

African Union, African Regional Bodies

Recommendation on enhancing institutional and legal environment for the rights of girls and women's education

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African Union

Recommendation on enhancing institutional and legal environment for the rights of girls and women's education

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Commenced

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THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT,

CONSIDERING Article 17 (1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union on the promotion of sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels; and the establishment of the Pan-African Parliament to ensure the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent;

CONSIDERING also Article 3 of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Pan-African Parliament, and Rule 4 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament, which empower the PAP to inter alia facilitate the implementation of policies, objectives and programmes of the African Union and to oversee their effective implementation;

REAFFIRMING the content of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (CADE), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), World Declaration on Education For All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on the rights to education for girls and women.

FURTHER REAFFIRMING the content of the 10 Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (2016-2025), the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the African Women's Decade (2010-2020), and other Gender policies and frameworks.

RECOGNISING that education is a basic human right for a continent's development and that gender equality and women's socio-economic and political empowerment can never be achieved without the implementation of policies, instruments adopted and ratified at global, regional and national levels and related to women and girls' rights;

AWARE OF efforts to promote girls' and women's education around the continent, yet continue to face an array of socio-economic, cultural and political challenges which limit the implementation of international, regional and national frameworks on promotion and protection of girls and women's right to education;

RECOGNISING existing and emerging threats to Africa's development, including climate change, conflicts, terrorism, the illicit proliferation of arms and health pandemics (Ebola, HIV/AIDS) and the disproportionately negative impact they have on girls' and women's lives and well-being; and underscore girls' and women's education plays a critical role in their lives and that large numbers of African girls and women continue to be disenfranchised by a lack of education annually;

APPRECIATING the commitment of Heads of State and Government of the African Union to girls' and women education in Africa;

RECALLING the final Communiqué of the Capacity Building Workshop jointly organized by the African Union International Center for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa (AU/CIEFFA) and the Pan African Parliament (PAP) held on the 13th of May 2017 at the PAP;

IN ACCORDANCE WITH Rule 5 (d) of the Rules of Procedures of the PAP, which authorises the PAP to make recommendations and formulate resolutions on any matter relating to the African Union and its organs, Regional Economic Communities and their respective organs, Member States and their organs and institutions;

NOW HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT:

AUC, RECs and Member States to:

1. **implement** legal policies, instruments related to women and girls' rights to access educational systems need to be adopted and ratified at global, regional and national levels;
2. **undertake** strong measures at the policy and management/administration level to address the fear among girls and parents/families of potential molestation, harassment and discrimination both on their way to and from school and within school;
3. **reformulate** policies related to gender education and gender equality and highlight the need for capturing the lived experience of girls while they go through the educational process rather than merely focusing on the issue of gender parity alone;
4. **encourage** AU Policy Organs to appoint an AU Special Rapporteur on Girls' and Women Education with a political mandate on the rights of girls to access schools and complete at least secondary schooling in spite of eventual break-ups in their schooling;
5. **implement** targeted specific school programmes and infrastructures for countries in emergency situation as well as other socially vulnerable groups like out-of school girls;
6. **reconstruct** school infrastructure in emergency situations as well as ensuring an education for displaced children and youth by encouraging teachers to resume teaching in conflict-affected areas;
7. **initiate** curricular reforms so that the curriculum for the entire spectrum of schooling from education to tertiary level fully and properly addresses the issues of gender parity, gender equality and gender equity not only as they pertain to the education sector but also with regard to women's empowerment in the socio-economic spheres;
8. **encourage** the improvement of the existing Educational Management and Information System (EMIS) to capture detailed and disaggregated data on many aspects of education, such as the quality aspect, the transformational experience of learners and teachers and the gender dimension, in a comprehensive manner and assessment of progress on access, retention and completion of girls and young women in the educational system;
9. **encourage** public-private sector collaboration as well as involvement of NGOs and CSOs working in the education sector in addressing a variety of socio-economic and cultural barriers;
10. **encourage** AU Member States to set up satellite campuses, feeder schools and recruit local female teachers, representing the disadvantaged groups, to facilitate implementation of programmes and projects seeking to achieve gender parity and gender equity provided that quality aspects are also ensured;
11. **share** best practices and challenges faced in retaining girls and young women in schools and universities;

Adopted at Midrand, South Africa, 18 May 2017.