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**IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK OF
THE SOLEMN DECLARATION ON GENDER
EQUALITY IN AFRICA**

ADOPTED AT

**THE FIRST AFRICAN UNION CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR WOMEN AND GENDER**

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IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK OF THE SOLEMN DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICA

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SD), which was adopted by the Heads of State and Government of Member States of the African Union during the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in July 2004, is the product of a broad-based and highly consultative process and concerted efforts of all stakeholders working on gender and development, including members of the civil society.

The SD reaffirms the commitment of the Heads of State to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4 (L) 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 and initiatives on human and women's rights, including:

- The Dakar Platform for Action (1994),
- The Beijing Platform for Action (1995),
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW - 1979),
- The African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women (1999);
- The Outcome Document of the Twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (2000);
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000);
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)
- Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +10); Decade Review of the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Outcome and the Way Forward (2004).
- International Conference on Population Development Platform of Action (1994)

This Framework is intended to provide guidance regarding the implementation of the Solemn Declaration. The timeframe for the actions is five years, and these will be reviewed every five years.

It is acknowledged that countries have their own national implementation plans on issues raised in the SD. The Framework is based on the commitments of Heads of State and Government to specific issues identified in the Solemn Declaration and should therefore be understood as a measure to accelerate the implementation of the existing national and regional plans.

It is important to understand that gender equality is not just a matter of political correctness or kindness to women, but also an issue of human rights as well as development effectiveness.

The implementation of the Solemn Declaration will require Member States to:

- Strengthen the political will to achieve gender equality at the local, national and regional levels;
- Incorporate a gender perspective into the planning processes of all ministries and departments of government and integrate gender dimensions into all phases of sectoral planning cycles, including analysis, development appraisals, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes, projects and budgets;
- Build in a gender perspective in national development frameworks such as the PRSPs and budgeting frameworks;
- Empower and increase the capacity and resources of national gender machineries;
- Forge links between government, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to ensure a co-ordination of efforts and resources; and
- Strengthen and simplify systems for institutionalised collection and use of sex-disaggregated data in statistical analysis, to reveal how policies affect women and men differently

Member States are also encouraged to include information on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration in their reports for the African Peer Review Mechanisms on progress towards gender equality under all objectives of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

COMMITMENT 1. : HIV / AIDS AND OTHER RELATED INFECTIOUS DISEASES

- ***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 making it more responsive to the needs of families that are providing care.***
- ***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.***
- ***Increase budgetary allocations in these sectors so as to alleviate women's burden of care.***

Actions

1. Ensure that there are:

- Laws:
 - to end discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS and protect women and girls from rape and other forms of Gender-Based Violence to reduce the higher vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS infection;
 - to address higher vulnerability of young girls due to cross generational and coercive sexual relations;
 - to strengthen the housing, property and inheritance rights of women and girls;
 - to criminalize wilful transmission of HIV
 - Policies in place to:
 - increase access to equal treatment, care and support for women and men of all ages, including women and girls with disabilities.
 - increase the access of women with HIV/AIDS to employment and income generating activities
 - Adequate budgets allocated for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support at all levels of government to ensure sustainability beyond donor support and where necessary embark on funds-raising
2. Ensure that more than 60% of those at risk of malaria, particularly pregnant women and children under five years of age, benefit from the most suitable combination of personal and community protective measures such as insecticide treated mosquito nets and other interventions which are accessible and affordable to prevent infection and suffering.
 3. Ensure that there are training programmes on treatment and care that involve women and girls and men and boys equitably.

Targets

- Laws to protect women and girls from rape and Gender-Based Violence, and for promoting property and inheritance rights in place by 2010
- Decline in rape and Gender-Based Violence prevalence
- 100% of all women and men infected with HIV/AIDS on treatment by 2015
- Reduction in incidences of child marriages
- Reduced vulnerability of young women to HIV/AIDS infection

Indicators

- Existence of laws that criminalize the stigmatisation of people living with HIV/AIDS
- Existence of laws to protect women and girls from rape and all forms of Gender-Based Violence
- Percentage of women living with HIV/AIDS receiving free or low-cost anti-retroviral treatment

- Percentage of pregnant women effectively treated for malaria
- Prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS disaggregated by sex
- Prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS among people of age 15-25 years disaggregated by sex
- Maternal mortality rate
- Awareness-raising campaigns on preventive methods, especially for women.

B. COMMITMENT 2. : PEACE AND SECURITY

- ***Ensure the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa as stipulated in UN Resolution 1325 (2000)***
- ***Appoint women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union***

Actions

1. Accelerate the equal and effective participation of women at all levels and stages of peace-making and peace-building, including formal and informal negotiations and agreements, in accordance with the AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and UN Resolution 1325
2. Promote and support the work of Special Tribunals and ensure that where crimes are committed in situations of armed conflict, all perpetrators, both state and non-state actors are prosecuted.

Targets

- Equal representation of women and men at all levels (continental, regional, national and local) of all committees established to promote the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa
- Equal representation of women and men appointed as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities on peace missions and in conflict areas
- Increased percentage of women involved in peace support operations

Indicators

- Percentage of women participating effectively in peace negotiations, peace support operations, peace-building processes and post-conflict-reconstruction initiatives
- National legislation which is in line with international instruments that promote the participation of women in peace missions and protect the human rights of women in areas affected by armed conflict
- Existence of Special Tribunals that protect the rights of women and ensure that perpetrators of Gender-Based Violence are punished.

COMMITMENT 3. : CHILD SOLDIERS

Launch, within the next one year, a campaign for systematic prohibition of the recruitment of child soldiers and abuse of girl children as wives and sex slaves in violation of their Rights, as enshrined in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

Actions

1. Enact laws that:
 - make rape in areas of armed conflict, a war crime
 - prohibit the recruitment of child soldiers
2. Put policies in place to:
 - free child soldiers and to rehabilitate them.
 - ensure that specific needs of young women, and girls in conflict situations, especially those who are child soldiers, refugees, abductees, internally displaced persons and people with disabilities are addressed
3. Ensure allocation of resources to support programmes on the rehabilitation of child soldiers and ensure that the particular needs of women and girls are allocated sufficient funds.
4. The AU Commission and Member States to launch a continent-wide campaign to discourage and eliminate the recruitment of child soldiers.

Targets

- Zero tolerance to rape and gender-based violence in conflict situations and ensuring that perpetrators are punished
- Launch of the campaigns to eliminate the recruitment of child soldiers by 2006
- Establishment of mechanisms within the AU Peace and Security framework to monitor recruitment of child soldiers by 2010

Indicators

- Increased prosecution of perpetrators of rape and gender-based violence
- Decrease in the recruitment of child soldiers
- Establishment of more and effective rehabilitation centres that pay special attention to girls
- Advocacy activities at continental, regional and national levels targeting recruitment of child soldiers

COMMITMENT 4: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

- ***Initiate, launch and engage within two years sustained public campaigns against Gender-Based Violence as well as the problem of trafficking in women and the needs of young women and girls***
- ***Reinforce legal mechanisms that will protect women at the national level and end impunity of crimes committed against women in a manner that will change and positively alter the attitude and behaviour of the African society***

Actions

- Enact and/or strengthen existing legislation so as to make gender-based violence a crime and punish perpetrators more severely, and strengthen policies and provide adequate institutional and financial support to address the needs of victims and witnesses, and the rehabilitation of perpetrators
- Deepen the understanding of the problem of Gender-Based Violence, its causes and consequences, through studies, community-based dialogue and public awareness campaigns and further develop strategies which will set specific short-term and long-term objectives to:
 - Respond effectively and adequately to the needs of individual victims and survivors of Gender-Based Violence
 - Take appropriate action with regard to the perpetrators of Gender-Based Violence
 - Build the capacity of law enforcement agencies to address Gender-Based Violence
 - Train media to cover issues of violence against women with sensitivity and enlist their support to promote equal and peaceful gender relations at the household level
- Formulate and adopt an African Protocol to prevent, eliminate and punish trafficking in women and children and develop plans and strategies to give effect to this protocol and the UN protocol at national level.
- Adopt laws that outlaw the practice of female genital mutilation and other harmful practices

Targets

- Elimination of Gender-Based Violence by 2015
- Elimination of trafficking in women and girls by 2015
- Elimination of female genital mutilation and other harmful practices by 2015

Indicators

- Existence of laws that prohibit gender-based violence;

- Existence of national Plans of Action to address Gender-Based Violence with adequate resources
- Existence of the AU Protocol on the suppression of trafficking in persons.
- Prevalence rate of female genital mutilation and other harmful practices

COMMITMENT 5: GENDER PARITY PRINCIPLE

Expand and promote the gender parity principle that has been adopted regarding the Commission of the African Union 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 our countries

Actions

Enact laws and put in place policies to promote equal participation of women and men in:

- the legislature
- leadership of political parties
- the executive branch of the State
- the judiciary
- local government etc.

Target

- 50% female representation in all Organs of the African Union by 2015
- 50% of female representation in the Regional Economic Communities and National governments of countries of the African Union by 2015
- 50 % female representation in parliament and the judiciaries by 2015

Indicators

- Percentage of women in decision-making positions of the AU Organs
- Percentage of women in decision-making Organs of the RECs
- Percentage of women in ministerial positions
- Percentage of women in the judiciary
- Percentage of women in local government councils
- Percentage of women mayors

COMMITMENT 6. : HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Ensure the active promotion and protection of all human rights for women and girls including the right to development by raising awareness or by legislation where necessary

Actions

1. Accelerate the ratification, domestication and implementation of international and regional human rights instruments that promote gender equality, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and related regional plans of action and implementation strategies
2. Put in place mechanisms for the sensitization of the judiciary and law enforcement officers on issues of gender equality and women's rights
3. Enact laws and ensure the development of policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and also protect the rights of women

Targets

- All AU Member States to have ratified and domesticated the following instruments by 2015
 - The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
 - The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)
 - The UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol
 - The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Indicators

- The number of countries that have ratified and domesticated the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, CEDAW and its Protocol, CRC, and the ACRWC

COMMITMENT 7: LAND, PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE RIGHTS

Actively promote the implementation of legislation to guarantee women's land, property and inheritance rights including their rights to housing

Actions

1. Enact legislation that guarantee women's access to and control over land and property and allow them to effectively enjoy these rights
2. Put in place policies that increase women's access to credit

Targets

- Increase the proportion of women who own land to 30% by 2015

- Increase the proportion of women with access to credit to 40% by 2015

Indicators

- Percentage of land owned by women
- Percentage of credit lent to women

COMMITMENT 8: EDUCATION

Take specific measures to ensure the education of girls and literacy of women, especially in the rural areas, to achieve the goal of “Education for All” (EFA)

Actions

1. Accelerate compliance with the EFA goal that promotes gender equality in education; MDG goals 2 and 3 on the universal primary education and on the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment respectively, and the African and Beijing Platforms for Action
2. Make school affordable for poor families so that poor girls can get the opportunity to attend school
3. Reduce the distance to school to encourage girls’ enrolment and attendance by alleviating concerns for safety and reputation.
4. Improve the physical infrastructure and social environment to enhance the safety girls. This includes freedom from harassment and other form of predatory behaviours
5. Improve the quality of education and ensure that there are policies motivating more girls to take Science and Mathematics and that there are mechanisms in place to encourage them in this regard

Targets

- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2010 and in tertiary education by 2015
- Increase percentage of girls and young women entering fields previously dominated by boys at tertiary level
- Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Indicators

- Primary school completion rate for girls and boys
- Net enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and tertiary education

COMMITMENT 9: THE PROTOCOL TO THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA

Undertake to sign and ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa by the end of 2004 and to support the launching of public campaigns aimed at ensuring its entry into force by 2005 and usher in an era of domesticating and implementing the Protocol as well as other national, regional and international instruments on gender equality by all States Parties

Actions

1. Sign and ratify, as well as domesticate the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and other international instruments that protect the rights of women, e.g. CEDAW and its Optional Protocol.
2. Continental, regional and national campaigns to raise awareness and champion ratification and domestication of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa

Targets

- Signing and ratification of the Protocol by all AU Member States by end of 2010
- Domestication of the Protocol by all AU Member States by 2015

Indicators

- Number of countries that have signed and ratified the Protocol
- Number of countries that have domesticated the Protocol

COMMITMENT 10: AIDS WATCH AFRICA

Establish AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) as a unit within the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission who should render annual report on HIV/AIDS situation in the continent during annual Summits; and promote the local production of anti-retroviral drugs in our countries

Actions

1. Provide AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) with the necessary technical and financial support to enable it to function effectively;
2. Ensure that gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS are fully taken into account in AWA programmes

Targets

- Produce accurate reports on the situation regarding HIV/AIDS on the continent including gender dimension of the pandemic

Indicators

- Annual reports of AWA
- Percentage of people leaving with HIV/AIDS with access to Anti-Retroviral drugs disaggregated by sex

COMMITMENT 11: TRUST FUND FOR WOMEN

- *Establish an African Trust Fund for Women for the purpose of building the capacity of African women*
- *Request the African Union Commission to work out the modalities for the operationalization of the Fund with special focus on women in both urban and rural areas*

Actions

1. Accelerate establishment of the Fund
2. AU Commission to submit a report to the AU Summit, in January 2007, on modalities for the operationalization of the Fund
3. Ensure that the Fund is used to build the capacity of women

Targets

- Establishment of the African Trust Fund for Women by 2010

Indicators

- Progress reports on plans to establish the Fund
- A Fund established with sufficient resources to serve the intended purpose.

COMMITMENT 12: REPORTING

Commit to report annually on progress made in terms of gender mainstreaming and to support and champion all issues raised in this Declaration, both at the national and regional level

Actions

Heads of State and Government submit annual reports at the Summit

Targets

- Heads of State to take responsibility and account for national progress towards gender equality annually

Indicators

- Annual reports submitted within the framework of the Solemn Declaration

COMMITMENT 13: CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission to submit, for consideration, an annual report, during Ordinary Sessions of Heads of State, on measures taken to implement the principle of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and all issues raised in this Declaration both at the national and regional levels

Actions

1. AU Commission to accelerate the development of the gender policy and the gender mainstreaming strategy for the AU Organs and all the building blocks, and ensure that these guide countries in their national strategies of mainstreaming gender.
2. Chairperson to ensure that measures are taken to implement the principle of gender mainstreaming at the AU Commission.

Targets

- Chairperson of the AUC to account annually to the Heads of State and Governments on actions to promote the principle of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

Indicators

- Regular reports by the Chairperson in the Ordinary Sessions of the Assembly Heads of State on progress made in mainstreaming gender in AU structures and all Member States.