



UN WOMEN AFRICA STRATEGY 2022 -2025
FROM COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in Africa is the basis to reaching all SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063



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ACRONYMS

- AFAWA:** Affirmative Action for women in Africa
- AfCFTA:** Africa Continental Free Trade Area
- AfDB:** Africa Development Bank
- AU:** African Union
- AWLN:** African Women's Leadership Network
- COTLA:** Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa
- CSOs:** Civil Society Organizations
- EAC:** East Africa Community
- ECA:** Economic Commission for Africa
- ECCAS:** Economic Community of Central Africa
- ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West Africa States
- FGM:** Female Genital Mutilation
- FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organization
- GDP:** Gross Domestic Product
- GEWE:** Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- HQ:** Headquarters
- ILO:** International Labor Organization
- IFAD:** International Fund for Agriculture Development
- IMF:** International Monetary Fund
- IOM:** International Organization for Migration
- NEPA:** New Partnership for Africa Development
- RECs:** Regional Economic Communities
- SADC:** Southern Africa Development Community
- SDGs:** Sustainable Development Goals
- SMEs:** Small and Medium Enterprises
- SNs:** Strategic Notes
- UNODC:** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- UNW:** United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- VAWG:** Violence against Women and Girls
- WEPS:** Women's Empowerment Principles

FOREWORD

We have a dream.

A dream to make Africa a continent where women lead, prosper and enjoy a life free of violence and discrimination, a continent where men support gender equality and women empowerment. Our vision is an Africa where a woman President should be a normality. Our dream is to achieve a peaceful continent where every woman and every girl can dream and thrive, speak up freely and exercise their rights.

Women in Africa are the backbone of family and communities, and at the centre of the economy. Yet they endure the worst working conditions with unpaid care, low pay jobs and little or no social protection; they suffer from different forms of violence including harmful practices, child marriage and physical violence. Except for few countries, the average number of women in leadership positions is less than 30 per cent. Women and girls experience the greatest impact of climate crisis and conflicts as they amplify existing gender inequalities.

Africa is the only continent where UN Women has three regional offices, covering North Africa and Arab States, East and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa. United by the above goal, three

regional offices and countries on the continent decided to come together to address many issues that African women face.

We came together recognizing the diversity of the political, social, cultural, and economic contexts, understanding common challenges African women face and leveraging on the common opportunities and shared experiences between our regions, and on the partnerships, we are building together while mutualizing efforts to address continental challenges related to gender equality and women's empowerment. Our joint strategy is aligned to the UN Women Global Strategic Plan 2022-2025; the AU Agenda 2063 and the Global Agenda 2030.

We hope that this strategy will enable the three UN Women regional offices in Africa to better align, integrate their technical, advisory and policy support in partnership with member states, regional organizations, civil society organizations and other regional and sub regional structures and institutions across the African continent.

We hope this strategy will help us collectively build a continent where women and girls are safe, their voices heard and where they make informed choices.

Maxime Houinato

UN Women Regional
Director for East and
Southern Africa

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Director for West and
Central Africa

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Director for Arab States

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Maxime Houinato

UN Women Regional Director for East
and Southern Africa



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UN Women Africa Strategy is the second Africa-wide strategy bringing together the work of the three regions (East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa and North Africa) as aligned to the UNW Global Strategy and responds to the continent specific context.

The strategy recognizes the three regions have common opportunities, challenges and partners in the realm of gender equality.

This strategy is transformational and it aims to seize the momentum of the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Commonwealth Commitments on gender equality to place African women's priorities in the global development agendas while building on commonalities of the three regions and mutualizing efforts addressing continental challenges related to gender equality and women empowerment.

UNW's Africa Strategy for 2022-2025, places African women and girls at the center of the continent's transformation and development. It contributes to the implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and to the achievement of SDGs.

The strategy has been developed based on lessons learned from the first strategy (Africa Strategy 1.0) and desk research to understand the context and in-depth consultations with UNW internal and external stakeholders. It will take advantage of the huge momentum built by the Generation Equality Forum both in terms of partnerships and financing opportunities.

It has a Theory of Change, which shows how specific interventions will generate positive outcomes under the strategy's three outcomes:

Outcome 1: Women's economic empowerment is accelerated

Based on economic opportunities and gender gaps related to women's economic empowerment, the Africa Strategy will focus on the following fields: (1) Positioning women's priorities in the center of Africa Continental Free Trade Framework through mainstreaming gender across all its sectors, establishing a market-driven value chain and strengthening women's resilience to shocks; (2) Establishing sustainable mechanisms to enhance women's resilience to unexpected shocks through the development and the adoption of a gender-responsive continental contingency plan with a special focus on gender-responsive prevention, preparedness and recovery sustainable interventions.

Outcome 2: Women's leadership in political governance and peace building is enhanced and recognized

In this particular field, the UN Women Africa strategy will focus on (1) the promotion of a young generation of women leaders: this will be achieved through building the capacity of potential young leaders and (2) the support for an intergenerational platform where members of AWLN will provide coaching to young women aspiring to leadership positions.



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Outcome 3: African women and girls live a life free of all forms of discrimination and violence

Under this outcome, the strategy will support the creation and operationalization of a strong accountability mechanism to ensure the translation of commitments into reality; (2) accelerate the transformation of negative social norms through supporting a continental multi-actors movement of gender activists) led by COTLA and (3) addressing cross-regional gender equality issues (migration, trafficking, etc.) in a more coherently and coordinated manner.



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UN Women will apply a two-pronged approach in the implementation of this strategy: i) evidence-based policy influence and accountability at continental level and ii) undertaking targeted and catalytic interventions as well as scaling up the best successful and innovative models.

A governance structure comprising leadership, advisory and implementation roles will serve as an accountability mechanism for this strategy, while the overall implementation will be led by the liaison office in close collaboration with the three regional directors and country representatives.

The successful implementation will be reinforced by strong resource mobilization and communication strategies to attract more investment and raise the institutional visibility.

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Africa Contextual Analysis



1. Introduction

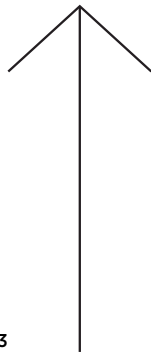
Africa is home to 54 recognized sovereign states and is the second-largest and second-most-populous continent on earth. The continent had an estimated population of 1.2 billion people in 2016 and is projected to reach over 1.8 billion in 2035. Women account for more than 50 per cent of the total population. Additionally, Africa is the world's youngest continent: almost 60% of Africa's population is under the age of 25. The young generation is technologically savvy and is becoming increasingly urban.



African real GDP growth is projected to range from

1.1% to
7.7%

and from 1.3. % to 8.1. % in 2023



Africa is home to some of the world's fastest-growing economies. According to a recent report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), African real GDP growth is projected to range from 1.1. per cent to 7.7 per cent in 2022 and from 1.3. per cent to 8.1. per cent in 2023. Across the continent, the economic growth over the two years remains consistent.

Despite Africa's dynamism, women do not share equally in its journey towards prosperity. Progress towards gender equality has stalled, and African women lag in relation to their peers in other regions in most spheres of development .

The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected the global economy, with most economies in Africa contracting in 2020. While most countries returned to growth in 2021, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has triggered a global economic shock that is hitting the region. All countries in Africa are not on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets by 2030. Climate action (SDG 13) is the only SDG indicator for which countries have registered significant progress on the continent.

To regain economic momentum and accelerate progress toward the SDGs, African countries must be more deliberate in unlocking the contribution of all their people -- especially women and the youth -- who have been left behind.



2. Challenges to gender equality and women empowerment in Africa

In 2021, the World Economic Forum released the Global Gender Gap Index 2021, which shows due to the impact of COVID-19, the global gender gap has increased by a generation from -- 99.5 years to 135.6 years. The report showed with the current relative pace, gender gaps can potentially be closed in 52.1 years in Western Europe, 61.5 years in North America, and 68.9 years in Latin America and the Caribbean. In sub-Saharan Africa, that period

jumps to 134.7 years, while in the Middle East and North Africa logged 142.4 years .

These statistics indicate the poor status of women in Africa across different indicators. They underscore the urgency of the need to make interventions to close the gender gap at a much faster rate. To achieve that, we must first understand the main challenges to gender equality in Africa.

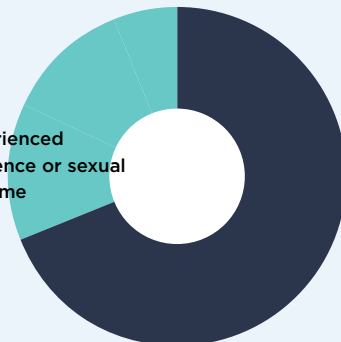
The prevalence of violence against women and girls (VAWG) is higher within Africa, where approximately 33 per cent of women have experienced intimate partner violence or sexual violence in their lifetime compared to 31 per cent at the global level. The rate is particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa, at 44 per cent. There is also evidence to suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the rate of VAWG to increase even further around the world, and particularly in Africa.

Additionally, it is reported that Africa is home to as many as 15 of the 20 countries with the highest number of child brides globally. The high rate of child marriage in Africa entraps women and girls in a cycle of poverty, contributing to their poor socio-economic status. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is another form of VAWG: it is reported that in 27 countries with available data, 42 per cent of women and girls aged 15-49 years have undergone FGM.

Human trafficking is also a form of VAWG practiced in Africa. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that 77 per cent of victims in sub-Saharan Africa are trafficked for forced labour against 30 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa while 20 per cent are trafficked for sexual exploitation in sub-Saharan Africa against 30 per cent in Middle and North Africa.

33%

of women have experienced intimate partner violence or sexual violence in their lifetime



As for women's economic empowerment: more than 50 per cent of the African population is female, and yet resources, opportunities, and decision-making in all sectors are still heavily swayed towards men. In agriculture, women are faced with insecurity and difficulties in accessing production inputs: female smallholder farmers face a 20–30 per cent productivity gap compared to their male counterparts.

In most sub-Saharan African countries, women are informally employed (UN Women, 2017). In East and Southern Africa about two-thirds of women are in informal employment. Most of these women are found in small-scale agriculture and informal cross border trading. Women's unemployment rates continue to be higher than men's at seven and six per cent respectively. In West Africa, informal employment including agriculture, accounts for 92 per cent of the economy, with women participation reaching as much as 89.7 per cent (Source: ILO 2018).

Productivity and earnings in the informal sector are low. Women's relegation to the informal sector is attributable to inadequate access to property, education, capital, public services, social protection, technology and infrastructure, as well as to skill deficit, gender-based discrimination and occupational segmentation in the labour market (Hearle et al., 2019). Women dominate in rural and agricultural production which is mainly for subsistence, unpaid and subject to negative impacts of climate change: According to a synthesis report of the Africa Region conducted by FAO, women provide 60 to 80 per cent of agricultural labor and furnish 44 per cent of the households' subsistence

Across the continent, women have also been left outside the formal employment due to structural challenges such as family laws, limited investments in the care economy and extended care responsibilities.

Unpaid care work continues to fall disproportionately on women's shoulders, leaving them with limited choices of where to work and fewer opportunities to find a job in the formal economy.

Access to financial resources still favors men, as most women lack the collateral needed to secure loans as well as information on credit facilities. On average, women in Africa own fewer assets

than men, often due to discrimination encoded in property laws and they lack the collateral necessary to secure larger loans.

According to the World Bank, more than 70 per cent of African women are excluded by financial institutions or are unable to receive financial services such as savings or current loans and other financial services.

According to a recent rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on populations in several African countries, women and girls have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 mainly because they tend to be involved in economic sectors and activities that were heavily affected by lockdown restrictions.

A study conducted by UN Women revealed that in Eastern and Southern Africa 19 per cent of women lost their jobs against 14 per cent of men, while in West Africa the rate is 8 per cent for women against 5 per cent for men.

For example, the Rapid Gender Assessment conducted in Rwanda showed that 44.2 per cent of women respondents reported to have stopped their economic activities compared to 17 per cent of men. This was much more difficult in rural areas where 50 per cent of women against 17.7 per cent of men have temporarily stopped their economic activities and hence lost their sources of their income.



The digital divide between genders remains wide, leaving women – who have much lower access to technology than men – unable to take advantage of the opportunities that the new digital world has to offer. In Africa 24 per cent of women use the internet opposed to 35 per cent of men. This gap is due to a combination of factors including availability and affordability of services, culture and norms as well as limited capacity and skills in the field. The disparities are even wider for rural, poorer, and less educated women who lag even further behind in access to technology.



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At least 13 countries in Africa have made great progress in women's representation in parliament, reaching 30%, which is the score that many national and international conventions aspire for.



These countries include: Rwanda (61.3%), South Africa (46.7%), Namibia (44.2%), Senegal (42.7%), and Mozambique (42.4%), Ethiopia (41.5%), Cabo Verde (38.9%), Burundi (38.2%), Tanzania (36.9%), Cameroon (33.9%), Uganda (33.8%), South Sudan (32.4%), Chad (31.2%), Zimbabwe (30.6%).²¹ Still, the percentage representation in much of Africa is less than 30%, which is considered a minimum requirement.²²

Political instability compounded by natural and manmade disasters continues to compound women's and girls' vulnerabilities across Africa. Conflict and insecurity are rampant in several countries, inflicting a negative impact on women and causing mass displacements and loss of lives and livelihoods. However, the situation varies from country to country; for example, in Tigray and DRC women are affected by weaponized sexual violence, while some countries in West Africa like Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso are experiencing extremist insurgency and/or subject to repetitive military coups that continue to limit democratic space and expose millions of women to vulnerability. Political instability in Africa contributes to a non-conducive environment for women's participation and leadership in governance and peace processes.

Whereas the **representation of women in the African peace and security architecture** has improved, there are still gaps in peace support operations and peace negotiations. The number of women deployed in security institutions and personnel remains low: They constituted only 4.4 per cent of military personnel and 11.15 per cent of police personnel in 2019. The same can be said of female leadership in peace operations. As of 2020, only 10 per cent of force commanders were women.

Even though there is growing agreement that female participation enhances the chances for lasting peace following a conflict as well as a recognition that women play a critical role in social cohesion and peace rebuilding in post-conflict settings, increasing female participation in these endeavors remains a challenge. It is imperative to advocate for a specific quota for women's participation in peace and security processes while at the same time strengthening their skills in these fields to enable them to make effective and meaningful contributions.

Women and girls bear the biggest brunt of the **climate crisis**, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and puts women's lives and livelihoods at risk. The percentage of women affected by climate-related crop changes are for example from 73 per cent in the Congo to 48 per cent in Burkina Faso ;

Climate change increases household burdens: gathering and transporting water typically falls on women, a task expected to become increasingly burdensome with global warming.

In rural Africa, 19 per cent of women spend more than one hour on each trip to fetch water . Increased time to collect water and fuel can place

women at greater risk of violence when travelling longer distances, and decreases available time for education or other economic and political enterprises .

This makes the leadership of women and girls in climate adaptation and mitigation crucial. Without the inclusion of half of the world's population, it is unlikely that solutions for a sustainable planet and a gender-equal world will be realized.

Consequently, there is an urgent need to establish the linkages between gender equality and climate change and their importance in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Feminized migration is a cross-border issue that needs to be addressed at the continental level to ensure that women migrants enjoy their rights and live in dignity in the country of migration..

The other side of the coin is an increasing number of women who are forced to head the household during many years when their husbands have migrated. This category of women is denied rights as head of household during the husband's absence.

Across the board, the main causes of the perpetuation of persistent gender inequalities in African settings are from a cultural and social perspective: (1) Deeply-rooted negative social norms strongly embedded in a patriarchal system; (2) Pluralism between formal law and traditional practices. From the institutional level, factors that hold women back include: (1) Weak implementation of adopted laws and policies; (2) Lack of sustainable funding; (3) Limited knowledge and capacity and (4) Weak coordination between different actors.

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3. Common challenges and opportunities across UN Women offices in Africa

A consultation with the technical team identified the following strategic challenges and associated opportunities in Africa:



CHALLENGES

At the institutional level – UN Women still suffers from limited visibility. Some of the reasons for this might likely be the lack of a robust communication strategy, insufficient clarity on its niche, and the limited capacity to scale up successful projects. Limited visibility of the institution and its work and achievements continue to hamper fundraising efforts. Another challenge facing the institution is the insufficient technical and financial capacity to respond to the need to promote greater gender equality both internally and externally, particularly in new areas such as climate change, digitalization and migration, as well as insufficient accountability for commitments to GEWE.

At the programmatic level – Women in general, but more specifically young women, are under-represented in political leadership or decision-making positions and peace processes. Feminization of migration is becoming an issue that needs special attention to safeguard the rights of women migrants while protecting them from vulnerability to unsafe migration. Additionally, climate change hurts the most vulnerable groups, the majority of them being women. That calls for appropriate gender-sensitive and climate-resilient interventions. Another programmatic challenge is that women are not reaping the full benefits of continental and global opportunities such as Africa Continental Free trade, Fairtrade International and the Green Climate Fund, among others.



OPPORTUNITIES

At continental and regional levels, some initiatives have been taken to ensure the acceleration of gender equality and women's empowerment. The UN Women Africa strategy will align itself and pursue partnerships with these efforts.

The African Union (AU) has adopted several instruments including the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa; the African Union Gender Policy; and Agenda 2063.

Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want provides strategic directions for UN Women Africa strategy 2.0. The vision of the Africa We Want is to "build an integrated prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven and managed by its citizens and which represents a dynamic force in the international arena. That vision cannot be achieved without the contribution of more than 50% of the continent's population who are women. Therefore, gender equality cuts across six out of the seven aspirations of the Agenda and it has its standalone aspiration for "an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially its women and youth.

The AU Gender Strategy and the UN Women Global strategy are aligned: the results areas of the two strategies are similar.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) -- NEPAD's Gender policy has four main objectives: reduce poverty, put Africa on a sustainable development path, halt the marginalization of Africa and Empower women

African Development Bank (AfDB): The Bank's Gender Strategy 2021-2025 aims at reducing gender inequalities across Africa by increasing access to finance and technical assistance, enhancing technical skills and gender-responsive infrastructure. It is anchored on three pillars: (1) Empowering women through access to finance and markets; (2) Accelerating employability and job creation for women through skills enhancement and (3) Increasing women's access to social services through infrastructure.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has a Gender Policy and specific strategies (gender mainstreaming in energy, gender in disaster mitigation, the regional strategy for preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, among others).

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has a gender policy that aims at achieving "a region where women, men, girls and boys have equal opportunities to participate freely as equal partners in all spheres of public and private life, including in all decision-making processes. The men and women should have equal access to and control over productive resources and services, as well as contribute to and benefit from all".

The East African Community (EAC) launched its Gender Policy in 2018. The policy seeks an inclusive community that guarantees equal rights and opportunities for women and men, boys and girls.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has a Gender Policy that advocates for equal and full participation of women in all aspects of COMESA.

The Economic Community of Central Africa (ECCAS) has a Gender Policy that envisages a community in which men and women enjoy equal rights, develop their skills and contribute as equal partners to the creation of a just and prosperous society for all and the sustainable development of Central Africa.

Generation Equality. Mexico, France and UN Women have led a global drive called Generation Equality to accelerate achievement of gender equality. It led to USD 40 billion in financial commitment from governments and the private sector to support targeted actions, including in Africa.

At the programmatic and thematic level, a few promising areas are worth exploring and investing in at the continental level. Some of them are:

The Africa Continental Free Trade (AfCFTA), which aims at accelerating intra-African trade and boosting Africa's trading position in the global market already been ratified by 36 countries: a study commissioned by UN Women identified opportunities for women in the context of AfCFTA in the areas of informal cross-border trade, gender and value chain analysis and affirmative action/preferential public procurement.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation are getting international focus and offer an opportunity to advance gender-responsive approach across the different dimensions including climate-smart agriculture and climate change and migration This opportunity will open doors for gender-sensitive investments in programming initiatives for adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and capacity building.

Digitalization is another opportunity that cuts across all sectors and creates links globally to access and deliver information and services as well as to link with a wider and more diverse international audience.

Commonwealth Secretariat's Gender Action Plan and the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter: A Commonwealth Call to Action on Living Lands, which both framed the outcome document of the Commonwealth Women's Forum held in Kigali 20-21 June 2022 under the theme "Delivering a Common Future: Transforming for gender equality". The UN Women Africa Strategy 2.0 will build synergies and partnerships around common areas of interest in the Outcome document and the living lands Call to Action.



2 Lessons from the Africa Strategy 1.0

The UN Women Africa Strategy 2018–2021 was the first-ever Africa-wide Strategy bringing together the work of the three regions (East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa and North Africa) as articulated in their respective regional and Country Strategic Notes. The Strategy recognized that the continent is extremely diverse, but also that there exists common opportunities, challenges and partners in the realm of gender equality. The interplay between this diversity and commonality formed the basis of the Strategy.

Within the lifespan of the Africa Strategy 2018–2021, several notable results impacted the lives of women and girls. This includes the birth of the Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa (COTLA). This regional body is the first of its kind in Africa and consists of traditional rulers from across all regions of Africa. COTLA also established partnerships with the Africa Union and with other UN agencies. One of the reasons why COTLA was particularly impactful is because it was linked to the AU Agenda.

As a way of strengthening the Women’s Movement for Africa’s Transformation, the African Women’s Leadership Network (AWLN) was born. Three years following its establishment, the network now comprises over 500 women across generations and sectors. The ambition of AWLN is to create a continent-wide force of women leaders who contribute to Africa’s transformation in line with the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Global Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

Migration and trafficking in women and girls became a grave area of focus for UN Women following reports across Africa about this challenge. Trafficking was both within and across borders.

The effective implementation of the strategy encountered some challenges that compromised the achievement of expected results. Some of the lessons learned are the strategy was not institutionalized and lacked organizational drive, shared ownership and collective action. A proper accountability mechanism was lacking and consequently, the governance structure was not enforced.

The implementation of work streams and interventions was compartmentalized and took place in isolation from the rest of the thematic work as a result of a lack of a coordination mechanism between the Africa Strategy and country programmatic interventions.

This Africa Strategy is built upon the challenges and opportunities highlighted in contextual analysis coupled with the lessons learned from the implementation of the previous strategy.

The strategy will:

- Address issues at a continental scale beyond country and individual regional work and explore emerging and relevant areas (e.g. trade, migration).
- Focus on agreed priority areas, value addition and accountability mechanism by the three regions
- Be results-oriented and focus on concrete innovative, budgeted and measurable interventions.
- Deliver in partnerships, leveraging on the different regions to strengthen resource mobilization efforts and ensure sustainability.
- Raise the visibility, image and respect for UN Women as the leader on gender equality and women empowerment on the African continent and facilitate the scaling up of successful models across the different regions.



3 Africa Strategy 2022-2025

1. The Rationale for UN Women Africa Strategy 2.0

The Africa Strategy is derived from the UN Women Global Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and as such articulated around the following impact areas:

-  Women's political participation and engagement in decision-making
-  Women's economic empowerment
-  Ending violence against women
-  Peace, security and humanitarian action

The strategy is also aligned with the AU Agenda 2063 and the Global Agenda 2030.

This Africa Strategy is unique as it brings the commonalities of the three regions in a coherent and coordinated manner to deliver as ONE on African women issues while building on accumulated knowledge sharing.

It creates synergies between the three regions for strategic repositioning of continental and global agendas using a strong women's movement speaking with one voice on African women's priorities. It is an opportunity for UN Women to deliver on Agenda 2063 and accelerate the delivery of the SDGs. It guides the home-grown and contextual sensitive solutions to gender equality and women empowerment while positioning African women on the global agenda.



2. Vision and Mission of the Strategy

VISION

This Strategy's vision is one for a continent where women and girls enjoy their human rights fully, their contribution to inclusive development is maximized and valued and where they can equally benefit from its growth dividend.

MISSION

The Strategy is transformative in positioning African women's priorities in the continental and global development agenda while capturing new emerging opportunities and innovations to make gender equality and women empowerment a reality for all with no one left behind. To fulfill its mission, the Strategy will:

- Provide room for addressing issues at a continental scale while using innovative and bold approaches.
- Address common institutional challenges through enhancing the technical and financial capacity of UN Women's offices and build strong and strategic partnerships to strengthen resource mobilization efforts and sustainability.
- Facilitate the scaling up of successful and innovative models to make them UN Women's signature interventions thus maximizing impact and making the institution visible and recognized for its added value.
- Make UN Women Africa a hub of knowledge and reference on gender equality and women empowerment through knowledge generation and sharing especially in new areas such as gender and digitalization (becoming a center of reference for gender and digitalization).
- Take advantage of emerging opportunities for strategic repositioning of African women in continental and global agendas: these include but are not limited to the Africa Continental Free Trade (AfCFTA), and the Green Economy initiative.
- Provide an evidence-based mechanism to measure the progress on gender equality and women empowerment using an integrated and consolidated approach that links micro and macro elements of UN Women's work.

3. UN Women Comparative advantage

Through its triple mandate and global brand: UN Women has been given the mandate of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment articulated around the three following interconnected dimensions: normative, coordination and programming. This mandate is increasingly being recognized as critical to gender equality as a requirement for global equitable and inclusive development. This creates an opportunity for the organization to be bold in championing initiatives that others cannot or will not, both through leveraging efforts of other organizations at continental level.

Powerful regional cross-sector partnerships and convening capacity: In Africa, UN Women has strong relationships with member states, regional bodies and economic communities, civil society, private sector and development partners and has the capacity to bring all these actors around one common agenda,

UN Women possesses a well-recognized expertise in gender equality and women's empowerment and offers a strong base of knowledge and technical capacity to enhance the quality of decision-making and programmatic interventions.

4. Guiding Principles

1. Ensures a strategic positioning of African women and girls in the global and continental global agenda through ownership by AU member states.
2. Addresses issues that cannot be tackled at the regional or country levels and capture new/emerging issues of relevance to Africa.
3. Maximizes results by leveraging on committed strategic partnerships and comparative advantages of UN Women as well as successful models of operation while ensuring the sustainability of the impact.
4. With innovation and boldness, effectively contribute to the transformation of gender power relations in Africa.
5. Adopt a contextual and sensitive approach around the principle of "Leave No One Behind"



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5. Theory of Change

Goal	All African women and girls enjoy their rights in full, are given opportunities to maximize their contribution to the inclusive growth and the prosperity of the continent and can reap the full dividends of that contribution.						
TOC Statement	<p>IF African women’s priorities are at the center of continental and global development agenda, IF they are given opportunities to contribute to inclusive growth, IF discrimination against them is addressed fully and in a more coherent and coordinated manner, IF young African women are supported to take up leading positions on the same footing as men and IF African countries deliver on their commitments to gender equality and women empowerment; THEN African women and girls will be able to exercise their full rights on an equal footing as men and boys and equally contribute to and benefit from inclusive development, BECAUSE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. African women’s voice is heard, and opportunities are provided for addressing gender inequalities at the continental level. 2. Stakeholders are accountable for their commitments to ensure women are economically empowered and protected from any form, discrimination/violence and can equally participate in political leadership and peace processes. 3. And women and girls will have the capacity and the right to position themselves in social, economic and political spheres. 						
Outcomes	Women’s economic empowerment is accelerated		Women’s leadership in political governance and peace building is enhanced and recognized		Women are protected from all forms of discrimination/violence		
Outputs	Women’s priorities are the center of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)	Women’s resilience to shocks is strengthened	More young women are engaged in leadership and decision-making processes both in political governance and in peace processes.	An intergenerational platform of women leaders is strengthened for advocacy and mutual learning purposes	Negative gender social norms are transformed	A strong accountability mechanism is created, agreed upon and operationalized	Cross-regional issues are addressed in a more coordinated and coherent manner at the continental level
Risks and Barriers	Limited commitment to the operationalization of AfCFTA Limited resources	Lack of required capacity in the new areas	Limited funding	Limited funding	The reluctance of countries to adopt the accountability system	Adverse socio-cultural norms and practices	

6.Strategic Priorities

- Women’s economic empowerment.
- Women’s leadership in political governance and peace building.
- Women and girls live a life free from all forms of discrimination and violence.

Outcome 1: Women’s economic empowerment is accelerated

The Africa Strategy has prioritized this outcome because feminization of poverty has increased due to a combination of factors as highlighted in the contextual analysis but also because the economic empowerment of women is fundamental to their ability to seize new opportunities. There is evidence to show that women’s economic and financial power can not only reduce the vulnerability to gender-based discrimination in social and political spheres but can also form a pathway for inclusive economic growth across the continent.

Based on economic opportunities and the gender gaps related to women’s economic empowerment, the Africa Strategy will focus on the following fields: (1) Positioning women’s priorities in the center of Africa Continental Free Trade Framework and (2) Establishing sustainable mechanisms to enhance women’s resilience to unexpected shocks.

1.Women’s priorities in the center of Africa Continental Free Trade Area

Individually and collectively, women, have established themselves as key players in trade on the continent and are crucial levers for the continental economy.

According to a study by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in 2017, 70 per cent of informal traders in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region are women. In West and Central Africa, informal cross-border trade among women represents more than 60 per cent and generates about 40 to 60 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the countries concerned. This cross-border trade provides the foundation for a diversified and globally competitive economy.

The baseline studies conducted in recent years in sub-Saharan regional economic communities have demonstrated the positive impact of informal trade at both the macro and micro levels.

As suggested in the study commissioned by UN Women on women entrepreneurs. The Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), offers opportunities in three areas: (1) women in informal cross-border trade, (2) gender and value chain and (3) affirmative action/preferential public procurement.

1.1. Positioning women's priorities in the AfCFTA sectors

The strategy will ensure that sustained commitment to implement gender responsive trade policies and practices are made in the framework of AfCFTA and proper arrangements are taken for women to reap equal benefits. In this respect, the Africa Strategy will provide : (1) relevant gender trade disaggregated data and comprehensive gender analysis in the three main sectors mentioned above for evidence-based policymaking and programming. (2) technical support to mainstream gender across the AfCFTA sectors and budgets and (3) conduct advocacy for gender-sensitive approaches to the implementation of all protocols. In addition, this strategy will support women-led SMEs to get familiar and compliant with the AfCFTA requirements.

1.2. Establishment of the market-driven value chain

Supporting women-led SMEs to enter profitable value chains and interact with the market with increased confidence and negotiation capacity. Additionally, women-led SMEs will be supported to ensure an effective transition from micro to middle business through modernizing and professionalizing their enterprises. This Strategy will enhance technical, trade and business knowledge of women-led SMEs as well as facilitate financial inclusion in partnership with the African Development Bank through AFAWA (Affirmative Action for Women in Africa), an initiative backed by the African Development Bank.

The strategy will put a special focus on new, emerging and promising areas such green /blue economy and technology. In these specific new fields, initiatives aiming at facilitating women to participate and benefit from climate smart and diversified economic opportunities will be promoted.

Promoting climate-smart and market-oriented agriculture while addressing the negative impact of climate change. This will be done through providing technical and financial support along with policy guidance to women to increase public and private investments and interventions that promote women's access to land, climate mitigation technologies, access to finance and skills to enable them to engage in value addition and markets, as well as to enhance their economic productivity.

2. Women's resilience to shocks is strengthened

Most African women are paying a heavy price to keep their livelihoods due to a combination of the negative impacts of COVID-19 and the Ukraine-Russia war. Women are indeed the most affected by these two events in terms of their economic activities and income sources as they dominate the informal sector, which is the most vulnerable economically. Women's economic activities have also been undergoing a very critical food and energy supply crisis aggravated by climate change. These factors have led to a significant loss of income, disruption in the supply chain and driving up the prices of necessities, thus reinforcing African women's poor economic status.

This pillar of women's economic empowerment should ensure that no one is left behind and that the most affected groups benefit from social protection measures. UN Women in partnerships with governments and other organizations including financial institutions will support:

- 2.1** The development and the adoption of a gender-responsive continental contingency plan with the adequate capacity both financial and technical for its operationalization with a special focus on gender-responsive prevention, preparedness and recovery interventions. These will include but are not limited to: (1) Diversification of food supply and storage systems in collaboration with FAO, IFAD and other institutions to ensure food security in case of shortage or unexpected events as happened during COVID 19 and Russia-Ukraine war; (2) Provision of emergency financing in collaboration with the private sector, tapping into their social responsibility commitment as a safety net measure and (3) guidance and tools to facilitate the integration of women's priorities in recovery plans.
- 2.2** The setting up and operationalization of an early-warning system to provide accurate and evidence-based information on the potential impact on women from shocks. This can lead to timely preventive measures as well to guide capacity-building initiatives for women to engage in resilience programming.

Outcome 2: Women's leadership in political governance and peace building is enhanced and recognized.

Most African countries have not reached the minimum 30 per cent women representation in leadership, which many national and international conventions aspire to. Despite some progress being made over the years, on average, the political status of women in Africa remains poor. Young women continue to be discouraged from venturing into the political arena by social stereotypes and fear. The same can be said about women's representation in Africa's peace and security architecture. Though some signs of progress are worth noting, the gap is still wide: as of 2020, only 10 per cent of force commanders in peace missions were women.

In this particular issue, the UN Women Africa strategy will focus on the following:

1. Promotion of a young generation of women leaders

This will be achieved through building the capacity of potential young leaders. UN Women will partner with existing leadership academies in Africa to integrate training packages on political and peace building leadership, including in peace mission for potential young women leaders. They will be provided with the required skills in political governance and peace-building operations to ensure an efficient intergenerational transition.

2. Support an intergenerational platform where members of AWLN and other strong African women networks

This will include providing coaching to young women aspiring to leadership positions. This platform will join other women's movements across the continent to lobby countries at AU level, for the adoption of a quota for women in peace-building operations and request accountability for the already adopted 30 per cent quota in governance and leadership.

Outcome 3: African women and girls live a life free of all forms of discrimination and violence.

Almost all African countries have adopted gender equality international instruments and relevant policies and laws to prevent and address all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. Many countries have expressed their commitments to the Generation Equality Six Action Coalitions. While progress has been made, discrimination and violence against women and girls have remained at alarmingly high levels due to poor implementation of the adopted policies and laws. This strategy will focus on the two following interventions:

1. Supporting the creation and operationalization of a strong accountability mechanism.

Under the framework of this strategy, and because of the need to accelerate the implementation of commitments, UN Women, in collaboration with AU, will design and advocate for the adoption of an accountability mechanism.

UN Women will first provide an evaluation framework based on gender equality consolidated indicators and support the peer-review assessment using the agreed framework. The outcome of the evaluation will lead to the certification of countries. The best-performing countries will be recognized at the continental and international levels. The recognition can serve as an advocacy tool to attract more investment from development partners. The poor performers will be supported to achieve the required compliance.

2. Acceleration of transformation of negative social norms

The most significant challenges remain the persistence of attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate negative gender stereotypes, and discrimination leading to the duality between commitments to international gender equality instruments and customary laws. This strategy will contribute to address this challenge through supporting a continental multi-actors' movement of gender activists (women movement, youth-led organization) led by COTLA in charge of empowering the community ecosystem to transform negative social norms through a results and incentive-based approach.

3. Cross-regional gender equality issues are addressed more coherently.

Due to a combination of factors, including poverty and violence, women are vulnerable victims of migration and trafficking both within and outside the continent. The Africa Strategy will (1) support the collection and dissemination of accurate data on African women in migration and trafficking (2) advocate for the adoption of gender-sensitive policies/laws related to these areas and (3) facilitate greater access to decent green jobs and socio-economic services for migrant women in close collaboration with other institutions such as IOM.

7. Alignment

As reflected in the table below, the Africa Strategy derived from the UN Women Global Strategy is aligned with the AU Agenda 2063, the AU Gender Strategy and the SDGs, opening prospects for joint initiatives and partnerships, mutual resource mobilization possibilities and opportunities to maximize impact across the continent.

UN Women Africa Strategy	Agenda 2063	AU Gender Strategy 2018-2028	UN Women Global Strategy 2022-2025	The SDGs
Women's Economic Empowerment		Women's Economic Empowerment	Women's Economic Empowerment	Women's Economic Empowerment
Outcome 1: Women's economic empowerment is accelerated	<p>1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development</p> <p>2. An Africa whose development is people-driven relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth and caring for children</p>	Outcome 1: Maximizing economic outcomes, opportunities and tech e-dividend	Outcome 1.1. Women and girls have equitable access to goods and services and resources that are responsive to their needs	<p>SDG 5: Gender Equality</p> <p>SDG1: No Poverty</p> <p>SDG2 Zero Hunger</p> <p>SDG13: Climate Action</p>

UN Women Africa Strategy 2022 -2025
From Commitments to Action

Ending Violence Against Women		Dignity, Security, Resilience	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls	SDG 5: Gender Equality
Women are protected from all forms of discrimination and violence	3. An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law	Outcome 2.1. Health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, harmful practices	Outcome 2.1. Positive social norms including engaging men and boys	End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
	4. A peaceful and secure Africa	Outcome 2.2. VAWG and peace processes	Pillar 3: Women, Peace and Security, Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction	
		Outcome 2.3. Human security		
		Pillar 3: Effective laws, policies and institutions	Pillar 3: Strengthening of global normative frameworks and gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions	
		Outcome 3.1. Maputo Protocol	Outcome 3.1. A comprehensive and set of global norms and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are strengthened and translated into gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions	
		Outcome 3.2. Norm setting	Pillar 4. Financing for gender equality	
		Outcome 3.3. Institutional gender governance	Public and private financing advance gender equality through gender-responsive financing policies, strategies and instruments	
Women Leadership		Pillar 4: Leadership, Voice and Visibility	Women's Voice, Leadership and Agency	
Women's leadership in political governance and peace building is enhanced and recognized	3. An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law	Outcome 4.1. Leadership; equal participation and representation	Outcome: More women and girls exercise their voice, agency and leadership through an enabling environment that supports women's and youth organization	SDG 5: Gender Equality Target 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
		Outcome 4.2.: Voice: women and girls have equal voice and exercise agency in the home, community and public spaces		
		Outcome 4.3: Women and girls are more visible and portrayed as equal contributors to society in the media, literature and cultural resources		

8. Enabling principles and success factors

The Africa Strategy has identified the following critical enablers that would contribute to the achievement of the results in the outcome areas:

1. Creating a hub of gender equality knowledge for the continent



UN Women and other institutions have already accumulated knowledge that needs to be consolidated, harmonized and disseminated widely.

The Hub is a forum to generate and pilot innovative models, especially in new areas such as gender and climate change, gender and digitalization and gender and infrastructure. The new knowledge will be available not only to UN Women's offices but also to all other institutions engaged in women's economic empowerment across the continent.

The Hub will be a showroom of the impact made through UN Women's signature interventions at the continental level, suggesting strategies for scaling up successful initiatives. Finally, the Hub will serve as a learning and experience-sharing platform.

UN Women will work closely with statistics institutes, academia, the media and any other institutions specialized in knowledge production and dissemination to suggest new and innovative ways of measuring success and affirming good practices through evidence-based research.

2. Investing in influencing socio-cultural norms



Despite great advances in laws against discrimination against women and policies in favor of gender equality and women's empowerment, negative social and cultural norms remain the greatest barrier to the realization of gender equality. The dual legal system in most countries results in rights being given with one hand and taken away with another. Transforming negative socio-cultural norms requires innovative solutions that involve the media, community-based advocacy, empowerment of structures and cultural influencers that shape these norms including religious, traditional and community leaders. A powerful multi-actors continental movement made of women, men and young men engaged will be supported to advocate for the removal of the contradiction between statutory provisions and practices that undermine women's rights.

A results-based incentive approach will be used to motivate communities in removing barriers to the fulfillment of women's rights.

3. Technology



Digital economy is an opportunity to create global linkages that help people to access and deliver information across the world. The gender digital divide is big, with women mostly at the far end of lower access to this type of technology. That means that many women are unable to take advantage of the opportunities that technology has to offer. Women who live in rural areas, live in poverty, and are less educated have been left far behind.

The use of mobile banking and ICT facilities during COVID-19 lockdowns substantially increased, but women did not benefit as much as men due to a combination of factors such as poverty and illiteracy. Consequently, women, especially those in rural areas, are likely to continue lagging behind if appropriate policy measures are not put in place. Such measures can include an increase in ICT and mobile banking literacy but also facilitating access to required devices by women and girls.

This strategy will support the adoption of policies and programs aimed at reducing the digital divide and, it will also offer opportunities to access related information and equipment to women.

4. Gender data and statistics for evidence-based advocacy and programming



UN Women in Africa recognizes the centrality of gender data and statistics for advocacy to inform decision making, policymaking and programming but more importantly to support the accountability mechanisms, which are vital for monitoring and tracking progress and compliance with commitments.

Together with Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and other development partners, UN Women will strengthen its capacity for the generation and dissemination of gender disaggregated data to support its advocacy for better participation of African women in the global development agenda and better financing of the concrete women empowerment interventions. Accurate data and analysis of women's contribution to their communities and the economy of the continent – often hidden in unpaid care work – will be at the center of this strategy for advocating for more investments to unlock women's potential.

5. Strengthening the institutional capacity to deliver and scale-up



The effective implementation of this strategy requires the capacity of the organization to deliver on its set goals, scale up successful models and respond to increased demand from partners. UN Women Africa will build a pool of experts in different areas, with a keen eye on new areas of development such as climate change and technology. In collaboration with UN Women headquarters, such experts can be engaged from within and from outside UN Women offices in Africa. Good engagement of such experts will help in ensuring a smooth and effective implementation of the strategy. For a more sustainable funding base, the strategy will dedicate sufficient resources and expertise to mobilizing more funds through traditional and innovative gender financing approaches.

Institutional capacity is needed to scale up successful models, promote innovations and pilot new models to adjust to the quickly changing global environment and the African youthful population.

Given the interconnectedness of challenges that women face across all the countries, the strengthening of the institution's capacity to deliver on its mandate will include the design of an integrated approach towards addressing those challenges in a mutually reinforcing way.

6. Addressing cross-regional issues



Across the continent, issues such as migration, forced marriages and human trafficking have become serious threats to women. These challenges have not been well addressed due to a lack of harmonized policies in different countries, as well as poor coordination. Resources to support this work have also been scattered. UN Women will work closely with Regional Commissions (RECs), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the African Union to suggest harmonized policies and protective measures to ensure women can be protected from these threats so they can live in dignity.

7. Youth involvement



Africa is the continent with the youngest population in the world. This strategy will purposely guide UN Women in working with young people – both men and women – in the journey of transforming Africa into a continent where men and women will be equal. UN Women will support youth-led organizations to fully participate in shaping the different outcomes of the strategy. It will provide room for intergenerational dialogue and knowledge transfer/sharing.

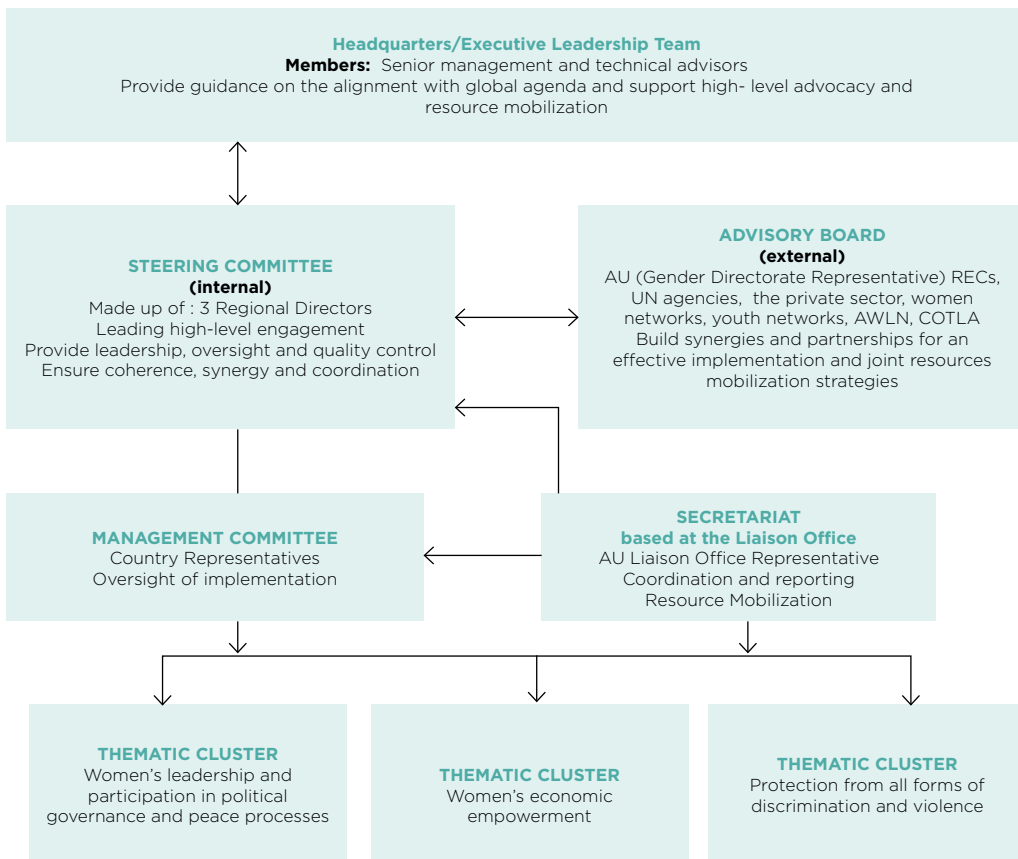


4 Operationalization and accountability mechanisms

The Africa Governance structure is designed to bring coherence and coordination to the implementation of the strategy, galvanize the stakeholders for effective partnerships and ensure accountability. To ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of the strategy, the UN Women will take the lead in the implementation process while working closely with the AU Gender Directorate Department.

The strategy will be coordinated by the UN Women Liaison Office in Addis Ababa. The UN Women Headquarters will provide guidance on how to measure and report on the contribution of this strategy to the global strategy. During the strategy implementation, the Liaison Office will play the role of linking the strategy to the regional Strategic Notes (SNs) – to allow for the leveraging of their technical and financial capacities and deliver as ONE.

1. Governance Structure



2. Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation system will be developed as an integrated package encompassing the processes of planning, systematic data collection, analysis, briefs and dissemination in view of improving the management and implementation of the strategy. The system will focus on measuring impact, learning and accountability to capture and demonstrate the changes; validate the theory of change; document experiences and best practices. This system will gather performance data at the outcome and output levels, linking the programmatic interventions and financial performance indicators so that evaluators can better measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the strategy. The achievement of outputs indicators will be monitored regularly using the existing UN Women monitoring and reporting mechanism, Results Monitoring Systems (RMS), to monitor progress towards the set targets.

A baseline study will be carried out as the first activity of the implementation of the system to establish the baseline values (baseline, targets, indicators and milestones) as part of the Results Measurement Framework that will capture achieved results and impact. To track progress regularly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual meetings will be organized between different team members and stakeholders to appraise the strategy. Appropriate monitoring and evaluation tools for the data collection will be developed and used on the same regular basis

(monthly and quarterly). Collected data will be analyzed to assess progress against expected results and adjust strategies as needed. Quarterly, semi-annual and annual activity reports will be produced.

A mid-term independent review will be conducted to assess progress made in relation to the main goals and outcomes and the operating environment. The review will make recommendations for any required adjustment including risk mitigation measures if needed.

UN Women will commission **a final independent evaluation** to assess the overall performance of the strategy, inclusive of its design, management, and its achievements against its main expected outcomes as well as testing its theory of change.

Lessons drawn from the Africa Strategy evaluation will be consolidated and communicated to inform decision-making and enhance evidence-based knowledge and learning.

The whole process of monitoring and evaluation of this strategy will be coordinated by the Africa Liaison Office in close collaboration with monitoring and evaluations units both at headquarters and regional offices and will focus on the value addition of this strategy to avoid any duplication with other existing mechanisms. The process will clarify the roles and responsibilities and ensure complementarity and coordination.



3. Strategic Partnerships

Making gender equality and women empowerment in Africa a reality requires multifaceted partnership models, which involve traditional and non-traditional actors. UN Women will seek increased engagement of partners in support of the Africa Strategy. UN Women will leverage and build on ongoing strategic partnerships at the regional, sub-regional and national levels to deliver on this strategy. The strategy will be implemented in close partnership and collaboration with:

Policymakers in national governments and regional and global agencies: These partners are fundamental to advancing gender equality at the national level through supporting implementation and also by influencing key decisions at the Africa Union level (AU Summits and other regional events) and the global level (Security Council, Civil Society Women’s organizations etc.)

Continental and regional bodies: UN Women will institutionalize an agreement with AU Gender Directorate that will provide room for joint programmatic and accountability initiatives at the continental level. With regional bodies, UN Women will offer a platform to work on shared areas of interest, with each organization building on its comparative advantage. The partnership will provide an opportunity to jointly monitor the implementation and reporting of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs from a gender perspective. UN Women will seek partnership with ECA in gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis to inform the work of the strategy.

Businesses and foundations: Private companies and foundations are showing an increasing interest in promoting the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) and Gender Seal for Certification as well as providing funding for this work. Though the active participation of these entities is still new to this field, these entities can play a key role in promoting transformative innovations. UN Women will work actively to strengthen partnerships with these entities as a way to promote innovative solutions, especially with regard to supporting women in business with advanced technology.

UN Women will seek to sign an agreement with the African Development Bank to accelerate women’s financial inclusion in the context of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

Tapping into their social responsibility commitments, private companies will be approached to increase sustainable financing for gender equality in Africa.

UN Agencies: By harnessing each UN agency’s comparative advantage and leveraging UN Women’s mandate for coordination of gender equality and women’s empowerment, the UN family can work to collectively deliver on the Africa Strategy outcomes. UN Women will enhance cooperation and coordination with UN sister agencies for joint efforts aiming at mobilizing resources for multi-country and cross-border interventions in the areas of trade, human trafficking, migration and climate change.

Other international organizations and civil society organizations: These entities will also be key for the effective delivery of the strategy's expected results. They will achieve that as implementing partners of programs for which they have proven track records and are in line with the priority areas of focus of the strategy. They will also play the role of advocacy partners, helping drive policy changes articulated in the strategy.

Generation Equality Commitment Makers: Partnerships will be developed as part of our efforts to harmonize interventions, but also to support specific financing opportunities.

Traditional and customary authorities: These include but are not limited to faith-based organizations. Cultural and traditional leaders will play a critical role in community-based advocacy by seeking to address negative social norms and stereotypes and by supporting the harmonization of modern and customary laws.

Academic and research institutions: These organizations will carry out evidence-based research to inform policy and advocacy around the Priority Africa Initiatives.

Media: UN Women will engage the media for outreach and to help with disseminating the results. The dissemination can be done through traditional media and social media as well as through internal publicity platforms, including the Africa Women Changing the Narrative Platform.



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4. Resource Mobilization

Resource mobilization is a process that includes identifying, building and managing relationships with existing and potential funding partners. The exercise of mapping resource mobilization opportunities concentrates on identifying potential partners to gather their interest, support and contribution to the successful implementation of the strategy. The success of the Strategy and its long-lasting impact on African women and girls' lives as well as on the whole continent will greatly depend on the availability of sustainable funding.

Resource Mobilization Opportunities

The mapping of resource mobilization opportunities, in this case, is to guide UN Women through a process of actively exploring and connecting with the community of donors who might be interested in gender equality and women empowerment. It is primarily used to identify where UN Women should focus its networking and resource mobilization efforts. The following two elements should guide UN Women while conducting resource mapping and selling its strategy to potential donors.

Understanding previous trends and sources of support

It is important to take stock of the existing partners, understanding their current concerns and the proposed way forward to retain them and ensure their renewed commitment. Understanding their current agenda will also help prepare a better approach for the strategy. Linking UN Women's priorities with those of the previous and current donor partners will play a big role in making the strategy a success and generating sustainable results.

Assessing potential resources available in the funding landscape

This process involves the collection of data on potential donors available at national, sub-regional, continental and international levels. It is necessary

to try to identify and list key stakeholders in the field but more importantly devise a plan to sell the innovations of the strategy to these potential donors.

Materializing Generation Equality commitments in Africa

During the 2021 Generation Equality Forum in Paris more than USD 40 Billion were promised to support gender equality. Our resource mobilization efforts will focus on transforming these opportunities into actual financing for partners involved in the implementation of this strategy.

Within UN Women

As the suggested initiatives of this strategy will be aligned to the global signature programs, the steering committee will negotiate the allocation of XBs (global or regional) to this work; use the Africa strategy to influence and inform the formula of allocation and work with regions and countries to allocate CORE resources towards the planned interventions. UN Women can also consider innovative sustainable financing strategies such as the Gender Bond.

Donor relationship management

Fostering current donor relationships will be achieved by ensuring great management and use of the funding received. As such, it will be critical that the results, outcomes and impact achieved on the ground are thoroughly monitored and

reported to donors. Frequent consultations and the establishment of formal mechanisms with existing and potential donors will help strengthen partnerships and increase resources.

A strong resource mobilization team of professionals with adequate fundraising skills (possibly located at the Liaison office) needs to be in place - supported by advocacy done by the steering committee. Resource Mobilization is defined in the widest sense - money, contributions in kind (for example, venues offered free of charge), and technical expertise. An important ingredient of successful resource mobilization will be strategic partnerships and communication support, which

will help in communicating results. The team's responsibilities among others would be:

1. Develop a full resource mobilization strategy.
2. Ensure its implementation and the management of donor relationships.
3. Maintain an opportunity tracker: monitoring the funding opportunities
4. Ensure that timely communication of results is done. That should be considered a critical component of resource mobilization.



5. Communications

To achieve its strategic goal, UN Women must communicate its vision in a clear, coordinated and targeted manner so that key audiences and stakeholders can buy in and become part of its overall implementation process.

Goal:

The main goal of the communication component of the strategy is to communicate widely the value addition of the Africa Strategy so that actors can rally behind it for support at regional bodies, but also at the headquarters level and with the AU.

Specific objectives

1. Take deliberate action to pull together achieved results, and communicate change, so UN Women can demonstrate accountability and raise more resources.

2. Disseminate information on the linkages between gender equality and women empowerment, the Africa agenda 2063 and the SDGs. That can be achieved by communicating the opportunity cost of not investing in women.
3. Make UN Women more visible and recognized as the leader of gender equality and women empowerment in Africa

Approaches

The communication plan intends to provide a framework for managing communication internally and externally.

Internal Communications

An important aspect of strengthening and widening UN Women's networks is to ensure adequate knowledge and information sharing among staff. This seeks to ensure that everyone is on the same page in terms of the common goals of the organization. Sharing good practices and success stories is critical in helping others learn from the experience, acquire new ideas as well as benefit from each other's partnerships.

The internal communication plan intends to ensure that UN Women staff have full ownership, of the Africa Strategy, understand its linkages with their Strategic Notes and take part in its effective operationalization. The plan will enhance collaboration between the three regions – as they can speak with one voice using shared communication channels. Internal communication will use a variety of channels, including but not limited to the following: emails, letters and telephone calls; social medial platforms; meetings; resource centers; reports, factsheets, publications, posters, internal newsletters, etc.

External Communications

Communication with external stakeholders should focus on enhancing the visibility of UN Women at the continental level, securing buy-in of the strategy as well as promoting partnerships. It is important to identify appropriate target audiences for the strategy to help decide on the appropriate messages and communication tools.

A variety of channels will be used: participation and presentations at high-level forums, consultative meetings, annual reports, monthly and quarterly updates, impact presentations at town hall meetings, press releases and briefings, flyers, short videos, factsheets, brochures, publications, the website, social and digital media platforms, advocacy exposure visits; advocacy kits, academic research reports and publications.

Communications approaches:

- Map regional media bodies and explore strategic partnerships with them to communicate UN Women's efforts to promote gender equality (BBC Africa is a good example).
- Secure structured regional advocacy engagements between regional leadership and media institutions.
- Produce clear and effective communication products that are aligned with the strategy. With more and more organizations competing for audiences, it is important to remember that "less is often more." As such, UN Women should invest more in short communication products that lend themselves better for use on social media. Such items may include info graphics, summarized reports and pictorials. The products would have a clear focus on progress and results.
- Bolster internal communication capabilities by adopting new ways of communication, especially by making use of new communication tools of the post-COVID-19 era.
- Regional offices must come together to build on each other's strengths by amplifying each other's messages through diverse communication channels.
- Expand the use of innovative ways of communication: sports, goodwill ambassadors, influencers and celebrities.
- Undertake sensitization campaigns and the hosting of special events, linking UN Women with partners, companies, and organizations with whom UN Women shares values.
- Form a unified platform to advocate and work together to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The three regions will hold collective accountability and the plan will be operationalized under the leadership of the Liaison office.

The main target audiences for this communication work will be:

Decision makers and policymakers in the international community, including donors, continental and regional bodies (AU, RECs, Financial institutions, etc.) UN agencies and intergovernmental institutions. UN Women needs to target these actors to forge a common agenda to support the strategic positioning of African women in the global arena.

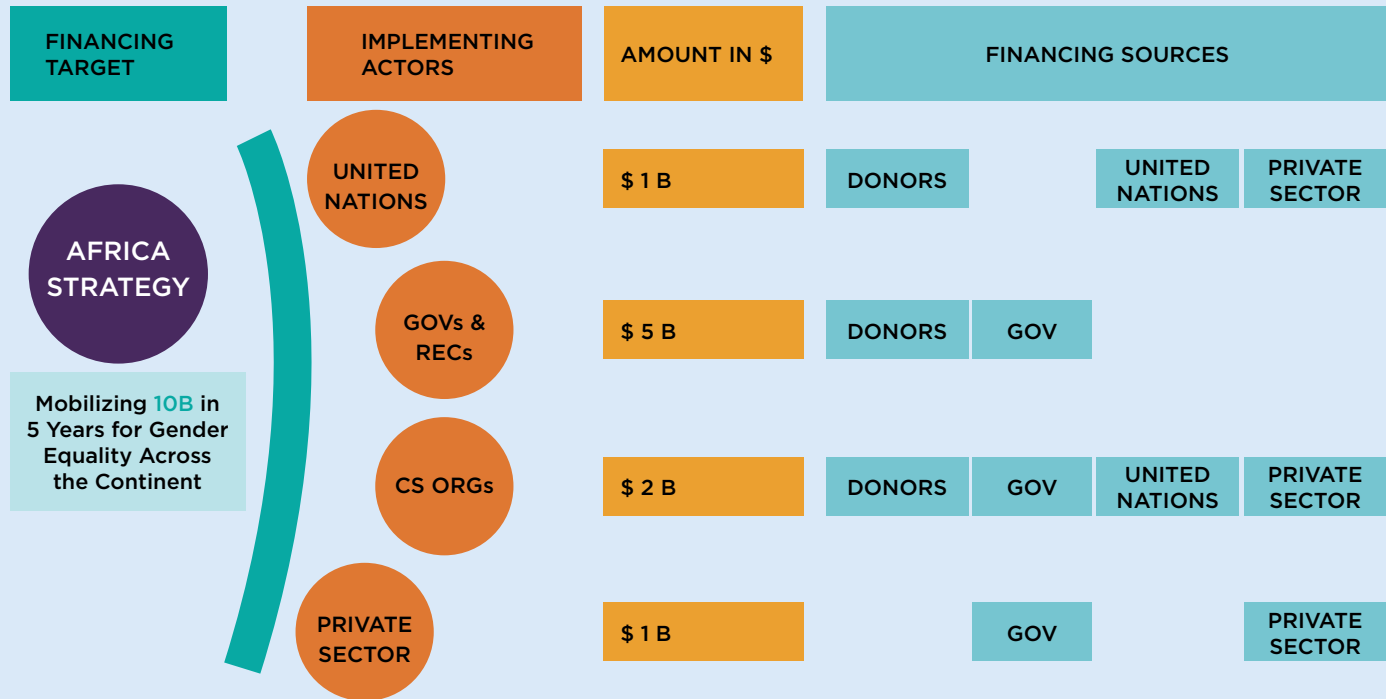
Women's networks, civil society organization networks, youth platforms, traditional leaders' networks and research and academic institutions. It is critical to get these diverse bodies to appreciate and support the strategy.

The private sector – Explore ways of forging strategic partnerships with private sector companies to raise UN Women's visibility, especially among the public by advertising using UN Women's logo.

AFRICA STRATEGY OVERALL TIMELINE



OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (INCLUDING “GENERATION EQUALITY” COMMITMENTS)



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