

VOICES FROM ADDIS – JANUARY 2016

ISSUE II: 8th African Union Gender Pre-Summit on 2016 African Year of Human Rights, with particular Focus on the Rights of Women 19-20 January 2016



KEY ISSUES/ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adoption of Communiqué with amendments
- Returning message of the inseparability of women's rights as human rights, especially in the context of the 2016 AU Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women
- Call for strengthening of pan-African institutions and enhancing their visibility and voices
- Improvements needed in social, technical and financial structures to support more women to enter the political arena
- Media must be brought on board to improve gender parity in politics
- Linkages must be made between the development of women-focused products by the financial sector & progressive regulatory frameworks by the public sector
- Leadership has to come from governments and central banks to ensure financial inclusion for women
- Need for removing gender-related barriers and empowering women at all levels can unlock the economic potential of the Extractive Industries Sector
- Women in Cross border trading processes require implementation & harmonization of agreements
- Peace is more than stopping guns but also requires basic services and guarantees of human rights at the community level
- Monitoring and evaluation of effective approaches to eliminate violent extremism is necessary to ensuring lasting peace
- The future of Africa lies on science and technology development - women and girls must be at the center of technological innovation in Africa
- Need for Africanization of higher education: re-orient African education system and institutions to respond to aspirations of Agenda 2063
- Adequate, comprehensive services are needed for often forgotten survivors of violence (i.e. early marriage) - health facilities, listening support, reintegration, etc.
- Call for community mobilization, including all stakeholders, to address the root causes of harmful traditional practices including violence against women



POEM by YOUNG GENDER ADVOCATES

One day my teacher asked me to spell COURAGE

I said: W.O.M.A.N.

She looked at me with so much astonishment

She said again: spell LOVE

I said: W.O.M.A.N... that's it

Then again she asked: spell AFRICA

I said: W.O.M.A.N.

The she asked me to spell: TEARS, SMILE, PARADISE and more and more words

I gave the same answer

She said you cant be serious..

The answer to every question cant be W.O.M.A.N.

Then I said, listen dear teacher

Let's switch roles for a moment

And I will tell you why

If you asked me thousand questions

The answer will be the same

Then I heard a big bang of silence

Like the day our universe divorced herself

From a forced marriage to unknown platenory bodies

I said,

Dear teacher

Dear every being under the sound of my voice

*What could be more courageous than being a midwife and
Delivering the earth of an overripe pregnancy with bear hands?*

Bruised hands

Spike torn feet

Not deterred by the angry sun rays

Or the crying skies

I ask,

Am I not right when I say love is a women..

Love has a womb and ten fingers doing a million things

(by Sebastiao Nhumbuavali and Waliyat Tajudeen)