



STATEMENT BY Ms. DIANA OFWONA, UN WOMEN REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA DURING THE 4TH DROUGHT DISASTER RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (IDDRSI) AT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD) STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING AT LAICO REGENCY HOTEL IN NAIROBI, KENYA ON WEDNESDAY, 27 APRIL 2016

MAINSTREAMING GENDER WITHIN THE IGAD RESILIENCE AGENDA

All protocols respectfully observed,

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the 6th Steering Committee meeting of the Drought Disaster Resilience Platform.

Allow me to very briefly outline the framework within which we work for a better understanding of the gender-aware approach to resilience.

The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the broader sustainability agenda, aim at addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for inclusive, sustainable and resilient development. Resilience commonly covers broad development concerns, including the capacity of people (men and women, boys and girls) and systems to mitigate, adapt to, recover, and learn from shocks and stresses from both the natural and social environment in ways that reduce vulnerability and increases well-being.

In Africa, resilience is frequently tried, and on a regular basis the region exposed to political, economic and environmental shocks, challenging development progress and sustainability of programmatic interventions. These comprise climatic variations, land degradation, drought, and floods, resulting in chronic vulnerabilities such as altering food insecurities, economic losses, chronic displacement as well as heightened tensions as especially vulnerable populations are forced to compete for access to key, but

increasingly scarce, livelihood resources. In the context of general and chronic vulnerability, women and girls are also often exposed to additional, gender-specific barriers which exacerbate the challenges women face.

To enhance women's resilience, there is need for a binary strategy that, on one hand, strengthens women's individual resilience and capitalizes on community resources to enable women and youth claim their rights and participate, more meaningfully, in development planning. On the other hand, a need to expand the body of knowledge and exchange information on successful ways to enhance women's resilience in the region and to better integrate a gender perspective in the resilience agenda.

In this regard, UN Women in close collaboration with IGAD is pleased to announce today an inaugural regional learning and sharing platform '**The Sharefair on Gender and Resilience**' to be held later in the year which aims to further explore the role of women in building and strengthening resilience, and promote dialogue and sharing of best practices on gender-responsive resilience-oriented programmes and policies in the region. The Sharefair will also serve as the flagship initiative of the recently established gender and resilience working group under the IDDRSI platform.

UN Women is in discussion with IGAD to support the fast-tracking of the Gender Strategy, including the development of a flagship on Gender and Resilience in the face of climate change, migration and chronic vulnerability.

On behalf of UN Women, allow me to once again to congratulate IGAD for its relentless efforts to mainstream gender in its work and to assure you of the continued partnership with UN Women.

Thank you for your kind attention.