with special mandates for gender and women and youth specific issues within the institution. This would ensure that women and youth issues would receive specific attention through these established structures. In response to this recommendation, the AU appointed a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security in 2014 and a Special Envoy for Youth in 2018.

Following the appointment of the Special Envoy on WPS, GIMAC Network members are regularly invited by the special envoy to contribute during meetings on WPS. GIMAC Network called for the strengthening of the office of the Special Envoy on Peace and Security as a key strategy for the systematic promotion and inculcation of a culture of peace among young Africans. One of the Special Envoys on WPS, Mrs Graça Machel, played a key mediation role in Kenya after disputed elections. GIMAC acknowledged the contribution of the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security in highlighting women's war experiences through solidarity visits and promoting their participation in peace building and post conflict reconstruction.

The AUC and GIMAC Network thematic leads undertook peace and solidarity missions to several countries including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia; Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe. The office of chairperson of the AUC has consistently supported the activities and programmes of the office of the Special Envoy on WPS particularly those focused on continued participation of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

The AU also appointed the African Union Goodwill Ambassador on Ending Child Marriage and Special Rapporteur on Women's Human Rights to ensure that gender equality, women's rights and empowerment remain high on the political and policy agenda of the African Union and its member states. Given its strategic role in Peace and Security in Africa, the AU further speeded up the operationalization of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD), established by the OAU in 1998, in response to a recommendation put forward by the women's movement in June 2002.

The first AU Champion on Gender and Development, the President of Ghana, was appointed in 2017 to provide leadership and political support to the chairpersons of the AU and the AUC to deliver on their gender equality and women empowerment mandates. The AU Champion launched the Gender and Development Initiative in Africa (GDIA) which seeks to promote women empowerment and political participation. Through this initiative, Member States who have not yet ratified the Maputo Protocol are continuously being urged to do so.

Specialised Technical Committees (STCs)

With support from GIMAC Network thematic leads, all the STCs of the AU adopted the gender equality agenda and set up gender mainstreaming priority actions for their sectors.





b. Implementation of the Gender Parity Principle

GIMAC Network advocated for the adoption and implementation of the gender parity principle from 2002. In response, the AU adopted the gender parity principle in 2002 and the operationalisation of the principle resulted in the following gender parity outcomes over the last 20 years:

- A year after the adoption of the gender parity principle in 2002, five female commissioners out of 10 were appointed in 2003. Since then deliberate measures have been taken over the last 20 years to ensure gender parity and regional balance in the appointment of AU commissioners. The gender parity principle has therefore been maintained since 2003 in the appointment of commissioners of the AUC and in other organs such as African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child AND THE Pan African Parliament where a female president was appointed in 2003;
- GIMAC Network strongly lobbied for the appointment of the first female chair of the African Union Commission in line with the gender parity principle. The first female chair of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dhlamini –Zuma, was appointed in 2013 for a four year term (2013-2016).

c. Women Economic Empowerment Initiatives²

GIMAC Network supported key AU specific initiatives aimed at empowering different groups of women. These initiatives included the Empowering of Women in Agriculture Initiative which was launched in July 2012 in partnership with FAS and the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) to promote inclusive livelihoods development and to address the constraints faced by African Women in Agricultural production. Other initiatives included the Kilimanjaro initiative; and the creation of a pool of women mediators (FEMWISE) initiative.

GIMAC Network's advocate efforts were also focused on promoting a legal and policy framework that accelerates Women Economic Empowerment. GIMAC Network recommended that Member States and RECs, with the support of the African Union, harmonise policy and legislation on women's property and land rights with special consideration for women affected by armed conflict and other forms of violence. The network put forward a number of recommendations on WEE that included the following: Member States should ensure women's access to land and to resources or profits obtained from extractive industries; and Member States should promote good governance and create a conducive environment to protect women's rights. The AU declared 2014 as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security in Africa and through the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, the AU Member States made a commitment to create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth through agriculture value chains and to support and facilitate preferential entry and participation for women and youth in gainful and attractive agri-business opportunities. The AU Members States also committed to allocate at least 10% of public expenditure to agriculture. In all the seven aspirations of the AU Agenda 2063 and its 10 year Action Plan, women's empowerment is recognised as a critical driver for the transformation and development of Africa.

² Please see section on good practices



d. Health

For the health sector, GIMAC Network made a number of recommendations over the years. The recommendations included; Enacting and implementing laws that protect women living with, or affected by, HIV/Aids from discrimination; prioritising spending towards health, in line with the Abuja Declaration, which provides for 15% of national budgets to be dedicated towards health; Creating mechanisms to engage the full and meaningful participation of affected women in all phases of health care delivery; Member States taking all measures to ensure the delivery of efficient health services to women at the local and national levels; the need for Member States to ensure women's access to health care; the need for African Governments to ensure availability of resources for women's access to ARV treatment in case of HIV/AIDS; designing communication strategies to ensure sexual education at secondary school level and to promote behaviour change in the communities; considering PMTCT (Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission) as an important intervention in AIDS control; Increasing access to family planning and reduce maternal mortality caused by unsafe abortions by ensuring access to safe abortion services within national laws and by renewing political commitment for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in line with the Maputo Protocol to "ensure that the right to health of women, including sexual and reproductive health is respected and promoted"; managing health and poverty issues in an integrated way so as to find a lasting solution to the recurring health problems on the continent; and availing adequate financing and resourcing for women specific health issues and commodities particularly in emergency situations.



In response to the GIMAC Network recommendations the AU Member States committed themselves through the Heads of State Summits to, among other commitments; Enact legislation to end discrimination against women living with HIV/AIDS and for the protection and care for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly women; Accelerate the implementation of gender specific economic, social, and legal measures aimed at combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and effectively implement both Abuja and Maputo Declarations on Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases; Ensure that treatment and social services are available to women at the local level and making it more responsive to the needs of families that are providing care; and to increase budgetary allocations in these sectors so as to alleviate women's burden of care. In May 2008, Dr M. Tshabalala-Msimang, Minister of Health of the Republic of South Africa, was nominated as Goodwill Ambassador to champion the Promotion of Maternal, Infant and Child Health in Africa. By 2012, a total of 37 Member States had launched the Campaign for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) as an advocacy strategy for the promotion of maternal, new born and child health. The AU urged other Member States that had not yet done so to launch CARMMA. In 2014 the AU Member States committed to Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths by the year 2035 in line with Post 2015 Framework on Sustainable Development.

The health sector continues to face major challenges particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, GIMAC Network noted with concern that the COVID-19 Pandemic has created major global health and economic shocks, with unprecedented impacts on people's health, nutrition and livelihoods.



e. Education

For the education sector, a number of recommendations for the AU Member States were put forward by GIMAC Network over the past 20 years. These included: Prioritising quality and accessible education, both formal and informal, in science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship to develop the skills of women and youth to attain economic independence; taking necessary legislative measures to promote girls' education, particularly through gender sensitive budgeting; Enacting, reinforcing or amending domestic legislation in accordance with AU standards in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the additional Protocol to the African Charter to protect girls from violence in schools and set the minimum ages of both marriage and consent for women and men at 18 years; Allocating a minimum of 20% of national budgets to education, with at least 3% dedicated to alphabetization and non-formal education; integrating human rights and peace education as well as life-skills into school curricula; Taking appropriate measures to introduce as quickly as possible IT programs in school curricula; Reinforcing gender perspective in education; and Considering as a priority free access to education for all as reflected in the MDGs and SDGs.

The AU adopted a number of measures in response to GIMAC Network recommendations on the education sector. In 2015, AU Member States committed to enhancing women's and girls' access to education, science and technology and resolved to end child marriage, also referred to as defilement, in Africa through adoption of the Common African Position on Ending Child Marriage and developing and implementing comprehensive action plans as an indicator for monitoring Agenda 2063 for girls' empowerment and well-being". The AU authorised the establishment of an African Education Fund in 2008 whose main purpose was to promote access to education, particularly among girls and young women. In 2010, the AU Member States resolved to work with GIMAC Network in the implementation of her Science and Technology agenda and programmes. At Member State level, countries such as Seychelles and Zimbabwe have introduced the GBV curricular in primary and post secondary education while other countries including Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe have introduced re-entry policies for girls and young women who will have dropped out of school due to pregnancy or early marriages.

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f. Young Women, Girls and Youth

GIMAC Network recommended AU Member States to invest in young women, girls and youth to enable them achieve their full potential through the promotion and protection of their rights which include participation in decision making; economic empowerment, education, employment, access to information, sexual and reproductive health; and prohibition of child marriages and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). GIMAC Network also urged Member States to urgently provide necessary support towards achieving the demographic dividend for Africa recognising the dividend is time limited. In 2011, GIMAC Network recommended for the appointment of a commissioner responsible for Gender and Youth Affairs to ensure a specific focus by the AU on issues affecting women, girls and youth.

The AU appointed a Special Envoy for youth in 2018. In 2017 the AU declared 2017 as the year of youth, with the theme “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investment in Youth”, which falls within the Decade on Youth Development in Africa (2009-2018), the Decade of Human Rights in Africa (2015 to 2025) and Agenda 2063 that aspires to build an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially women, youth and children. The AU endorsed the establishment of the African Youth Fund to support activities focused on the socio-economic and political development of youth in Africa. The AU also agreed there should be allocation to the African Youth Fund of an amount at least equal to 1% of the Programme Budget of the African Union Commission. In 2018, the AUC also resolved to take specific measures to ensure that by 2025, 35% of the AU workforce will be made up of youth. The AUC further resolved that from 2018 onwards, Member States shall fully finance the Youth Volunteer Program and the Junior Professionals Program from the regular budget of the Union. The AU made a commitment that Member States shall accelerate the payment of their contributions to the African Youth Fund in line with the July 2017 Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.661(XXIX) on the Establishment of the African Youth Fund.

The AU has made efforts to ensure that youth participate in peace and security issues in Africa. In 2021, GIMAC Network applauded the efforts of the AUC to establish a Network of African Youth on Conflict Prevention and Mediation (WISE Youth). In 2022, the AU endorsed the establishment of Wise Youth, as well as the outcomes of the November 2021 Nairobi High Level Retreat of AU High/Special Representatives and Envoys. The AUC further urged Members States which have not yet done so to ratify the African Youth Charter. After the successful organization of a Pan-African Youth Forum in N'Djamena, Chad from 29 June to 1 July 2017, the AU endorsed the institutionalisation of the Pan-African Youth Forum.

The women, girls and youth agenda has remained firmly on the AU agenda in the last 10 years largely because of the consistent lobbying by the GIMAC Network. GIMAC Network has thus ensured that the women, girls and youth agenda remains on the radar of the AUC and Member States which has resulted in significant efforts by the AU towards addressing some of the challenges facing women, girls and youth on the African continent.

The GIMAC Network has developed a strategy aimed at grooming, mentoring and nurturing young women and girls as leaders. This strategy is being implemented through (a) institutionalization of young women within the GIMAC Network mechanisms and enabling them to participate in AU processes; (b) annual advocacy and training institute led by young women themselves and bringing a collaborative work relationship with AU Youth Division, thus in-building sustainability; (c) anchoring key advocacy on pertinent issues affecting lives of girls and young women such as child marriages, SRHR and education in a systematic way, linked to AU campaigns and flagship programs; and (d) fostering partnerships for sustainability.



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g. Governance and Corruption

GIMAC Network made several recommendations aimed at improving governance and eradicating corruption within AU Member States. Member States were urged, among other measures, to: Ensure that all national and local policies and programs have in-built anti-corruption and gender sensitive monitoring instruments to minimize corruption; Create Citizen Action Groups for monitoring and evaluation of how public resources are governed and utilized to respond to needs, interests and aspirations of all citizens especially women and girls and marginalized groups who are often left behind; Provide the necessary support to ensure that all anti-corruption governance mechanisms being used have 50% women representation and promote initiatives that will protect African women from the impact of corruption; Ensure that 25% of recovered state looted money are devoted to women's development programmes such as female health related projects, economic empowerment, female literacy programmes, girls education and scholarship schemes and rural credit schemes; Investigate, sanction and curb all Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and corrupt behaviours and practices within states; and strengthen accountability mechanisms for holding multinational companies accountable to pay their fair share of taxes and uphold human rights in their activities including women's rights in accordance with

regional and international instruments especially women's rights instruments such as Maputo Protocol; Expose corrupt individuals and companies in Africa through open contracting that ensures contracts and trade agreements between foreign investors and governments are open to citizens engagement, input and approval by parliament; and promote the use of social media and other social spaces to curb IFFs.

In response to the above GIMAC Network recommendations, the AU Heads of State and Government declared 2018 as the year of Anti-Corruption. The AUC established an 11-member African Union Advisory Board on corruption mandated to provide advice on strategies to effectively address the scourge of corruption. Despite these efforts, many of the GIMAC Network recommendations remain unimplemented and corruption remains one of the cancers hindering development on the African continent.





3.5 GIMAC Network's Role in Ensuring Accountability for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Commitments

The GIMAC Network played a critical role in ensuring that the AU and Member States remain accountable for their gender equality and women empowerment commitments. The network produced the first civil society shadow report on the SDGEA in January 2010, and deliberated on how best to continue the monitoring of the reporting and the national implementation of this important instrument.

In order to strengthen her reporting mechanism relating to the implementation of the SDGEA, GIMAC Network with the support of UNECA in 2012 developed a monitoring index called the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI). The SDI was developed after the realisation by GIMAC Network that the AU reporting guidelines were weak and this made it difficult to evaluate both the quantitative and qualitative performance of Member States. The SDI was adopted by the AU Assembly through a declaration made during their 25th Ordinary Session on 14-15 June 2015 in Johannesburg. It was agreed that the SDI survey would be undertaken after every three years. GIMAC Network developed the Index to monitor the SDGEA based on the thematic indicators of health, education, women's rights, gender parity, land and housing rights, peace and security and reporting. GIMAC Network produced the first SDI report in 2016 based on submitted SGEA reports of Member States and has since used the indicators in this instrument to identify countries that have performed well in the implementation of the Gender Agenda and recognize them through the African Gender Forum Award (AGFA). To date Senegal, South Africa, Mozambique, Rwanda and Namibia have been awarded the AGFA. Acceptance of the award by the Heads of State indicates confidence and recognition of the role and work of GIMAC Network in promoting gender equality and women empowerment within AU Member States.

GIMAC Network used the Solemn Declaration Gender Index to measure progress of countries on agreed indicators. Good Practices for Emulation by member countries were also captured in the reports for use by other member States in strengthening

their gender mainstreaming work. The network also trained GIMAC Network members on how to produce shadow reports covering issues on women in Africa and profiling success stories and personalities in advancing women's rights at a national and continental level. GIMAC Network has supported the adoption of the Solemn Declaration Score Card (SDSC) which captures the qualitative aspects of SDGEA such as policy, legislative and institutional commitments made by the AU Heads of State. The SDSC is being utilised to recognise Member States who accelerate the implementation of their commitments in Africa as spelled out in Agenda 2063 and other commitments. The Score Card of the Maputo Protocol is implemented every three years to monitor extend of implementation. In the 2019 SDSC ranking, Namibia, Senegal, Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire scored highly with an implementation achievement of 92%. Mauritius and Somalia had the least score of 25%, indicating significant gaps requiring high level investment in advocacy.

The AU Heads of State Summit adopted the SDI as a measurement and evaluation tool for the implementation of Agenda 2063. The SDI has also led to the introduction of evidence based reporting on SDGEA for Member States, which also motivates them to reach specific gender equality targets. The SDI has become a tool for identifying gaps in fulfilling the AU commitments on gender equality and women empowerment and has become a key basis for advocacy efforts of the AU and member states. The SDI has thus become one of the key influential outputs of the GIMAC Network initiatives.

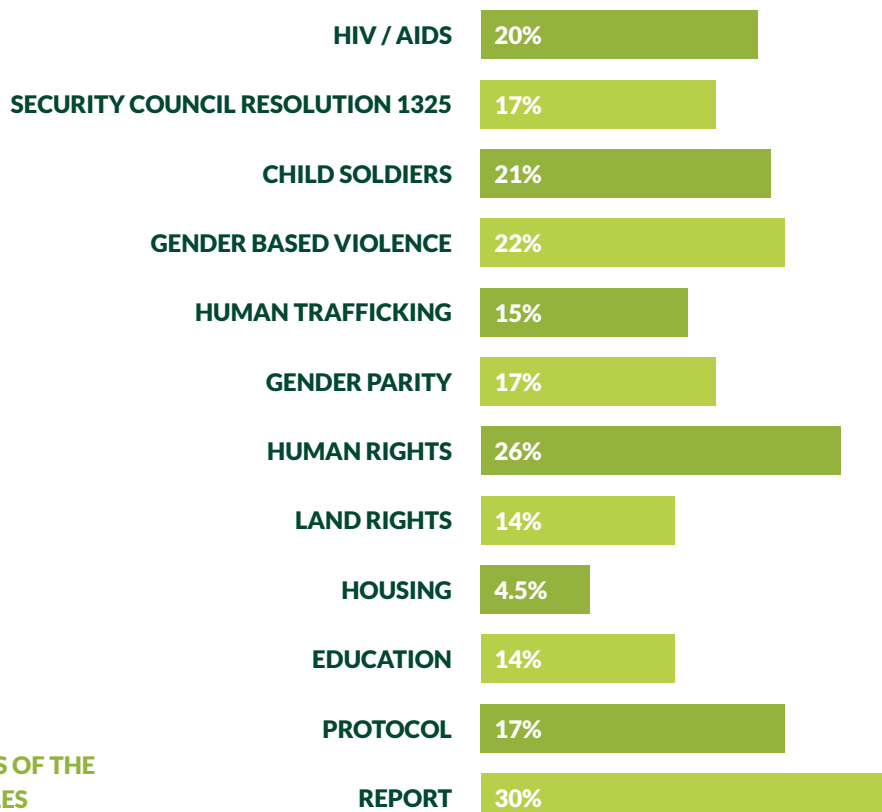
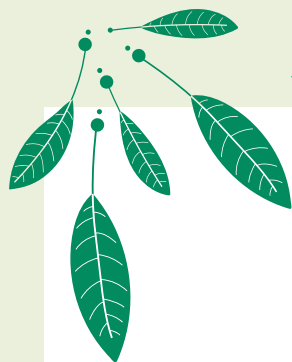


FIGURE 1:
IMPLEMENTATION TRENDS OF THE
SDGEA OPERATIVE ARTICLES

Figure 1 shows the Implementation Trend of the SDGEA Operative articles as at 2019.

The Operative Articles that have received the most attention in terms of reporting across the 35 countries that submitted reports include Human Rights (ratification of the African Charter on Human and People's rights); Ratification and Domestication of the Maputo Protocol; Gender Based Violence (use of appropriate legal instruments against GBV and trafficking of women and girls); Child Soldiers (adoption of child protection laws); and HIV/AIDS (adoption of anti-stigmatisation laws for PLWHAs). Operative Articles with low reporting (less than 50% of the countries reported) include Housing (housing rights of women); Education (girls education opportunities); Land Rights (land rights of women); and Human Trafficking. In the middle of the table, SCR 1325 (production of national plan of actions and legislation for implementation of the SCR) and Gender Parity (adoption of the gender parity principle) were reported on by at least 50% of the countries. Although some of the AU Member States did not submit their reports, the fact that 30 countries have started to use the SDI for reporting on specific Operative Articles is a good starting point as increased advocacy will result in more countries reporting. The 2019 report noted that there is need for improvement on the quality of reporting of some of the Member States.

The SDI tracking tool also does not track implementation of commitments at RECs level, which makes it hard to determine the extent of gender mainstreaming within the RECs. In 2021, the AU congratulated the GIMAC Network, GIMAC Network Steering Committee, its members and partners for:

“Consistently, qualitatively and solidly sustaining the monitoring of the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol on Women's Rights), through the GIMAC Network annual forums aligned with the African Union theme of the year”.

The above recognition of GIMAC Network work by the Heads of State summit is an appreciation of the work that the GIMAC Network is doing to monitor implementation of commitments and ensuring accountability. GIMAC Network is therefore regarded as a strategic partner of the AU.

The GIMAC Network has recognised women leaders and pioneers with individual annual awards. This has helped to inspire young women as they are able to benefit from mentorship and nurturing from these women leaders. Even though some of the women leaders and pioneers have left office, they continue to be important resources that will influence the agenda and core purpose of GIMAC into the future.

3.6 Member States Good Practices

The 2019 SDI Report identified good practices from Member States in terms of implementation of gender equality commitments. These were captured to encourage other Member States lagging behind to emulate and replicate the good practices from fellow Member States. The capturing of good practices is key in establishing minimum standards that should be set for each operative article. The documentation of the good practices has been made possible by the adoption of the SDI by the AU which was developed by the GIMAC Network. This shows the extent to which GIMAC Network has provided leadership in promoting AU and Member States accountability for commitments made on gender equality and women empowerment.

The section below provides a summary of some of the good practices under each operative article captured in the GIMAC Network SDI 2019 report.



GOOD PRACTICES FROM MEMBER STATES

HIV/AIDS



Malawi

- Mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS in national policies and programmes
- Decline in HIV prevalence from **14%** in 2004 to **9.1%** in 2016
- Adoption of EMTCT
- Moonlight testing for couples
- HIV and AIDS Prevention and Management Bill which prohibits cultural practices that make women and girls vulnerable to HIV infection
- **275,000** deaths averted through ART
- Youth friendly SRHR services
- Expansion of Maternal Health Programmes and Interventions

Peace and Security



Rwanda

- In 2015: world's second highest contributor of female peace keepers (**53%** of Rwanda's peace keepers were female)
- Women made **44.3%** of community mediators and **48%** in Access to justice Bureau
- Developed second generation National Action Plan (2018-2020) to Implement UNSC **1325** with strong emphasis on women participation in post-conflict resolution and peace building



Sudan

- GIMAC Network embarked on solidarity visits to SUDAN to enable women to share their experiences during the conflict in the country. Following the visits, GIMAC Network in 2014 recommended that women should participate in the peace process in Sudan. The participation of women in the peace process culminated in a final peace agreement document that was gender sensitive and inclusive.

Adoption of Child Protection Laws (child soldiers)



Chad

- In 2012 a total of 1174 child soldiers rescued from armed forces; **98** minors cared for in transit camps; and **48** reunited with their families
- Legislated against the recruitment of children by armed forces and the integration of rescued child soldiers into rehabilitation programmes
- Child protection agencies (international NGOs) mobilised to support these child protection initiatives
- As a result of the above efforts, Chad removed from a black list of countries with children in their armed forces



Democratic Republic of Congo

- From 2012-2013 the DRC government removed a total of **2,894** children from the armed forces (**365** of whom were girls)
- Enacted several laws on child protection:
- Law No. 09/01 on protection of children: raised the age of marriage from 14 to 18 years; child defined as anyone below 18 years; condemns the use of child soldiers
 - Appointment of Personal representative of the Head of State to combat Sexual Violence and Recruitment of Child Soldiers into armed forces
 - 2014 Action Plan to end recruitment of child soldiers
 - Medical assistance and psycho-social support for rescued child soldiers

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Trafficking of women and girls



Seychelles

- 2014: Enactment of the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons Act with minimum sentence of 14 years and 25 years if it involves children
- 2017: Standalone legislation that criminalises domestic violence in all its forms
- Orange campaign against GBV
- Introduction of GBV curriculum in post-secondary education



Liberia

- Introduction for a special court to prosecute and fast track SGBV offences, including rape
- Specialised training for the judiciary system, police, health and social workers in case management, care, prevention and reporting

Gender Parity



Ethiopia

- Political Party support by the National Election Board to be granted based on the number of women candidates nominated by the political party
- **15%** of the total budget of political parties for parties that meet the **30%** women representation threshold
- Special media time on radio and television for female candidates and **10%** of media time exclusively for female candidates
- Women representation in the House of Representatives grew from **21%** in 2005 to **28%** in 2010.
- 2019 parliament women representation **38%**
- Women representation among electoral officials: **40%**
- **43%** of the judiciary are women

Housing and Economic Empowerment



Ethiopia

- **30%** of federal housing scheme reserved for women and remaining 70% divided equally between men and women
- **54%** beneficiaries of housing schemes in the capital are women
- **60%** of rural women own arable land for farming
- Legislation put in place to promote women's access to resources including land e.g Rural Land Administration and Use Proclamation and the Revised Family Law
- Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) Strategy aims at empowering women:
 - **42%** of jobs created in the MSE sector for women
 - **41%** of training opportunities went to women
 - **47%** of those that accessed finance women



Kenya

- 2013: **30%** of government contracts to be awarded to disadvantaged groups such as women, people with disability and youth through the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) regulations



Zimbabwe

- Under the land reform programme, **20%** of A2 farms (Large Scale Commercial Farms) were to be allocated to women in their own right
- Women to own A1 farms (small scale) in their own right
- Creation of Women in Agriculture Apex Board to promote contract farming and agro dealership for women
- **15,200** women farmers went through Master Farmer Training
- Women Development Fund created in 2010 to fund women economic activities



3.7 GIMAC Network Membership and Partnership Building

GIMAC Network's progress in building a membership and partnership network was reviewed and documented. The effectiveness of GIMAC Network's advocacy work at AU, RECs and Member States levels largely depends on the extensiveness and geographical spread of its membership and partnerships and the capacity levels of the network members to carry out effective advocacy work. An extensive membership at all levels increases the network's collective voice and power and enlarges the sphere of influence of the collective pan-African platform of feminists.

The membership of GIMAC Network grew phenomenally from 14 founding Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) in 2002 to the current 55 member organisations across 23 countries. This represents close to a 400% increase in organisational membership over the past 20 years. Individual participation in GIMAC Network summits grew from around 11 in 2002 to more than 250 by 2020. In line with the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle, GIMAC Network has endeavoured to take on-board women's groups in their diversity, including vulnerable and socially excluded women's groups. Women's Organisations that have become part of GIMAC Network include those representing: youth and young women; rural women; women farmers; women with disability; and elders. Realising that young women are socially excluded from participating in development initiatives owing to a number of barriers, among them gerontocracy, inadequate resources and generation inequality, a specific Young Women's Network was formed to spearhead gender equality and young women empowerment activities.

The diversity of GIMAC Network member organisations include pan-African Women's Rights Organisations, regional, national and Community Based WROs. This ensures that gender mainstreaming and advocacy work is carried out at all levels, including at community level thus promoting the principle of LNOB.

GIMAC Network is focusing on six thematic clusters, each led by member organisations' focal point persons. The six clusters are Governance; Peace and Security; Human Rights; Health; Education; and Economic Empowerment. Other member organisations are organised into these thematic clusters. The allocation of thematic cluster leads ensures that gender issues are mainstreamed in the thematic focus areas of the AU and MS. GIMAC Network has also allocated regional focal leads for Africa's five regions to ensure regional representation of gender equality and women empowerment issues.

All the above actors have become effective agents of change at continental, regional, national and community levels in the various thematic areas that they are focusing on. All these efforts contribute towards the achievement of Agenda 2063 goals and objectives.

Over the past 20 years, GIMAC Network has built a broad range of close to 20 strategic development partners to support its work. These partners include AU's WGDD; NEPAD; UN Agencies (UNDP; UNFPA; UN Women; OHCHR; UNAIDS; FAO, UNECA;), international and regional development partners and donors (DFID; Governments of Norway and Finland; SIDA; Rockefeller Foundation; Mo Ibrahim Foundation; Africa Capacity Building Foundation etc) and international NGOs (Plan International; Action AIDS International; and Oxfam) among other strategic partners. These partners have drawn on their extensive international experience on gender mainstreaming and women empowerment which strengthened the advocacy work of GIMAC Network.

Through its secretariat based in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, GIMAC Network organises press briefings, press releases, newsletters and statements to keep the network and members regularly informed about GIMAC Network programmes, donors and partners and ways to support the goal of the network. GIMAC Network also uses social media such as Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook, its website and knowledge platform established with the support of ECA to communicate and share documents with members. The network also hosts bi-annual meetings on the side lines of AU Heads of State Summits to listen to the voices of different groups of women. The Steering Committee has been meeting twice a year face to face and online to discuss on issues that include GIMAC Network advocacy, fundraising and Gender Pre-Summit Meetings. GIMAC Network has been able to successfully convene 37 pre-AU Heads of State summit meetings. These meetings have created opportunities for visibility, skills building and profiling of the GIMAC Network members.

4 GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Although commendable strides have been made by the GIMAC Network in promoting gender equality and women empowerment through advocacy work and the creation of accountability mechanisms for the AU and Member States, the network faced significant challenges which led to a number of gaps in the network's efforts. Some of the key gaps and challenges are highlighted below:

4.1 Implementation of Commitments

Commendable progress has been made, with the support of GIMAC Network advocates efforts, to obtain the commitment of AU Member States towards the adoption of key instruments such as the Maputo Protocol, SDGEA and the SDI for accountability monitoring. Although the majority of the AU Member States have made commitments and adopted these key instruments, implementation of the same has been a key challenge owing to a number of factors that include inadequate commitment and political will, weak gender national machineries, pervasive patriarchal attitudes and practices resulting in resistance to change, inadequate human and financial resources, and low technical capacity by stakeholders at AU and its organs, RECs and national levels to mainstream gender.³

Weak implementation of commitments has led to the continued persistence of gender gaps that the GIMAC Network advocacy efforts sought to address. Some of the gender inequality challenges that have persisted despite the advocacy efforts of GIMAC Network include Sexual and Gender Based Violence and gender disparities in structures of the AU and Member States.

Outcome Statements of the GIMAC Network bi-annual meetings from 2016-2022 expressed the network's deep concerns on the "increasing violence against women and girls in Africa, the limited resources made available to implement policies and actions to advance the rights of women, the ongoing challenges of transitional justice and access to justice for women and girls, the dire humanitarian situation of women in refugee and internally displaced camps and those migrating beyond their country borders"⁴. SGBV thus remains a key challenge and threat to gender equality and women empowerment emanating from weak or non-implementation of commitments by Member States. The SGBV situation has been exacerbated by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, which left women and girls more vulnerable as a result of lockdown measures; limited access to GBV services; and increased economic vulnerability among other factors.

The GIMAC Network has also expressed concern at the limited implementation of the gender parity principle at both the AUC and Member States levels. The last GIMAC Network SDI

"WE REMAIN DEEPLY CONCERNED about the lack of effective implementation of the existing continental commitment of women's rights and gender equality such as the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality and the Maputo Protocol on Women's Rights, as well as the Kampala Convention on rights of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons"

GIMAC Pre-Summit Outcome Statement, 2019

survey report of 2019 showed that gender parity gaps still exist within the AUC with women comprising only 35% of the staff compliment while men constitute 65%. Of all the AU organs and institutions, only the ACERWC has the majority (64%) of female members. The gender disparity is glaring in organs such as the Assembly where only 1.8% of the members are female, the Executive Council (18% female), PRC (20%), Peace and Security Council (27%) and ECOSOC Bureau (20%)⁵. The above statistics indicate that despite adopting and making commitments on the gender parity principle, the AU falls short when it comes to implementation of the provisions of the principle. This remains a key gap that GIMAC Network needs to continue working on.

A key gap also exists in the annual reporting of the SDGEA implementation status by Member States. The last SDI survey report (2019) shows that annual reporting of SDGEA declined significantly from 52.83% in 2016 to 20% in 2017 with only Senegal, Mauritius and Ethiopia reporting consistently. The decrease in annual reporting by Member States is a cause for concern as it makes it difficult to assess SDGEA implementation performance of individual countries and therefore weakens accountability mechanisms put in place for implementation of gender equality and women empowerment commitments. The decrease in reporting is also an indication of waning political will and commitment by member states, a key gap that GIMAC Network advocacy efforts need to address.

³ Key informant Interviews with GIMAC Network members

⁴ GIMAC outcome document, 2016

⁵ 2019 SDI Survey Report

4.2 Funding of the GIMAC Network Secretariat and Advocacy Work

From inception in 2002, GIMAC Network has been operating without long-term funding. Members, and at times donors, funded specific bi-annual meetings where outcome documents with recommendations for the AU Heads of State were presented. The funding was thus mainly for the bi-annual meetings and very little was channelled towards ongoing advocacy and gender mainstreaming activities outside the bi-annual pre-AU Heads of State meetings.

The funding model of GIMAC Network present a number of challenges. The activity based funding model implies that the GIMAC Network has no long-term and sustainable funding to support advocacy and activities beyond the bi-annual meetings. The limited funding has also resulted in a lean secretariat of two staff members, not adequate to meet the secretariat needs of a membership that spans across the African continent and

with diverse interests and goals. The limited funding has forced the GIMAC Network to rely on voluntarism, which though indicating commitment on the part of the members, might not be sustainable in the long term. The resource limitations at GIMAC Network have also made it difficult to track implementation of recommendations at RECs and national levels. More long-term funding is needed for GIMAC Network to support advocacy and gender mainstreaming activities beyond the bi-annual summits.

One of the constraints to obtaining long term funding has been the non-registration of GIMAC Network as a formal organisation. In most cases, donors would want to support CSOs that are formally registered for accountability purposes. Efforts are however underway to register GIMAC Network as a formal organisation to pave way for long term support from donors.

4.3 Membership

The GIMAC Network has an informal membership structure comprising more than 55 organisations spread across Africa. The member organisations have a common goal of promoting gender equality and women empowerment. Organisations desiring to join the GIMAC Network are required to make an application which will be reviewed by the Steering Committee and upon approval a membership certificate and Terms of Reference will be issued to the new member. New members pay a membership fee of USD100, which is regarded as a gesture of commitment and the fee will be used to fund the activities of the network.

There were concerns among GIMAC Network members that there is no formal documentation of member organisations because the network has remained informal. Members interviewed described the documentation of membership as "haphazard". This makes it difficult to determine the exact number of organisations that are fully committed and active in advancing the cause of GIMAC Network. Furthermore, when members join, they are not organised into thematic clusters as this clustering is only done for the Steering Committee member organisations. Follow up on members that will have expressed willingness to join the GIMAC Network was also noted to be weak.





5 CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the impact of GIMAC Network advocacy work since inception in 2002 has shown phenomenal growth in the convening power and influence of the Network at both the AU and Members States level. The network is recognised and regarded as a leader in spearheading gender equality and women leadership and participation in decision making structures and processes at the AU and within Member States.

GIMAC Network recognition and acceptance as a strategic partner of the AU is evidenced by: high uptake and adoption of GIMAC Network recommendations made on the sidelines of AU summits; invitation to participate in AU activities and initiatives such as the drafting of the organisation's policies and strategies; and incorporation into the decision making structures of the AU and its Commission. Key GIMAC recommendations that have been adopted by the AU include: the gender parity principle; gender mainstreaming as a strategy for gender equality; Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA); Maputo Protocol; AU Gender Policy; and Policies aimed at Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Women and Girls.

The GIMAC Network has also played a pivotal role in strengthening the AU gender machinery through the adoption of its recommendations including: the need to create a directorate of gender; African Union Women's Committee; African Women's Fund; and the creation of special mandate positions and institutions for youth and WPS. GIMAC has contributed in the setting up of accountability mechanisms for women empowerment and gender equality through supporting the development of a monitoring index called the Solemn

Declaration Index (SDI) which is used to assess countries excelling in implementation of gender equality commitments and award them with the gender equality award.

The membership of the network has grown by more than 400% over the past 20 years. This has enabled the Network to leverage, for its advocacy work, on their members located in different countries thereby spreading the influence of the network across the African continent. The GIMAC Network has managed built a broad range of close to 20 strategic development partners to support its work.

The GIMAC Network has undoubtedly left a significant footprint on the gender equality and women leadership and participation landscape on the African continent. Key challenges ahead for the Network include: weak implementation of commitments owing to limited political will and commitment by some member states; lack of long-term funding for the secretariat which makes it difficult for the Network to support its growing membership base and to embark on long-term sustainable projects; and lack of formal registration which makes it difficult to attract funding from donors.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE WAY FORWARD

The documentation of the achievements and impacts of GIMAC Network advocacy work has identified a number of gaps highlighted above. Going forward, the following recommendations are proffered to strengthen the movement and increase the impacts of its activities.

a. Formal Registration:

The GIMAC Network needs to be formally constituted and registered as a WRO in order to attract more sustainable funding from donors who prefer funding formally registered organisations for accountability purposes. It is acknowledged however that efforts are currently underway to formally register the network.

b. Resource mobilisation and funding:

GIMAC Network needs long-term sustainable funding to be able to expand advocacy activities beyond just the bi-annual pre AU Summit Meetings and be able to monitor implementation at RECs and member states level. GIMAC Network needs to develop a Resource Mobilisation Strategy and engage a specialist to spearhead the resource mobilisation process. This will ensure increased visibility and presence in member states and at RECs level.

c. Secretariat Human Resources:

There is need to engage more support staff to support the activities of GIMAC Network. The thin staffing levels make it difficult for the personnel to cope with the amount of work required to efficiently coordinate the network. Specialist positions, such as Resource Mobilisation Officer, need to be created to mobilise resources for the sustainability of the organisation.

d. Increased advocacy efforts and monitoring of implementation of commitments and reporting:

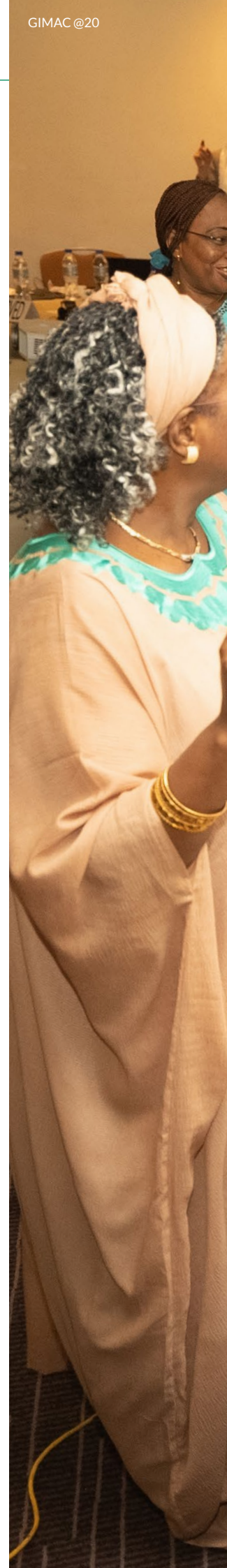
As noted earlier, implementation of commitments by member states and reporting has been weak and these are areas that GIMAC Network need to concentrate on going forward. For effectiveness, GIMAC Network needs more long-term resources and adequate human resources at the secretariat.

e. SDI Reporting tool:

The tool captures activities at AU and Member States level. It needs to also capture implementation at the RECs level for a holistic picture of the implementation process and achievements on the continent to emerge.

f. Structured Membership and Database:

There is need for a more formalised membership structure and data base to be able to track recruitment of new members and maintenance of the current members. The membership database will need to capture the activities of the members that they are implementing at regional, national and community levels so that a clear picture can emerge of the type of work that the members are doing and the impact of that work in promoting gender equality and women empowerment. The database can also be used to capture good practices that members are doing which can be replicated by the other members in the network.





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7 TRACKING TOOL: UPTAKE OF GIMAC NETWORK RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE AU

It is recommended that the tool be used during bi-annual meetings convened on the eve of the AU Heads of State Summits to capture recommendations of the meeting as well as to assess uptake of the previous recommendations made.

Date of AU meeting	Date Recommendation made	GIMAC Network Recommendations		Responsibility for actioning recommendation					
		Thematic Area	Specific Recommendations	AU HoS Summit	AUC/DGYE	RECs (specify)	Member State ⁶	United Nations ⁷	Donors (Specify)
		Peace and Security							
		Governance							
		Human Rights							
		Economic Empowerment							
		Education							
		Health							
5-6 February 2022	03-04 February 2022	Food security & Nutrition	AUC, through the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture and Commission for Health (DREA), Humanitarian & Social Affairs must develop a Nutrition Roadmap for the continent, with accountability structures to monitor implementation of the Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy (ARNS, 2015-2025).						
			AUC, through DREA, the Commission for Health, Humanitarian and Social Affairs, and AUWYGDD, must support member states to generate annual data on Africa's nutrition situation analysis, ensuring that there is an ARNS progress report that can be submitted for discussion at the AU Heads of State and Government Summit.						
			In line with the commitments and provisions in the African Regional Nutrition Strategy, the AUC, led by the AU Nutrition Champions and the relevant departments (DREA and the Commission for Health, Humanitarian and Social Affairs), must fully implement the African Region Initiative for Stunting Elimination (ARISE 2025 initiative), which can be used as a platform to generate and share knowledge on nutrition.						
		Youth and Young Women							
		Climate Change							
Totals									

⁶ Specify state, district, community⁷ Specify which agency and process e.g. CSW

Target period for uptake of recommendation	Who will fund implementation of recommendation	Recommendation Outcome-Adoption	Recommendation Outcome-Implementation	Comments	Recommendations on the way forward
1=half a year 2=1 year 3=2 years 4=more than 2 years	e.g. GIMAC Network members, UN, AU, Member States etc	1=Fully adopted 2=Partially adopted 3=Not adopted	1=Fully implemented 2=Partially implemented 3=Not implemented		
4	AUC	1	3	Recommendation yet to be fully implemented as it was recently adopted in February 2022	
2	AUC	3	3	Not mentioned in the AU resolutions	GIMAC needs to re-emphasise this with the AU
4	AUC	1	3	Recommendation yet to be fully implemented as it was recently adopted in February 2022	
		% Fully adopted % Partially adopted % Not adopted	% Fully implemented % Partially implemented % Not implemented		

ANNEXES

DOCUMENTATION OF GIMAC 20YEARS ADVOCACY IMPACTS AT CONTINENTAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

QUESTION GUIDE

for Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

- **UN Women**
- **Selected GIMAC network members**
- **AU Women, Gender and Youth Directorate**
- **RECs**
- **Donors**
- **Selected national gender machineries (Ministries responsible for Gender Equality)**

Introduction

Thank you for taking time to speak with me today. My name is George Zimbizi, an international development consultant engaged by UN Women Ethiopia Country Office to document the advocacy impacts at continental, regional and national levels of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) Network over the past 20 years. Although the outcomes of the advocacy efforts of the GIMAC over the 20 years are evident, there is need for a systematic analysis, documentation, tracking and monitoring of the substantive contributions of the network to fully measure the results of its advocacy efforts. The impacts of the advocacy efforts are going to be tracked and documented at continental, regional and national levels through engagement with GIMAC membership and key stakeholders at these levels. The longitudinal documentation of the advocacy impacts has been timed to coincide with the GIMAC 20th anniversary celebrations where key achievements of the network will be showcased.

You have been identified as one of the key members of the GIMAC Network and I would like therefore to have a discussion with you to capture your views and opinions on various aspects of the GIMAC advocacy work. The information you provide will be combined with information from other stakeholders to better understand the advocacy impacts of the network.

I would like to find out if you are willing to participate in this discussion and if you are, I'd like to record our discussion so that I can capture all of your key points.

- a. It is okay to record the interview?**
- b. Can we include your statements in the evaluation report? We won't use your name or your organisation's name**
- c. Can we include your name in the list of key informants?**

1. Background

- Could you please provide a brief background of your organisation's participation in the GIMAC Network advocacy initiative?
- In which thematic area(s) did you participate in:
 - Governance
 - Peace and Security
 - Human Rights
 - Health
 - Education
 - Economic Empowerment.
- Please give a brief description of your role, work and the activities you have carried out or participated in under this GIMAC Advocacy initiative?
- In your view, what would you in summary, say was the central purpose of the GIMAC advocacy initiative?

2. Achievements

- What would you say have been the key achievements/outcomes/impacts of your advocacy initiatives over the last 20 years at continental, regional and national levels? (Please list the key achievements in chronological order):

Probe for:

- Implementation of key major regional and international gender equality instruments
- Development and review of gender equality policies and legal frameworks aligned to international standards and commitments
- regular appraisal and evaluation of performance of the Member States and civil society in the implementation of SDGEA
- Creation of advocacy spaces for CSOs and the GIMAC network
- Adoption, uptake and implementation of recommendations from the GIMAC advocacy initiatives
- Building a stronger advocacy women's movement starting from grassroots level

3. Impacts

What has been the impact of the above achievements on the empowerment of women and girls over the last 20 years?

4. Key Lessons Learnt

- What key lessons have you drawn from your experiences participating in the GIMAC advocacy initiative?
- What would you consider to be the key gaps or weaknesses of the GIMAC advocacy initiative that would need to be addressed going forward?

5. Recommendations & Way Forward

- What recommendations can you put forward to address the gaps identified above?
- How can the GIMAC advocacy initiative be strengthened going forward?
- We are developing a tracking tool for monitoring and integration of the GIMAC Network recommendations in AUC Assembly Decisions and outcomes of other continental policy platforms.
 - How should the tracking tool be structured?
 - What key elements would you want to see in the tracking tool?
 - How often should the tracking tool be applied?

Thank you for participating in this discussion.

ANNEXES

List of key Informants Interviewed

Name of Person Interviewed	Name of Organisation	GIMAC Thematic Area of Focus
Eunice Musiime	Akina Mama wa Africa	Governance
Pravinna	ACCORD;	Women Peace & Security
Heken Kezie Nwoha	Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC);	
Coumba Fall Venn	Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS)	
Martha Muhwezi Fracia Kagu Juliet Kimotho	Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)	Education
Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda	Rozario Memorial Trust (RMT)	Young Women
Karen Ondwasi	GIMAC Young Women Network Chair	





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