



Side Event of 3rd Pan African Youth Conference 2019, Banjul

CONCEPT NOTE ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

By Gender Equality & Empowerment for Women

The Gambia, Banjul

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women in The Gambia have over the years suffered from all kinds of discrimination from their opposite sexes, getting its roots from culture, tradition, custom and religion. There are many mechanisms of empowering women to which Education is the source. Non-discrimination, Equal Pay for Equal Work, Inclusiveness in Decision Making Processes and Leadership though might also be considered. Education is a key influence when it comes to capacity building, thus is a key. It provides women with the ability and knowledge needed to direct their own lives. The positive ripple effect of education for women and girls is so far-reaching that a number of international organizations, *UNESCO* and *UN Women* foremost among them, have persuasively argued it may be the single most effective tool for development.¹ As the African Union puts it, Africa women shall play an important role as drivers of change,² a developmental aspiration. Further, the aspiration and vision of the AU towards 2063 captured the Empowerment of Women to play their rightful role in all spheres of life³ without discrimination as to gender.⁴

THEME AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

GEEW's side event will examine how various stakeholders can contribute now and in the future to achieve gender equality⁵ in various aspects of empowering women. This overarching theme will underscore a sub-theme on *education*, with a guiding question.⁶

● WHAT ARE THE NECESSARY STEPS IN ATTAINING THESE?

Cultural practices that are myopically degrading and illusory should be abolished;
Government policies should be geared towards advancing accessible education for girls at all levels;
The government should encourage civic education for women and girls;

¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2014), EFA Global Monitoring Report (2013) Teaching and learning: 'Achieving quality for all' Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e>

² African Union Agenda 2063 'The Africa We Want' Aspiration No. 5 para 45.

³ African Union Agenda 2063 'The Africa We Want' Aspiration No. 6.

⁴ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; General Assembly Resolution 34/180 (18th December, 1979), article 1.

⁵ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (25th September, 2015) 'Transforming Our World; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 3.

⁶ UNESCO Concept Note 'Mobile Learning Week 2015'.

The government should create all necessary level playing backgrounds for women affairs;

The government should encourage meaningful participation of women in governance and decision making process;

The government should enforce gender-based violence laws;

The government should take all necessary steps in domesticating all international laws protecting women in its laws.

If the above encapsulations are achieved, ‘education’ for women would be ascertainable and be empowered obviously.

● EDUCATION

An Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its Women⁷ has *aspired* that, all women has full gender equality in all spheres of life⁸ to which education is a machinery. When women are educated the following are attainable:

- ✧ *They are oriented on early child marriage;*
- ✧ *When married, they tends to have healthier families;*
- ✧ *They gain skills needed to enter and succeed in the labour market;*
- ✧ *They will recognize the importance of health care and seek it for themselves and their children;*
- ✧ *They will understand their rights and gain the confidence to insist on them.*⁹

OBJECTIVES OF THE SIDE EVENT

The side-event would encourage delegates and other participants to embark upon endeavors which are achievable in pursuing the *Empowerment of Women* in their various societies, schools and work places.

Gender Equality as being a subtopic of the sub-theme would gain the attentions of delegates and attendees to considering the AU Agenda 2063 and the UNSDG 2030.¹⁰

CONCLUDING OUTCOME

At the end of the event, we are hopeful that delegates, participants and attendees would adopt the proposed measures and thereby, bring about further appropriate measures in setting a standard for empowering African women.

⁷ African Union Agenda 2063 ‘*The Africa We Want*’ Aspiration No. 6.

⁸ AU Agenda 2063, para 47.

⁹ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2008) ‘Promoting Gender Equality: Empowering Women through Education’ *New York*. <http://www.unfpa.org/gender/empowerment2>

¹⁰ United Nations Sustainable Developmental Goals 2030 No. 5 para 5.1.