

AU's 1st Pan African Conference on Girls' and Women's Education in Africa

**THEME: 'Prioritizing Girls and Women's Education:
A Strategy for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and
relevant learning in Africa'**

Date: 2nd – 5th July 2024

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



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ON GIRLS' EDUCATION

I. Background and context

Following the fourth ordinary session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology (STC-EST4) in 2022, the Declarations from both the UN Transforming Education Summit, the High-level Side Event on Transforming Education in Africa, the Declaration and upcoming launch of the AU Theme of Year 2024 titled ***“Educate an African fit for the 21st Century - Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa.”*** as well as the Dakar Declaration under the theme “Assessing Learning Losses to Embrace Learning Recovery for African Girls” adopted at the Experts Meeting held in Senegal 21st – 23rd June 2022, and the #AfricaEducatesHer campaign; there is a growing recognition to increase and invest in girls and women’s access to education and skills development in Africa. Additionally, both agenda 2063 and the SDGs call for equal participation of all persons in work and education. Promotion of women and girls’ participation in TVET is also crucial as the sector is closely related to employment outcomes, and the promotion of gender equality in Africa.

The African continent has half a billion children aged 0 -14, a number expected to reach 580 million in 2030. For Africa to harness this demographic dividend, educating the most vulnerable and marginalized children and especially girls should be invested in and prioritized by all. Although there is progress made in ensuring access to education for girls, and other marginalized children, overall progress has been impeded by socio-cultural, economic, and political factors including poverty, gender inequality, humanitarian emergencies, and forced migrations. Evidence demonstrates that approximately 30% of all out-of-school children globally are in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 32.6 million girls at primary and lower secondary school age being out of school, and 9.3 million of them likely to never set foot in a classroom. In view of this alarming situation on Girls and Women’s Education (GWE) in Africa, which got hypervisibilised by the COVID 19 Pandemic, the African Union International Centre for Girls and Women’s Education in Africa (AU CIEFFA) views the ambition of sustainably educating and investing in girls’ and women’s education as a necessity for all. This ambition needs concentrated, sustainable multi-sectoral efforts by all.

It is against this background that the African Union CIEFFA is convening all key stakeholders working on the intersections of gender equality, education, and social protection context at the Pan African Conference on girls and women’s education (AU PACONGEd1) under the theme: *‘Prioritizing Girls and Women’s Education: A Strategy for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa’*.

In recognition of 2024 as the African Union year of Education under the theme 'Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa', this conference intends to convene all key voices on girls and women's education. The main purpose of the conference is to position equitable access to quality education and skills development for girls and women, and particularly in humanitarian situations during the AU Theme of year 2024, collectively evaluate the status of girls and women's education in Africa, galvanize support for financing, and strengthen advocacy towards high level adoption of gender transformative and inclusive policies and frameworks.

II. Overall Objectives

The Pan African Conference aims to:

1. Popularize and widely disseminate the continental #AfricaEducatesHer campaign;
2. Evaluate and crystalize the Status of Girls and Women's Education in Africa;
3. Explore Sustainable financing opportunities for Girls and Women's Education in Africa;
4. Identify challenges, recommendations, and key solutions for the advancement of girls and women's education and skills development in Africa;
5. Strengthen networks and partnerships of stakeholders working on the intersections of gender equality and education in Africa;
6. Advocate for the adoption of frameworks, recommendations, and policies particularly, those formulated by the AU Summit of Heads of states and governments, through the 8th HLD on gender equality

III. Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the discussion are:

1. Disseminated and popularized #AfricaEducatesHer Campaign within all AU Member states
2. Crystalized Status on Girls and Women's Education and Skills Development in Africa;
3. Sustained financing for Girls and Women's Education in Africa;
4. Identified challenges, recommendations, and key solutions for the advancement of girls and women's education and skills development in Africa;
5. Strengthened networks and partnerships of stakeholders working on the

intersections of gender equality and education in Africa;

6. Adoption of Frameworks, decisions, and policy recommendations, particularly those formulated by the AU Summit of Heads of states and governments on the AU 2024 theme of the year, through the 8th High Level Dialogue (HLD)

IV. Participants

The conference will bring together various multi-stakeholders responsible for education and skills development, gender, social development, policy makers, development partners, UN Agencies, experts, donors, youth, Traditional and religious leaders, and civil society actors at the intersections of gender and education and social protection.

V. Methodology and Thematic Areas

The conference will comprise key-note speeches, plenaries, panel discussions, testimonies, and documentary screenings that will allow for participatory and collaborative experience sharing, solutions creation and engagement.

Thematic areas for engagement will be on critical issues on girls and women's education, including the below

- ✚ Out of School Girls and Re-Integration Policies and frameworks
- ✚ Gender Responsive- Education Sector Planning (GRESPP)
- ✚ Gender responsive pedagogy and Curriculum Reform
- ✚ Skills development for Women and girls in TVET and STEAM
- ✚ Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other harmful practices
- ✚ Education in emergency settings and Climate change
- ✚ Gender-responsive Financing for Education
- ✚ Positive Masculinity' support to gender equality in Education

VI. Format

The conference program will be 4 days Long, convened hybrid: with online and physical participants. It will comprise of the 8th AU High level Dialogue on Gender Equality in Education, the multi-stakeholder's Forum on School related gender-based violence, the

Youth Forum for girls' education, celebration of 20th Anniversary of the AU CIEFFA, and various side-events pertaining to girls' and women' education.

VII. Funding

The African Union Commission, Development Partners, Donors and self-sponsorship.

VIII. Language

English and French

IX. Venue

The conference will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the African Union Commission headquarters.



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