



## **DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE**

**31<sup>st</sup> Civil Society Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on  
Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union and Member States**

**African Union Summit Theme:  
“Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation”**

**GIMAC Theme:  
“Corruption and Governance: Impact and way out for Women, Children and Youths.”**

**Tentative dates (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2018)**

***Venue:* United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

## 1. Introduction

The African Union Heads of States Assembly has marked the year 2018 by dedicating it to the fight against corruption with the theme “**Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation**”.<sup>1</sup> The theme follows the AU’s previous three themes that focus on women’s empowerment, Human rights and young people. This year’s theme falls within the African Women’s Decade (2010-2020) and also contributes to the achievement of aspiration 3 of the AU Agenda 2063 which is to have an “Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law

Africa continues to make great strides towards the realization of the Agenda 2063 despite the many challenges that face the members States. Several of the states have witnessed violence in different forms with women and youths highly impacted. These incidences have tarried longer than expected and mostly due to dysfunctional governance framework in many of these countries. These occurrences decry the commitment of Africa to Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in Youth, which was the focus of the Africa Union in the year 2017 and then focusing on wining the fight against corruption in the year 2018

Corruption is a governance issue and it is defined as the “misuse of entrusted power for private gain” It has been well-stated in an Africa Commission report that “*unless there are improvements in capacity, accountability, and reducing corruption other reforms will have only limited impact*”<sup>2</sup>. It is also important that corruption is not limited only to the government, the private sector has also been known to engage in undue influence to shape state policies, laws and regulations for their own benefits, of course, with the help of corrupt persons in the corridors of power. Foreign aid also deteriorates existing economy by contributing to the gravity of corruption in African states. Their support is usually shrouded with hidden agenda and unbearable conditions. Most often the aid provided do not reach their rightful recipients, but go to the hands of corrupt political officials. These activities have contributed to the continued setback observed in sustainable peace and development in Africa. The 2018 theme of the AU speaks directly to Aspiration 3 of the Agenda 2063, “*An Africa of good governance, democracy, and respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law*”.

Corruption has a negative impact on women’s empowerment and participation. Women face corruption in their everyday lives, they experience corruption in enrolling their children in schools, denouncing physical abuse against family members, partaking in government subsidized programmes and participating in electoral processes. Due to social and cultural discrimination against women in our society, corruption impacts them disproportionately, for instance, when compared to men, women engaged in vulnerable employment and their unpaid care work is undervalued.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://assodesire.com/2017/07/05/outcomes-of-the-29th-summit-of-the-african-union-unofficial-note-july-2017/>

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Kaufman, Myths and Realities of Governance and Corruption. 2006

To deal with corruption against women at all levels, we should not just understand but address the relationship between women and corruption. To address this, relevant and effective strategies that mandates women inclusion in policy, research, and programme design processes must be developed, community monitoring of public services through a variety of mechanisms should be institutionalized while an anonymous and safe spaces for women to report corruption is established. Also, National Governments should create an enabling environment for women to address corruption, this could be achieved when gender-sensitive anti-corruption laws and policies that recognize physical abuse, sexual extortion or exploitation, and other forms of bribery particularly experienced by women are passed<sup>3</sup>.

In view of this, the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the GIMAC pre-consultative meeting will tentatively hold from 17-18 January, 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia under the theme: “**Corruption and Governance: Impact and way out for Women, Children and Youths.**”. The meeting aims to identify strategies and interventions that have continental implications in order to forestall the continued impact of corruption in governance, which hinder development, weaken the fabrics of sanity in the communities, promote violence and encourages avoidable negative consequences or marginalization and ethnocentrism.

In preparation for the January 2018 AU Gender Pre-summit meeting and the 30th AU Ordinary Session of the Assembly, the GIMAC network will work closely with the African Union Commission, African Union Ministers of Gender and Women’s Affairs, African Union Advisory Board on Corruption, , Regional Economic Communities, United Nations agencies and other civil society entities, to ensure the inclusion of women’s voice and those of the youths in the fight against corruption.

The 30th AU Heads of States and Government Meeting is preceded by the 35<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Permanent Representatives’ Committee (PRC) to be held from in January 2018 and 32nd Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council to take place on in January 2018.

## **2. Background**

The Gender is My Agenda Campaign came to existence during the transformation of the Organization of the African Union (OAU) to AU to ensure women were part of, and benefited from, the transformation process. Taking cognizance of OAU’s focus on decolonization and its failure to address and integrate the concerns of African women, GIMAC members called for the recognition and visibility of gender issues in the newly organized continental framework - AU and Member States. Since it was officially launched in 2002, in Durban, South Africa, GIMAC has been taking place bi-annually in advance of the African Union Summit of Heads of States and Government to engage AU Member States on African women rights, issues, and concerns.

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Anti-corruption/Grassroots%20women%20and%20anti-corruption.pdf>

So far, GIMAC has played a pivotal role in influencing decisions and actions taken to strengthen women's rights and gender mainstreaming in the African continent by working closely with the AU.

The GIMAC network consists of more than 55 civil society organizations promoting gender equality and accountability for women's rights. The GIMAC is organized around the themes related to the operating articles of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa namely human rights, governance, peace and security, economic empowerment, education and health. The GIMAC also monitors emerging issues such as climate change and promotes the leadership of young African women.

The GIMAC network members are leading practitioners in women's rights and development and over the years, the network has registered key successes in contributing to the adoption of the AU gender parity principle, the Maputo Protocol and the SDGEA. The GIMAC recommendations have been reflected in the outcome documents of the AU Summit and the GIMAC has supported advocacy campaigns for a female Chairperson for the African Union Commission, the application of the point's principle 50/50 and the appointment of an African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security.

As a follow-up to the flagship project of the GIMAC, Empowering Women in Agriculture (EWA) launched in July 2012 in partnership with FAS and the ACBF, the GIMAC also creates space for launching innovative ideas and campaigns such as the campaign on safe abortion with the special rapporteur on Human Rights and IPAS, the campaign to End Child Marriage with AU with an appointment of Goodwill Ambassador for Child Marriage and the African Governments effort to facilitate the realization of property right of women in agriculture through the Kilimanjaro Initiative. The GIMAC also supported the launch of UNAIDS and the African Union joint report entitled "*Empower young women and adolescent girls: Fast-Tracking the end of the AIDS epidemic in Africa*" meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2016.

Since the GIMAC launched the first civil society monitoring report, the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI), in 2016, the performances of the Member States of the AUC have become measurable, given the benchmark set by the SDI, given its data-driven and evidence-based approach to monitoring progress of the MS in the implementation of the Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA). The SDI has served as an advocacy tool especially for countries that have consistently recorded low performances in the commitment to the SDGEA.

During the 24th GIMAC meeting in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, Gender Ministers and representatives of Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) joined the deliberations of the GIMAC and committed to working closely with the GIMAC in successive meetings.

### **3. Justification:**

Recognizing the efforts the various Member States and State Parties to the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) have made in the fight against corruption, yet it is still evident that corruption continues to affect people's daily lives both economically and socially.

In general, it is the poor who suffer the most from corruption. Even more women and girls are more vulnerable to corruption's impact due to unequal power and gender dynamics. Owing to the challenges in implementing anti-corruption legislation, policies, plans and programmes in Africa, the GIMAC meeting offers a gender dimension to analyzing the implications of corruption and highlighting the differentials in exposures and vulnerability between women and men.

Since corruption is largely linked with the misuse of entrusted power for private gain, the conference will provide opportunities to assess the nexus between feminization of poverty and access to essential services with attendant consequences of poor social well-being. Issues of bribery, extortion, embezzlement, revenue fraud and nepotism in tax administration in Africa and its negative impact on women will be addressed.

Women often carry the burden and negative impact of corrupt practices more than men. For instance, when resources are scarce as a result of economic deterioration, women are culturally expected to make sacrifices. The tragic dilemma about this is that these women do not have a voice in the processes that promote and entrench corruption in Africa's governance structure despite the fact they bear more of the burden of corruption.

Corruption has become an increasingly salient issue for societies that are transitioning from war to peace, it has also become apparent that corruption deeply affects all aspects of the recovery process, including activities such as institution building, DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration), reconstruction, and economic development.

The relationship between corruption and peace building is characterized by a recurring tension between accepting (or even encouraging) forms of corruption in the short term to attain greater stability and the need to counter it in the longer term in order to lay the foundations for sustainable peace. Corruption directly affects several key peace building activities including negotiating a political settlement, disarming combatants, and providing humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance.

The GIMAC meeting and engagement with the AU Summit theme is thus a great opportunity for women to redefine some norms and call for inclusiveness in resource management as well as in the machineries being used to fight corruption now.

### **4. Objective**

- Strengthen and improve capability of CSOs to engage with heads of government on the burden/impact of corruption on a sustainable Africa and development of gender sensitive unified anti-corruption framework.
- Create an inclusive anti-corruption vanguard to identify and document best practices and lessons as well as set corruption vulnerability index for Africa
- Strengthen multi-stakeholders processes between the CSOs and the African Advisory Board on Corruption, the African Union Commission, African Union Ministers of Gender and Women’s Affairs, Regional Economic Commissions and United Nations agencies and foster coordinated action.
- Produce GIMAC Statement in conjunction with AUABC as a tool for advocacy on gender policy reform to ensure policies and programs reflect the lived experiences of women.

## 5. Activity: 31sts GIMAC Pre-Summit Meeting

Within the above contexts, the 31<sup>st</sup> session of GIMAC pre-consultative meeting will be held in January 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the theme: **Corruption and Governance: Effects on Women, Children and Youths**” Recalling on the commitments and recommendations made during the 30<sup>th</sup> GIMAC held in Addis Ababa in June 2017, the 31<sup>st</sup> GIMAC aims to identify strategies, approaches and interventions that have worked for gender responsive continental policy framework towards combating sectorial and country level corruption with special focus on its impact and the role of women and the civil society organizations (CSOs).

In preparation for the January 2018 Pre-Summit meeting, the GIMAC network will work closely with the African Union Commission, African Union Advisory Board on Corruption, Women, Gender and development Directorate (WGDD), African Union Ministers of Gender and Women’s Affairs, Regional Economic Commissions, United Nations agencies, Transparency International and other civil society entities, to engender robust discourse on the negative consequences of corrupt practices such as, bribery, theft of states assets by officials, political and bureaucratic corruption, isolated and systemic corruption, and corruption in the private sector. Essentially, the discourse will focus on institutional weakness, processes of sexual exploitation, rent seeking policies of national government, dysfunctional government budgets, motivation of public and private sectors employees, patron-client relationships, institutional failures, inadequate laws, patterns of political power, macroeconomic stability etc.

The key topics proposed for discussion during the meeting include:

- i. Women and Inclusive Anti-Corruption Framework for Africa: The Key Issues.
- ii. The Impact of Corruption on the Resolution of Conflicts and Humanitarian Crisis in Africa.
- iii. Corrupt Practices and its Effect on Girls Rights and empowerment (beyond education)

- iv. Corrupt Practices, Women's Health Care, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights: What are the solutions and options
- v. Discrimination against Women in Governance and Electoral Processes.
- vi. Corruption and Economic Dis-empowerment of Women: From the Household to the Public Space.
- vii. Women and Corruption in the Mining Sector: A Situational Analysis
- viii. Enforcement of Women's Rights and the Corruption in the Judiciary and Law Enforcement Agencies.
- ix. The Youth and the Crisis of Corruption in African Countries: Implications for Africa's Future.
- x. Creating Women Anti-Corruption Advocacy Groups: How Should We Proceed from Here?
- xi. Taxation and Illicit financial outflows: Measures for Economic and Gender Justice

## **6. Expected Key Outcomes**

- Documented evidence on the burden of corruption on women and girls and implications of corrupt practices in Africa
- Sharpened civil society strategy for engaging relevant stakeholders on the burden of corruption on families and women in Africa
- Advocacy tool that addresses Women Anti-Corruption strategies across the continent Developed;
- Development of engagement framework to enhance the commitment of civil society, the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption, the African Union Commission, African Union Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs, Regional Economic Commissions and United Nations agencies to addressing gender issues created by corruption and corrupt practices.
- Design a support framework for international community, and private sector to help African countries in the fight against corruption;

## **7. Co-organizing partners**

The 30th GIMAC consultative meeting will be organized with GIMAC focal and thematic members who include, but are not limited to Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), African Center for Democracy and Human Rights (ACDHRS), Africa Leadership Forum (ALF), Egyptian Business Women Association (EBWA), Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), IPAS Africa Alliance, Isis-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE), Pan-African Women Organization (PAWO), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), Rozaria Memorial Trust; the World Young Women's Christian Association ( World YWCA), African Artists Peace Initiative (AAPI), Association des Femmes de l'Afrique de l'Ouest West African Women Association [AFAO-WAWA], and ABANTU for Development.

## **8. GIMAC Partners and Stakeholders**

GIMAC will collaborate with AUABC which is the lead organ on the African Anti-Corruption Year. Various activities will be developed and implemented from the selected thematic areas. An action plan will be developed as a follow up to pre-summit and joint activities will be implemented throughout the year.

The AU Commission and AU organs are key partners of the GIMAC. Officials of the AU have often engaged in the Pre-Summit Meetings, chairing sessions and actively participating during the debates. The AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) and UN Women are our key partner in ensuring the success of GIMAC meetings. UNECA's African Centre for Gender is an invaluable partner in lending logistical and technical support to the Pre-Summit Consultative meetings.

Other key partners and stakeholders that have supported the GIMAC network over the years include United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), IPAS Africa Alliance, Training for Peace, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Urgent Action Fund-Africa, , the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Nobel Women's Initiative, the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice, the World Young Women's Christian Association (World YWCA), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Government of Norway, the Government of Finland, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).