



OUTCOME DOCUMENT

5TH GIMAC AU-RECS COORDINATION MEETING
ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE AFRICAN UNION



5th GIMAC AU-RECs Coordination Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Unions

Theme Of The Year:

The Implementation of the AfCFTA - Breaking Trade Barriers of African Women and Youth to Ensure their Inclusion

Dates:

13 - 15 July 2023

Location:

Nairobi, Kenya



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AfCFTA has the potential to increase intra-African trade by 81%, lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty by 2035, and boost Africa's income by \$450 billion by 2035.

Preamble

We, the participants at the 5th Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) AU-REC Coordination meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union convened in Nairobi, Kenya from Thursday 13th -Saturday 15th of July 2023 under the theme: The Implementation of the AfCFTA: Breaking Trade Barriers of African Women and Ensuring their Inclusion, acknowledge the relevance of the AfCFTA Agreement and its protocols in fostering an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, committed to advancing gender equality within the common Continental market.

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





CONGRATULATE the GIMAC Network, the GIMAC Steering Committee, the GIMAC Young Women's Network, for continuing to ensure that gender equality and women's human rights remain central on the agenda of the African Union (AU) and its member states.



APPRECIATE the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), H.E. Moussa Faki for his continued support for the women's movement and CSOs in their engagement with the various organs of the African Union, especially the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate and the Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights in Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGE and VALUE the presence of representatives from the Regional Economic Communities, the United Nations, especially UN Women, Development Partners and International NGOs, in the 5th GIMAC Strategic Engagement with the AU, RECs, and Partners;

APPLAUD the African Union for the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which was signed on the 21st of March 2018. We observed that there were many gender gaps in the Agreement and call for the involvement of CSOs in its development and provide capacity building for advocates to better understand the provisions of this protocol and how to use them at national level;

OBSERVED the need to implement Articles 13 and 19 of the Maputo Protocol on economic rights of women as the necessary minimum condition to guarantee maximum participation and integration of women into the AfCFTA protocol on women and youth in trade;

Emphasise the importance of working with CSOs in monitoring of the progress in this regard and in the implementation of AfCFTA protocol using appropriate tools and mechanisms that protect women's rights



REMAIN GUIDED BY the various normative instruments and decisions that advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in Africa, including the following:



- Article 4(I), of the AU Constitutive Act;
- The Maputo Protocol on Women’s Rights (2003);
- The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004),
- Aspiration 6 of the AU Agenda 2063; and
- The AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (2018-2028);

We therefore make the following recommendations to the African Union and Regional Economic Communities and AfCFTA Secretariat to:

1. **ADOPT** Human Right approach in the implementation of AfCFTA, ensure the effective implementation of the Maputo Protocol at all levels; and provide the platform for women’s rights organisations and gender advocates inclusion in the negotiations, implementation, and monitoring mechanisms of AfCFTA
2. **INVEST** in the simplification and dissemination of the AfCFTA Protocol for rural women traders and implement interventions that promote the value and importance of young people, especially young women and girls in the implementation of AfCFTA including the design of appropriate legal framework and services that protect them thus reducing exploitation and abuse, minimizing cross border crimes such as human trafficking and child marriage;
3. **DEVELOP** gender-responsive institutional framework, policies, strategies, and action plans that align with the objectives and principles of the AfCFTA, integrating gender equality at all levels of decision-making and encourage Member States to actively include the national machineries for gender in the implementation of AfCFTA;



4. **AGREE AND SUPPORT** further review and consultation on the Women and Youth Protocol on Trade through a technical session between Civil Society Organizations, AUC-WGYD and AfCFTA Secretariat to ensure that the protocol is more gender-responsive and cover the needs of women traders across the continent;
5. **INTEGRATE** the AfCFTA in Education Curriculum of Member States and review existing curriculum to respond to the needs of African Market through the promotion of Technical, Vocational Education Training and Entrepreneurship training from primary to the tertiary level as well as transition into the job markets;
6. **INVEST** hugely in women farmers cooperatives with processing, value addition and storage facilities for increased market access and reduction of post-harvest losses which is between 30-50% in African countries.
7. **INVEST** in strengthening health systems under AfCFTA and ensure that the private sector invest more and give access to woman through production of affordable and high quality SRHR products and services;
8. **ESTABLISH** mechanisms for regular evaluation and assessment to ensure that adequate attention is paid to the possible impact of trade liberalization on women and youth, especially those in cross-border trade and women farmers who are small-scale producers;
9. **SUPPORT** the creation and maintenance of a trade information portal through the AfCFTA Secretariat to provide information relevant to women traders, especially small-scale traders, to facilitate access to finance and support capacity-building of women in trade to ensure their access to benefits derived from AfCFTA implementation
10. **PRIORITIZE** the implementation of trade facilitation measures that are gender-responsive, including simplifying customs procedures, improving logistics and infrastructure, and leveraging digital technologies to streamline trade processes;
11. **BRIDGE** the Digital Gender Divide by prioritizing digital literacy and skills training for women and youth, ensure affordable access to digital





technologies, and foster an enabling environment for their active participation in the digital economy; while reducing digital inequalities especially for rural women and girls with the AfCFTA implementation;



12. **FUND AND RESOURCE** women and girls' organisations, cooperatives and businesses to leverage and benefit from AfCFTA while protecting and advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

13. **IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS** the differentiated effects derived from the AfCFTA implementation on populations at risk of being left behind through human rights analysis, monitoring and disaggregated data collection (by disability, gender, age, socioeconomic situation, etc).





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