



# THE YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA 4TH CONTINENTAL CONVENTION

AFRICAN UNION HQ, ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA  
11 - 12 DECEMBER 2024



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# INTRODUCTION

## Executive Summary

The 4th Annual Continental Convention (ACC) of the Young Women of Africa (YWOA) was a landmark event that brought together 120 young women from 20 African nations to tackle key challenges and drive transformative solutions. Held at the African Union Headquarters on the 11-12 February, 2024, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the 4th ACC was designed to cultivate leadership, foster economic resilience, and promote gender-sensitive innovation.

The YWOA 4th Annual Continental Convention (ACC), under the theme **“Encouraging Gender-Sensitive Leadership to Promote Innovation and Economic Empowerment: Unlocking Opportunities for Young Women in Africa”**, reinforced our commitment to nurturing young women leaders, fostering entrepreneurship, and addressing systemic barriers that hinder progress. The success of this convention was made possible through the support of our partners and stakeholders, who share our vision of an Africa where young women are empowered to lead, innovate, and drive economic transformation.

This report highlights the measurable outcomes, strategic recommendations, and future aspirations that emerged from the convention, demonstrating YWOA’s unwavering commitment to advancing young women’s empowerment. Moreover, the report includes annexes as follows: convention program, keynote speeches, commissions reports, convention Declaration, organizational report and decision tracker.

# ATTENDANCE



## Physical Participation (20 countries):

Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

## Virtual Participation (15 countries):

Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Egypt, Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Western Sahara.

## Partners participation:

Directorate of Women, Gender and Youth, CUA, Pan African Women Organization (PAWO), Ethiopian Medical Women's Association (EMeWA) and GIZ.



# KEY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS



The convention was structured around four pillars:

1. **Leadership Development** – Building confidence, decision-making skills, and public leadership capabilities.
2. **Young Women’s Empowerment** – Addressing systemic barriers and promoting gender-responsive policies.
3. **Innovation & Economic Empowerment** – Strengthening entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and technology access.
4. **Policy Advocacy & Transformation** – Driving tangible policy changes at national and regional levels.

## Key Achievements:

- ✓ 90% of participants reported enhanced leadership confidence and skills.
- ✓ 85% gained deeper insight into gender-responsive leadership and empowerment.
- ✓ 95% expanded their professional networks, forging new collaborations across Africa.
- ✓ Major policy actions were adopted, including the amendment of YWOA’s governing statutes and the ratification of the 2025 Programme of Action (POA).
- ✓ The convention’s march against gender-based violence (GBV) at the African Union grounds provided a critical safe space for dialogue and healing.

# Methodology & Engagement Strategy

The convention incorporated a mix of plenary sessions, expert panel discussions, targeted discussions, and networking opportunities. Additional engagement activities included:

- Breakout commissions addressed economic empowerment, leadership, education, innovation, women health, peace and security and policy reform.
- Thematic entrepreneurship exhibits showcasing young women-led businesses and side events and mentorship.
- 
- High-level stakeholder engagements with policymakers, corporate leaders, and development agencies.
- Anti-GBVF March on AU Grounds, amplifying urgent calls for policy action.

Each element was designed in collaboration with YWOA members and partners to ensure that the convention remained highly relevant, solution-driven, and impactful.



## STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

### 1. Increased Investment in Women's Leadership & Economic Empowerment

- Corporate and development sector stakeholders must expand funding for programs in education, skills development, and entrepreneurship.
- Investment in financial inclusion initiatives to provide young women with greater access to capital, markets, and business mentorship.

### 2. Policy Reform & Advocacy

- Urgent government and AU-backed policy shifts are needed to dismantle systemic barriers, such as discriminatory laws and gender gaps in decision-making.

### 3. Scaling Leadership Development & Mentorship Programs

- Expanding capacity-building initiatives, particularly through mentorship networks that connect young women with experienced leaders.
- YWOA's 2025 Programme of Action outlines concrete steps for continent-wide training and development initiatives.

### 4. Expanding Convention Scope & Duration

- Future conventions should extend in length to allow for more in-depth skill-building sessions and hands-on training.
- Enhanced strategic communication and media partnerships will increase visibility and corporate engagement

# FUTURE VISION & CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



Building on the success of this convention, we are committed to expanding our reach, deepening impact, and fostering sustainable partnerships. Our key priorities include:

- Launch of a Leadership Development Program – Establishing mentorship, training, and capacity-building initiatives across Africa.
- New Young Women’s Empowerment Initiatives – Including projects like Period Dignity, Entrepreneurship Development, and the “Back to Class” Education Campaign.
- Scaling the 5th Annual Continental Convention (2025) – Expanding participation, impact measurement, and stakeholder involvement.

## Financial Overview & Sponsorship Impact

### Budget & Funding Sources

The total budget for the convention was \$100,000 secured through a mix of sponsorships and contributions.

### Key Funding Partners:

- Main Partner: African Union
- Additional Sponsors: EMeWA and partners, African Renaissance, GIZ, La Francophonie, FES South Africa, UN Country Office Ethiopia, Lindiwe Pads, and private donors.
- Delegates apart from 10 out of the 120 self-financed their travel, reflecting high commitment and stakeholder buy-in.

A detailed financial report is available upon request, reaffirming our commitment to transparency and accountability.





# Conclusion: A Call to Action

The 4th ACC of YWOA was a resounding success, exceeding expectations and establishing a robust foundation for future growth. It demonstrated the power of collaborative leadership, cross-border partnerships, and grassroots empowerment. However, real transformation requires sustained investment. As we prepare for the 5th Annual Convention (2025), we invite corporate and development stakeholders to partner with us in scaling this movement.

The President of YWOA, Madam Precious Banda, concluded by expressing her heartfelt gratitude to all the participants physically and virtually present to the 4th ACC, as well as the high appreciation towards all the partners that, in their different capacities, provided an invaluable support that made possible the convening of the convention at the AU HQ in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She wished the participants a safe return to their respective countries, and encouraged them to embody the 4th ACC recommendations and decisions, and work towards their full implementation at the national, regional and continental level to reach a bigger impact on the lives of the young African women.



# Gallery





4TH ACC YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA



4TH ANNUAL CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA





4TH ACC YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA



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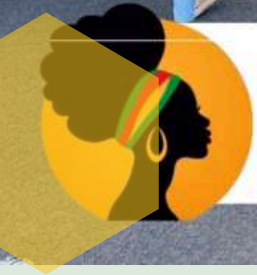
4TH ACC YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA



4TH ACC YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA

YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA  
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YWOA 2024



# Declaration

We, the determined delegates of the 4th Annual Continental Convention of the Young Women of Africa (YWOA), unite at the esteemed African Union Commission (AUC) headquarters in

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the 11th and 12th of December 2024, under the inspiring theme

“Encouraging Gender-sensitive Leadership to Promote Innovation and Economic Empowerment to Unlock Opportunities for Young Women in Africa.” In this moment, we wholeheartedly reaffirm our steadfast commitment to champion the rights, leadership, and economic empowerment of young women throughout the African continent.

**The Vital Contribution of Young Women:** We honour the vital contribution of young women in shaping Africa’s future as leaders, catalysts, and champions of economic transformation.

**Resilient Journeys:** We acknowledge the resilient journeys of young women across the continent, confronting systemic gender inequality, navigating limited access to quality education and skills development, striving for representation in decision-making processes, and battling the ongoing threat of gender-based violence.

We highlight the importance of surmounting these challenges to create a fair and inclusive society, where every young individual can thrive and appreciate the significance of their contribution to the community.

**Dedication to Gender Equality:** We renew our promise to uphold the values of gender equality as outlined in the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Importance of gender-responsive leadership:** We highlight the significance of nurturing gender-responsive leadership to eradicate gender inequalities and open doors for young women across Africa.

**Value of solidarity and collaboration:** We honour the significance of solidarity, collaboration, and innovation in triumphing over the diverse and numerous challenges that young women encounter across the continent.



**Decolonization of Education Systems:** We are committed to championing the decolonization of education systems in Africa, safeguarding and enhancing the rich tapestry of African diversity, cultures, and aspirations.

**Equal Access to Excellent Education:** We are committed to nurturing equal access to outstanding education and skills development, guaranteeing that every African young woman is empowered and included.

**Empowering Young Women's Participation:** We are committed to uplifting young women's involvement in political decision-making by dismantling systemic barriers and fostering inclusive spaces where their voices resonate and are cherished.

**Training and Development Programs:** We are committed to designing and advancing training and development programs that empower young women to embrace leadership roles.

**Policies and initiatives for economic empowerment:** We are committed to crafting policies and initiatives that open doors for young women, granting them access to financial resources, entrepreneurial opportunities, and innovative pathways, thereby securing their economic independence.

**Fair Chances for Economic Advancement:** We are committed to guaranteeing that young women have fair chances to engage in and reap the rewards of Africa's economic advancement.

**Eradicate violence against women and children:** We stand united in our unwavering commitment to eliminate violence against women and children. Through the power of awareness, education, and the steadfast implementation of protective laws and policies, we will forge a safer future for all, this is amplified by our historic march against Violence on Women and Children which was hosted on AU grounds during the convention.

**Championing campaigns and secure havens:** We are committed to championing initiatives like the "365 Days of Activism" and fostering secure environments for young women throughout the continent.

**Strengthening Alliances:** We are devoted to forging strong partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs), political formations, sister entities, and our governments, with the purpose of crafting sustainable solutions to the challenges that young women encounter.

**Establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems:** We are dedicated to establishing systems that empower us to track and assess the progress made, fostering unwavering transparency and accountability.



**We warmly welcome:**

- **Governments:** Embrace policies that honour gender equality and dedicate resources to empower young women.
- **Educational institutions:** Foster inclusive educational initiatives that equip young women with essential skills.
- **Communities:** Foster environments where young women can boldly chase their aspirations.
- **Global Community and the Africa we want:** Champion African-led initiatives that empower the rights and opportunities of young women.

As we embrace the **16 Days of Activism** and pay tribute to the enduring legacy of women's strength and contributions, we pledge to uphold the principles articulated in this declaration. United, we will strive relentlessly to promote the rights, leadership, and economic empowerment of young women in Africa, ensuring that no one is left behind.

We extend our heartfelt and genuine appreciation to the Government and People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for their gracious hospitality. We also thank the African Union Commission and the Directorate of Gender, Women and Youth for their role in hosting the 4th Annual Young Women of Africa (YWOA) Convention.

end.

# **4TH ACC PROGRAMME**



**4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONTINENTAL CONVENTION DRAFT PROGRAMME**

AUC Headquarters

11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2024

**Theme:** *Encouraging Gender Sensitive Leadership to Promote Innovation and Economic Empowerment to Unlock Opportunities for Young Women in Africa*

**Master of Ceremony**

**Ms. Karabo Mohale**, YWOA Continental Head of Stakeholders and Partnerships Committee

DAY 1			
TIME	DURATION	ACTIVITY	MODERATOR
08:30 – 09:00	30 mins	Arrival + Registration	
<b>Opening Session</b>			
09:00 – 09:05	5 mins	Opening and Introduction of Guests of the Annual Continental Convention	
09:05 – 09:15	10 mins	Welcome Remarks – <b>Ms. Prudence Ngwenya</b> , Director, Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate	
09:15 – 09:35	20 mins	Statement – <b>Ms. Precious Banda</b> , Young Women of Africa (YWOA) Continental Convener	
09:35 – 09:45	10 mins	Message – <b>Dr. Hiwot Tadesse</b> , Ethiopian Medical Women's Association (EMWA) President	
09:45 – 09:55	10 mins	Messages of Support from fraternal organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pan - African Youth Union</li> </ul>	
<i>Musical Item</i>			
09:55 – 10:20	25 mins	Keynote Address – <b>H.E. Madam Eunice lipinge</b> , President of PAWO	
10:20 – 10:50	30 mins	<b>Family Picture + Coffee Break</b>	
10:50 – 11:50	60 mins	<b>Panel discussion: Education and Skills for the Future - Decolonizing Africa's education to leave no young woman behind</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms. Lebo Ramalepe (PhD (Candidate), MA, PGD, BA Hons, BA, Lecturer North West University)</b></li> <li>- <b>African Renaissance</b></li> <li>- <b>Ms. Asmau Idris Omeiza</b>, Graduate of mass communication, Msc in view and Director of Gender orientation and</li> </ul>	<b>MC</b>

		empowerment NANS (North Central Zone) - <b>Ms. Emma Kwaje Martin</b> , Founder/ED Banat Power Initiative, 2023 Future Africa Leaders Award Winner, 2021 World Bank Blog4dev Winner, Communication Officer at UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel - <b>Dr Azeb Asamenew</b> , Ethiopian Medical Women's Association (EMWA)	
11:50 – 12:50	60mins	<b>Towards Beijing +30 and Enhanced Promotion of Young Women's Rights in Africa</b> - <b>Ms. Lindiwe Mugabe</b> , Programme Specialist, Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate, African Union Commission	
<b>12:50 – 13:50</b>	<b>60mins</b>	<b>Lunch + Exhibitions</b>	
13:50 – 14:50	60 mins	<b>Young Women's participation in Political Decision-Making Processes - Challenges and Prospects</b> - Mr. Ibrahim Jerry Faruk - Ms. Olasimbo Odunayo Olatoregun - Dr Hanna Muzee (PHD in Governance and Regional Integration)	<b>Advocate Thembisile Mahuwa</b>
<b>Commemoration of the 16 Days for No Violence against Women and Children – Uniting Young Women in Our Continent. a Call to Action!</b>			
15:00 – 16:00	60mins	#16Days Walk and candlelight by young women to reclaim our safety in Africa	<b>Madam Sibongile Sibanda – Continental Deputy Convener</b>
16:00 – 16:30	30mins	Messages of Solidarity & Pledge - AUC - Poem from Lesotho - Remarks by <b>Ms. Una Nkuna</b> - Gadise Terefe Leta (YWOA Ethiopia) - Young women's organizations on GBVF - <b>Right Honourable Dr Grace Kabayo</b> , PAWO Secretary General	
16:30 - 17:00	30mins	Closure of day 1 (Networking + Tea)	
<b>DAY 2 - Ndahafa Hapuliile</b>			
08:30 – 09:00	30mins	Arrival + Tea	
09:00 – 09:20	20mins	Presentation of the YWOA Annual Report	<b>Mdm. Precious Banda Organisational Report</b>
09:20 – 09:35	15mins	Presentation of YWOA Policies	<b>Ms. Lioness Sibanda</b> , YWOA Continental Head of Research and Policy

09:35 – 09:50	15mins	Presentation of the Programme of Action for 2025	<b>Ms. Jocelyne Ngoie</b> , YWOA Continental Head of Rural Development
09:50 - 10:20	30mins	Plenary discussion and adoption of Annual Report, Policies, and Programme of Actions	<b>All</b>
<b>10:20 – 10:40</b>	<b>20 mins</b>	<b>Health Break + Coffee</b>	
10:40 – 11:00	20mins	Presentation of the EMWA Programme of Action	
11:00 – 12:00	60mins	Panel Discussion on Economic Empowerment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposed Panelist 1 – <b>Dr. Bethel Dereje</b>, Ethiopian Medical Women's Association</li> <li>- Proposed Panelist 2 – <b>Ndahafa Hapulile</b>, LLB and LLM in International Commercial Law and also Managing Director of Samra International Investment (Pty) Ltd in Namibia</li> <li>- Proposed Panelist 3 - <b>Sandra Murhola</b>, Studied LLB and is a Human Rights Activist from Goma in the DRC</li> <li>- Proposed Panelist 4 - <b>Belinda Mwiinga</b>, Founder and Lead Consultant of Elevate360 Consultancy, Board Member under Chartered Institute of Customer Management in Zambia</li> <li>- Proposed Panelist 5 - <b>Lionel Hugo Etoa</b>, Program Officer, La Francophonie</li> </ul>	<b>Ms. Heather Hunda</b> , YWOA Continental Finance Secretary
12:00 – 12:15	15mins	Commission Outline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women, Peace and Stability – Commission 1</li> <li>- Social and Economic Transformation – Commission 2</li> <li>- Women and Health – Commission 3</li> <li>- Education – Commission 4: Is the African Education System capable of educating an African fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?</li> </ul>	<b>Madam Lioness Sibanda (YWOA Assistant Secretary and Head of Research and Policy Development)</b>
12:15 - 13:15	60mins	Commissions	<b>ALL</b>
<b>13:15 – 14:15</b>	<b>60mins</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
14:15 – 15:00	45mins	Commission Reports to plenary and adoption	<b>Mdm Gadise Terefe Leta</b>
15:00 - 15:30	30Mins	Continental Awards	
15:30 – 15:45	15mins	Convention Declaration	<b>Una Nkuna</b>

15:45 – 16:00	10mins	Closing Statement	<b>Ms. Precious Banda,</b> Young Women of Africa (YWOA) Continental Convener
<b>Convention Ends</b>			

*Summary of*  
**KEYNOTE SPEECHES**



## Welcome Remarks

### Ms Prudence Ngwenya

Directorate of women Gender and Youth Directorate, AUC

Distinguished guests, young women trailblazers, all protocol duly observed.

Good morning, let me take the opportunity to welcome you to the beautiful city of Addis Ababa and to also thank the distinguished that have joined us today. It really is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the fourth convention of Young Women of Africa. I really wish I could have been with you in person but competing end of year activities of the commission prevented me from doing so. But I am also happy that this is not the last time that you will be coming home.

Addis is your home, and I want you to feel at home. I have had the opportunity to meet some of you on various occasions, and I know what a vibrant, dynamic, and dedicated group of young women you are and leader that you are.

It is important to support young women like yourselves and because Africa is a youthful continent with women comprising majority of its population. The theme for this convention is "Encouraging Gender Sensitive leadership to promote innovation and economic empowerment to unlock opportunities for young women". This is timely and it holds the potential for the future of young women across the continent.

The demographics of young people, particularly young women in Africa, are not mainly statistics. They serve as a call to action and to create an enabling environment for them to thrive and reach their full potential.

Why does gender-sensitive leadership matter? Gender-sensitive leadership is crucial to unlocking opportunities for young women on the continent. However, true gender sensitive leadership goes beyond token representation. It calls for rethinking power structures, dismantle barriers and design economic ecosystems that are inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

For too long, young women have been constrained by systematic inequalities. Limited access to quality education, unequal pay, restricted financial resources and pervasive gender-based violence. Yet, despite all their challenges, young women are heading their communities, they are driving innovation, and they are demonstrating resilience. As leaders, it is our responsibility to amplify their voices, invest in their potential and ensure that there are not many participants in the economy, but co-creators of its future.

The African Union has made significant progress in empowering African Youth and advancing gender equality. We have a number of normative frameworks that seek to make sure that women like yourselves continue to climb the ladder of change in the societies where we are in.

Let me conclude by saying that let us reimagine a continent where young women are not recipients of initiatives and programs, but they are active agents, where their innovations drive economies, their leadership reshapes our societies, and their voices inform our policies. This is the Africa we are building together. Our shared vision must transcend conferences and materialize into measurable outcomes and reduced unemployment amongst young women. It must also lead to increased representation in leadership and tangible improvement in young women's economic and social well-being. Let us remember that leadership is not about power, its about purpose. As leaders, we must continue to build an enabling environment where young women like yourselves can thrive.

Thank you!



## Opening Statement

Ms Precious Banda  
YWOA Continental Convenor

The President of Women of Africa, Precious Banda, delivered a powerful opening speech that set the tone for the convention. In her address, she underscored the importance of challenging societal norms and creating a more just, equitable, and peaceful Africa. Banda emphasised the role of young women in leading this transformation:

*"The future, who will challenge the norms and who will create an Africa that is more just, equitable, and more peaceful. Today, we take the final and first step on the journey together in this Fourth Convention."*

Banda also stressed that the convention was not just a space for discussions but for meaningful action. She encouraged attendees to take bold steps toward shaping a new Africa:

*"At this convention, we convene not merely to discuss issues. We are here to redefine narratives and forge a transformative path towards equality."*

Recognising the systemic barriers young women face in leadership and economic participation, Banda urged the attendees to take ownership of the process of overcoming these obstacles:

*"For far too long, women have encountered systematic barriers to leadership and economic participation. However, as history illustrates, where there are barriers, there are also bridges to be constructed. And who is better placed to construct those bridges than yourselves?"*

Expanding the Agenda: Environmental Leadership and Decolonisation

Banda addressed the critical role of environmental leadership and sustainability, calling for the empowerment of women who safeguard the environment. She emphasised the need for young women to guide discussions on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the future of work, and decolonisation:

*"We must empower women and environmental leaders and also those that look after the environment. These discussions will not be enough if we do not touch on the Fourth Industrial Revolution and also the future of work and decolonisation. It is yourselves that are going to guide us on what campaigns in that regard we need to take."*

## Celebrating Progress: The Fourth Anniversary of Women of Africa

Marking a milestone in the movement's journey, President Banda celebrated the fourth anniversary of Women of Africa, which began with the first convention in 2021. She reflected on the progress made, the challenges overcome, and the solidarity built among young women:

*"Today, the 11th of December marks exactly four years from the very first time in our first convention since we convened on the 11th of December in 2021. So let's just take time to wish all of you a happy anniversary."*

While celebrating these achievements, President Banda reminded the attendees that the journey toward equality and empowerment was ongoing:

*"We dare dream of an Africa where young women are empowered and equipped about their place in the continent. Today, we celebrate the progress we've made, the challenges we have overcome, and the sisters we have gained along the way. As we mark this milestone, we want to remind you that our way is far from over."*

### Encouragement to Young Women Leaders

President Banda issued a passionate call to young women, urging them to embrace their leadership potential and challenge societal limitations:

*"As young women, you are the backbone of your communities, and your voices, actions, and leadership are crucial in creating a better Africa. Don't let anyone tell you that you are too young, you are too inexperienced, you are too ambitious. Your age is in fact your strength, not a weakness."*

She encouraged the attendees to take risks and break boundaries, assuring them that leadership requires boldness and courage:

*"Remember that your voice matters, your presence is needed, and your leadership is required. Don't be afraid to take risks, challenge the norms, and push the boundaries. That's where the magic is going to happen."*

### Acknowledgment of Partners and the African Union

President Banda expressed her gratitude to the African Union Directorate for its support of the Women of Africa initiative. She highlighted the importance of strategic partnerships in driving sustainable change:

*"In closing, Madam Program Director, we would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to the African Union Directorate for believing in our vision and our mission. Their support has enabled us to amplify our impact and reach more young women and girls in our continent."*

### *A Call for Unity Across Borders*

*A key theme in President Banda's address was the need for unity and collaboration across African borders. She called for young women to reject colonial divisions and focus on collective progress:*

*"So this is your chance as young women to forge together even more, to unite together even more, to close the gaps, but to have honest reflections on the things that hold us back, and also what is it that we can do to move forward."*

She also emphasised the importance of seeing borders as opportunities for collaboration rather than divisions:

*"It is here that we are going to stand together to ensure that our countries and the borders that divide us, that the colonialists and oppressors put for us, do not divide us, but become just an instrument that we use on how we improve the livelihoods of all our people and young women in particular."*

### *Closing Remarks*

Banda concluded her speech with a heartfelt blessing for the young women of Africa, reaffirming her commitment to the movement:

*"God bless all of you, God bless the young women of this continent, and God bless Africa. I thank you."*



## Message of Support

Dr Hiwot Tadesse

**President of the Ethiopian Medical Women's Association**

Dr. Hiwot, the President of the Ethiopian Medical Women's Association (EMWA), delivered an impactful speech at the Fourth Annual Continental Convention of Young Women of Africa, held in Addis Ababa. In her address, she emphasised the vital role of women's leadership in driving change across various sectors such as healthcare, education, governance, and economic growth. Dr. Hiwot highlighted the significance of the gathering, describing it as not merely a meeting but a platform for transformation aimed at empowering young women across Africa.

She began her speech by welcoming the attendees to Addis Ababa, which she described as a city that symbolises unity, resilience, and progress for the continent. She expressed her gratitude to the participants, recognising their commitment to advancing the rights, leadership, and well-being of young women. Dr. Hiwot stated that the convention represents a collective determination to break barriers and redefine societal norms in order to ensure that no woman is left behind in Africa's progress.

Dr. Hiwot emphasised that leadership is not just about holding positions of power but about unlocking possibilities, amplifying voices, and inspiring others to act. She reflected on the critical role that women play as leaders and change agents, particularly in healthcare, education, governance, and economic sectors. Women, she argued, are not merely participants but are the architects of solutions and drivers of innovation. Despite these contributions, Dr. Hiwot acknowledged the numerous challenges that young women continue to face in their journey to leadership. These include systemic barriers such as limited political representation, economic exclusion, unequal access to education, and underrepresentation in decision-making spaces.

She outlined key areas where progress must be made, starting with economic empowerment and financial inclusion. Dr. Hiwot noted that women and youth are disproportionately affected by economic challenges but also have the potential to drive Africa's prosperity. She called for the opening of doors for women entrepreneurs, the promotion of access to finance, and the implementation of economic policies that promote gender equality. She stressed that when young women thrive economically, entire communities benefit and are lifted from poverty.

Another central theme of her speech was the importance of education as a pathway to leadership. Dr. Hiwot argued that empowering young women begins with empowering education. She highlighted the need for Africa's education systems to be more inclusive, reflecting the continent's histories, cultures, and future aspirations. Education, she explained, is not only an individual success tool but the very foundation upon which leadership is built. She called for universal access to quality education for young women, regardless of their background, in order to prepare the next generation of leaders.

Lastly, Dr. Hiwot highlighted the issue of gender-based violence and how it continues to impact women's ability to thrive in leadership roles. She noted that the convention coincided with the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, calling attention to the importance of standing united against such violence. Dr. Hiwot underscored the need to create safe spaces for women, free from harassment and discrimination, to ensure that they can fully participate in leadership roles.

In conclusion, Dr. Hiwot called for a collective commitment to overcoming the barriers that hinder young women's progress and leadership. She encouraged the attendees to continue pushing for change and to be at the forefront of Africa's transformation, using their voices and actions to pave the way for future generations of women leaders.

Her speech left the audience inspired and motivated to take meaningful action toward the empowerment of young women in Africa, and to tackle the systemic issues that have long prevented many women from realising their full potential.



# Keynote Address

**HE Amb. Ntsiunoa Sekete**  
Ambassador of Lesotho to Ethiopia

## Opening Remarks

The Ambassador began her address with a heartfelt greeting that resonated with the audience, emphasising the significance of unity and connection across African nations. She expressed her admiration for the strategic, bold, and capable women present, recognising their potential to drive transformative change.

She acknowledged the leadership and organisers of the forum for bringing together brilliant and ambitious minds from across the continent, emphasising the importance of such gatherings in fostering collaboration and innovative solutions.

## Reflections on Agenda 2063

Drawing attention to Africa's Agenda 2063, the Ambassador posed critical questions:

- Where will we be in 2063?
- What will we have achieved by then?

She challenged the audience to reflect on their role in shaping a better Africa not just for themselves but for future generations. Her call to action was clear: decisions made today must be guided by a vision of a brighter future for siblings, children, and even grandchildren.

## The Power of Youth Leadership

The Ambassador passionately conveyed her belief that leadership is not bound by age. Reflecting on her journey as one of the youngest ambassadors, she emphasised that young people should not wait until they are 50 or 60 to take on leadership roles.

She stated, *"This is our time, all of us. It should not be a miracle or a 'wow' moment when a young woman becomes a minister or an ambassador, because this is our time."* The Ambassador urged the young women present to seek guidance from seasoned leaders, learn from their experiences, and leverage their wisdom to navigate the complexities of leadership.

## Celebrating African Women in Leadership

Throughout her speech, the Ambassador celebrated the achievements of African women who have broken barriers and set remarkable precedents, including:

- Namibia's first woman president
- Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, former Chairperson of the African Union Commission
- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia
- Botswana's appointment of a young female leader at the age of 37

She emphasised the importance of networking and learning from these trailblazers, stating, *"Let us see how we link up with them, let's ride on their shoulders, and let's involve them in what we do."*

## Inspirational Story from Lesotho

The Ambassador shared an inspiring story from her home country, Lesotho, highlighting the journey of a female Secretary-General of the most powerful political party. Without prior political experience, this woman assembled a team, registered a political party within seven months, and led the party to victory in national polls.

She used this example to illustrate the power of belief, vision, and perseverance, declaring, *"When you dream it, you believe it, and you make it happen."*

## Conclusion

In closing, the Ambassador delivered a powerful and motivational message to the young women in attendance, urging them to believe in their dreams and to act on them with courage and confidence. She reiterated the importance of collaboration, mentorship, and the continuous pursuit of leadership roles.

Her speech was not merely a call to action but a celebration of African women's resilience, ambition, and capacity to shape the future of the continent.



# Keynote Address

Madam Eunice Ipenge

**President of PAWO**

Madam Ipenge, the President of the Pan-African Women's Organisation (PAWO), delivered an inspiring keynote address at the Fourth Annual Continental Convention of Young Women of Africa. Her speech, entered on "Encouraging Gender-Sensitive Leadership to Promote Innovation and Economic Empowerment," celebrated the accomplishments of African women and highlighted the pressing need for continued progress in gender equality and leadership.

She began by reflecting on the historical context of the Pan-African Women's Organisation, founded in 1962 by African women from 14 independent countries and 10 liberation movements. Madam Ipenge reminded the audience of the role that African women played in liberating the continent, a legacy that young women today are building upon to secure a better future for Africa. She emphasised that this gathering of young women represents a movement toward a future of equality and empowerment for all.

In her speech, Madam Ipenge acknowledged the strides made in breaking traditional gender roles, referencing women who have excelled in various fields, such as science, aviation, and engineering. However, she also pointed out that despite these achievements, societal expectations and historical biases continue to limit women's leadership potential. She called for the rejection of outdated beliefs that associate certain qualities with women and others with men, reinforcing the message that leadership should not be dictated by gender.

A significant part of her speech focused on the power of education in empowering women. Madam Ipenge underscored the importance of education as a tool for accessing power and overcoming the systemic barriers that hinder women's progress. She highlighted the need for equal opportunities and equal pay for equal work, advocating for the removal of obstacles that prevent women from reaching leadership positions, particularly in male-dominated industries.

Madam Ipenge also addressed the persistent challenges that women face in leadership. She highlighted how discrimination and bias in decision-making continue to limit women's participation, largely due to the perception that leadership is a "man's job" and the undervaluing of women's voices. Financial, technological, and educational barriers further hinder women from reaching their full potential. She emphasised that harassment and violence against women leaders, particularly in business and politics, remain significant issues that require urgent attention.

To address these challenges, Madam Ipenge advocated for a multi-faceted approach that includes:

- **Strengthening Gender Awareness Training:** She stressed the importance of educating society about gender sensitivity, emphasising that people can only be sensitive to issues they understand. She cited Namibia's success in implementing strong gender awareness programs after independence, leading to a more gender-sensitive society. She argued that continuous gender awareness training and research are essential for bringing facts to the table, raising awareness, and eliminating gender blindness.
- **Policy Implementation and Advocacy:** Madam Ipenge called for the full implementation of existing policies and frameworks such as Agenda 2063 and the Maputo Protocol, which often remain under-utilised due to a lack of awareness. She emphasised the role of workshops and awareness programs in ensuring that these frameworks are understood and effectively implemented.
- **Promoting Mentorship Programs:** She underscored the value of mentorship programs to guide and support the younger generation. Highlighting the wisdom of learning from those who have already navigated challenges, she encouraged experienced leaders to mentor young women to help them avoid pitfalls and overcome emerging challenges.
- **Encouraging Women in Technology and Innovation:** Madam Ipenge stressed the importance of prioritising women's participation in technology and innovation to drive Africa's digital transformation. She pointed out the need to enhance skills and provide resources, noting that many young women miss opportunities due to financial constraints. She emphasised that resource allocation must be gender-sensitive to enable equal participation.

Madam Ipenge also recognised the progress made in Africa, with countries like Rwanda, South Africa, and Kenya leading the way in gender parity in governance and economic participation. She cited Rwanda's achievement of having over 60% female representation in parliament as an exemplary model of gender equality. Despite these advancements, she acknowledged that social, political, and economic barriers remain, especially in rural areas where traditional views on gender roles persist.

In conclusion, Madam Ipenge encouraged the young women in the audience to take full advantage of the opportunities presented to them, build on the foundations laid by previous generations, and drive the transformational change needed to achieve gender-sensitive leadership across Africa. She urged them to be the lifeblood of the continent, using their creativity, strength, and determination to create a more inclusive and prosperous Africa.

Her address was met with a standing ovation, leaving the young leaders inspired and motivated to continue the fight for gender equality and leadership empowerment in Africa.



# Pleanary Sessions: Panels

# Towards Beijing +30 & enhanced promotion of young women's rights in Africa

## Pleanary Sessions

**Moderated by Ms Lindiwe Mugabe**

**The programmes Specialist, Women, Gender, and Youth directorate at the African Union Commission.**



Panelist:

Ms Rizzan Nassuna from the Management of the Rights Component of the project implemented by AU Human Rights Organs (ACHPR, ACERWC, African Court and AUC WGYD) and Women's Rights Networks/Organisations

Lerato Moamogwa Graduate in the built environment, youth development practitioner, Member of the Community Schemes Ombud Service in South Africa and Country Secretary South Africa Young Women of Africa

Dra Mariam Abdoulaye Ahmed Seid an Activist medical doctor specialising in surgery in Chad.

Young women's participation in political decision making processes - challenges and prospects.

# Pleanary Sessions

**Moderated by Thembisile Mahuwa**

**A youth development practitioner and is part of the continental media team.**



Panelists:

Dr Hanna Muzee (PHD in governance, and regional integration.) Uganda

Ms Olasimbo Odunayo Olatoregun from GIZ.

Mr Josh from the Youth Directorate.

Education and skills development for the future. Decolonising Africa's education to leave no young woman behind.



Panelists:

Ms Lebo Ramalepe (PHD candidate, MA, PGD, BA Hons, BA graduate. Lecturer at the North West University in South Africa.

Ms Idris Asmawu Omeiza, Graduate of mass communication, currently studying MSC, Director of Gender orientation and empowerment in NANS. Nigeria

Ms Emma Kwaje Martin, Founder of Banat Power initiative, 2023 Future African leaders award winner, 2021 world bank blog4dev winner and communications officer at UNFPA youth Advisory Council. South Sudan

Dr Azeb Adamenew, Ethiopian Medical Women Association (EMeWA). Ethiopia

# Pleanary Sessions

**Moderated by Winnie Mabena Winnie Mabena**

**Country leader for Zambia.**



# Day 2

## Young Women Economic Empowerment

### Pleanary Sessions

**Moderated by Madam Heather Hunda** *BSc honours. L.LM MRICS MCI Arb*

**Young Women of Africa Continental Finance Secretary**



Panelists:

Dr Bethel Dereje from EMeWA, in Ethiopia. Ndahafa Dalah Hapulile LLB, and LL.M graduate who is a Director of SAMRA International Investment in Namibia.

Sandra Murhola LLB graduate and human's Rights activist from Goma in the DRC

Belinda Mwiinga, Founder and Lead Consultant of Elevate360 Consultancy. Board Member of Chartered Institute of Customer Management in Zambia.

Lionel Hugo Etoa the Programme Officer at La Francophonie



# Commissions Report



**WOMEN AND  
HEALTH  
COMMISSION**

**EDUCATION**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
TRANSFORMATION**

**PEACE AND  
STABILITY**

# Women and Health

## COMMISSION 1



## Overview

The breakout session on Women and Health, moderated by Dr. Nanati and Dr. Rakeb, provided a valuable platform for insightful discussions on the systemic barriers women face in accessing quality healthcare. While considerable progress has been made, challenges rooted in cultural norms, economic constraints, and gaps in healthcare systems continue to limit women's access to essential services.

Throughout the session, we examined the broader implications of these challenges—not just as health issues, but as matters of equity, empowerment, and justice. A striking reminder of this reality is the fact that about 830 women die every day from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Beyond the numbers, these represent lives, families, and futures shaped by inequities in healthcare access.

Participants engaged in a dynamic discussion, sharing perspectives on key challenges and proposing strategies for change. Topics included making health systems more inclusive, empowering women to take control of their health, and fostering partnerships for sustainable solutions. The session underscored the importance of collective action in addressing these disparities and driving meaningful progress.

The insights and ideas shared during the session will serve as a foundation for ongoing efforts to improve women's health outcomes. As we move forward, the need for policy reforms, community engagement, and innovative solutions remains critical in ensuring that healthcare systems work for all women.

You will find below the key topics discussed and summaries made from the commission meeting.

Guiding Question 1:

What are the main barriers women face in accessing quality healthcare in your region or area of expertise?

Answers:**Economic Barriers**

- Poverty often leads to healthcare being deprioritized in household budgets, disproportionately affecting women.
- Financial dependence on men limits women's autonomy in seeking medical care.
- Systemic underfunding in healthcare results in poor-quality services, exacerbating access issues.

**Policy & Systemic Barriers**

- Inadequate policies to ensure women's healthcare rights and access.
- In some regions, restrictive policies hinder access—for instance, in Tanzania, women require their husband's permission for antenatal care.

**Educational Barriers**

- Lack of awareness and health education prevents women from recognizing symptoms and seeking timely medical care.
- Cultural Barriers
- Early marriage increases the risk of reproductive health complications.
- Traditional beliefs may discourage women from accessing modern medical care.

**Mental Health Barriers**

- Postpartum depression is stigmatized, discouraging women from seeking professional help.
- Broader mental health struggles in women are often overlooked or dismissed.

Guiding Question 2:

What innovative programs or policies have you seen that effectively address women's health challenges?

Answers:

**Integrated Healthcare Models:** Combining maternal, reproductive, and mental health services in one setting to ensure comprehensive care.

**Community-Based Interventions:** Using local networks to deliver culturally sensitive health education and services.

**Financial Support Mechanisms:** Subsidized healthcare programs or insurance schemes designed to reduce the financial burden on women.

**Policy Reforms:** Enforcing laws that protect women's rights in healthcare, including autonomy in decision-making and protection from discriminatory practices.

### Guiding question 3

How can technology, such as telemedicine or digital health tools, be used to improve access to care?

#### Answers:

**Telemedicine:** Enables women in remote or underserved areas to consult healthcare providers without needing to travel.

**Mobile Health Applications:** Provide health education, symptom tracking, and appointment scheduling, empowering women to take charge of their health.

**AI and Data Analytics:** Improve early detection of health issues, personalize care, and enhance healthcare delivery efficiency.

**Wearable Health Devices:** Check vital signs, reproductive health, and chronic conditions, allowing for proactive intervention.

### Guiding question 4

What role do education and empowerment play in improving women's health outcomes?

#### Answer:

**Health Literacy:** Educating women on their bodies, reproductive rights, and available healthcare services leads to informed decision-making.

**Economic Empowerment:** Financial independence allows women to prioritize their health and access necessary medical services.

**Advocacy & Leadership:** Encouraging women's participation in healthcare policy and decision-making ensures their needs are addressed.

**Breaking Stigma:** Awareness campaigns help dismantle cultural taboos around reproductive and mental health, making it easier for women to seek care.

### **Proposed Convention resolutions from our commission**

Our Commission resolved on the following resolutions for tabling in the plenary;

#### **Resolution 1: Empowering Girls and Young Women**

We, the participants of this conference, resolve to:

- Promote comprehensive education and awareness programs that empower girls and young women to make informed decisions about their health.
- Advocate for policies and programs that support girls' and young women's autonomy, agency, and leadership.
- Support initiatives that provide safe spaces for girls and young women to discuss their health concerns and access support.

## **Resolution 2: Addressing Adolescent Health**

We, the participants of this conference, resolve to:

- Advocate for increased investment in adolescent health programs and services.
- Promote policies and programs that address the unique health needs of adolescents, including mental health, reproductive health, and nutrition.
- Support initiatives that provide accessible, youth-friendly health services.

## **Resolution 3: Preventing Violence Against Girls and Young Women**

We, the participants of this conference, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that prevent and respond to violence against girls and young women, including sexual violence, FGM, and child marriage.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge harmful social norms and promote healthy relationships.
- Support initiatives that provide safe spaces and support services for survivors of violence.

## **Resolution 4: Promoting Digital Health Literacy**

We, the participants of this conference, resolve to:

- Promote digital health literacy programs that empower girls and young women to navigate online health information and resources.
- Advocate for policies and programs that address online harassment, cyberbullying, and digital violence against girls and young women.
- Support initiatives that develop digital health tools and platforms that cater to the unique needs of girls and young women.

## **Resolution 5: Supporting Girls and Young Women in Crisis Situations**

We, the participants of this conference, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that prioritize the health and well-being of girls and young women in crisis situations, including conflicts, natural disasters, and humanitarian emergencies.
- Promote awareness and education programs that address the unique health needs of girls and young women in crisis situations.
- Support initiatives that provide emergency healthcare services, including reproductive health and mental health support.

These resolutions are a call to action for conference participants, stakeholders, and policymakers to address the unique health needs and challenges faced by girls and young women in our beautiful continent.



## Overview

### **Commission Question: Is the African education system capable of educating individuals fit for the 21st century.**

The efficacy of Africa's education systems in preparing young women for the demands of the 21st century is a topic of increasing importance. In a rapidly changing global context, educational frameworks must equip young women with skills and knowledge relevant to technological advancement, economic participation, and societal leadership (UNESCO, 2020). However, evidence suggests that many education systems in Africa remain constrained by outdated curricula, gender inequalities, and limited access to quality resources (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2019; Oketch, 2018). For example, In Malawi, the curriculum has struggled to keep pace with the demands of a rapidly changing world. Studies show that much of the content remains theoretical, with limited emphasis on practical skills, critical thinking, or technological literacy (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014).

As a result, graduates, especially young women, often leave school without the competencies needed for employment in emerging industries or entrepreneurial activities. This outdated curriculum has hindered their ability to participate in sectors such as information technology, science, and engineering, where the demand for skills is growing. Furthermore, gender disparities in education are particularly pronounced in northern Nigeria. Sociocultural norms and practices, such as early marriage and expectations of domestic labour, limit educational opportunities for girls (UNICEF, 2020). Even when girls are enrolled in school, many face higher dropout rates due to factors like gender-based violence, lack of female-friendly facilities, and teacher bias. Research by Human Rights Watch (2016) highlights how these inequalities lead to fewer girls completing secondary education, restricting their future economic participation and leadership roles.

Additionally, in rural Kenya, access to quality educational resources remains a significant challenge. Schools often lack basic infrastructure, including well-equipped classrooms, textbooks, and digital resources (Oketch & Somerset, 2010). This disparity disproportionately affects girls, who may be discouraged from attending school due to inadequate sanitation facilities and the associated stigma around menstruation. A case study conducted in Kilifi County found that improving access to resources, such as providing sanitary products and upgrading school facilities, led to a measurable increase in girls' attendance and academic performance (Sommer et al., 2015).

Young women in particular face systemic barriers that hinder their educational outcomes and, consequently, their potential to thrive as leaders and innovators (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2017). These barriers include socio-cultural norms, economic challenges, and insufficient integration of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, digital literacy, and adaptability into educational programs (United Nations Girls' Education Initiative [UNGEI], 2021). Without targeted reforms, Africa risks perpetuating cycles of inequality that limit the full participation of half its population in socio-economic development (Unterhalter, 2019).

This commission seeks to critically analyze whether current educational policies, curricula, and teaching practices in Africa are responsive to the evolving needs of young women. It will explore structural inequalities and propose strategies for fostering inclusive, innovative, and responsive learning environments. In particular, it examines how education systems can better align with the skills required for contemporary and future labour markets while addressing gender disparities (World Bank, 2020). By identifying challenges and recommending evidence-based reforms, this commission aims to highlight pathways toward an educational paradigm that unlocks the potential of Africa's young women, ensuring they are equipped to lead and contribute meaningfully in the 21st century.

## **CHALLENGES**

### 2.1 Policies, Curricula, and Teaching Practices

#### Policy Challenges

Education policies across Africa often face significant challenges in their design, implementation, and sustainability. Many policy frameworks are influenced by historical legacies of colonial education systems, which were not designed to address the diverse needs of African societies or to foster local innovation (Brock-Utne, 2000).

Despite various commitments to achieving universal education, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), education policies frequently lack the necessary resources, infrastructure, and political will for effective implementation (UNESCO, 2020). Additionally, gender equity policies often face resistance due to entrenched socio-cultural norms that discourage investment in girls' education (Unterhalter, 2019). For example, policies aimed at reducing early marriage or promoting girls' education in countries like Malawi and Nigeria often fail due to weak enforcement mechanisms and lack of community engagement (Mlama, 2018). These policy gaps hinder the ability of education systems to adapt to contemporary needs and ensure equitable access for all students.

In its deliberations, the commission further identified case study examples in the following countries (South Africa, Niger and Uganda) where policy challenges are still eminent:

In South Africa, despite progressive education policies introduced after the end of apartheid, significant disparities in educational quality persist, particularly affecting marginalized communities.

The post-apartheid government introduced policies such as the South African Schools Act (1996), aimed at achieving equitable access to education for all learners. However, the historical legacy of segregated education has left a lasting impact on infrastructure, teacher distribution, and resource availability. Schools in historically disadvantaged areas continue to suffer from overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and poorly trained teachers (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). Additionally, the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) has faced criticism for its complexity and lack of teacher support, undermining its effectiveness (Jansen, 2012).

Uganda's Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy, introduced in 1997, aimed to eliminate barriers to primary education by waiving fees for all children. While the policy led to a significant increase in enrollment rates, it was not accompanied by sufficient investment in infrastructure, teacher recruitment, and learning materials (Nishimura et al., 2009). The influx of students has resulted in overcrowded classrooms and a decline in educational quality. Furthermore, gender equity remains elusive, as many girls still drop out due to socio-cultural factors like early marriage, pregnancy, and household responsibilities (Ahikire & Madanda, 2011). The lack of enforcement mechanisms to address these challenges has limited the policy's impact on achieving gender parity in education.

In Niger, policies designed to promote girls' education, such as the Ten-Year Education Development Plan (PDDE), have faced significant obstacles. Despite recognizing the importance of girls' education, implementation has been hindered by a lack of resources, inadequate teacher training, and deeply rooted socio-cultural norms (UNICEF, 2016). For example, initiatives aimed at reducing early marriage and increasing school attendance for girls often fail due to weak enforcement and minimal community engagement. Families in rural areas may prioritize immediate economic needs over long-term educational goals, leading to high dropout rates among girls (Hindin et al., 2014). These challenges highlight the need for more context-specific, community-driven approaches to policy design and implementation.

## 2.2 Curricula Challenges

The curricula in many African countries remain outdated and disconnected from the skills needed in the 21st century. Designed largely for rote memorization and examination-driven learning, these curricula often fail to incorporate critical thinking, digital literacy, and problem-solving skills, which are essential for modern economies (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). Moreover, many curricula are still rooted in Western-centric content, neglecting indigenous knowledge systems and the socio-economic realities of African societies (Chisholm, 2005). For young women, this disconnect is particularly problematic, as curricula do not adequately address gender issues or provide practical pathways for entering non-traditional fields like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2019). The lack of contextually relevant and skills-based education means that many graduates, particularly women, are ill-prepared for the labour market, limiting their potential for economic independence and leadership roles.

In its deliberations, the commission further identified case study examples in the following countries (South Africa, Kenya and Zimbabwe) where policy challenges are still eminent:

In South Africa, while post-apartheid curriculum reforms aimed to create a more inclusive and equitable education system, the content often remains Western-centric and disconnected from the realities of many learners. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), introduced in 2012, emphasizes knowledge acquisition over critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Chisholm, 2005). Research by Jansen (2012) highlights that this approach inadequately addresses the needs of marginalized communities and fails to incorporate indigenous knowledge systems and African contexts. For young women in rural areas, the curriculum offers few practical pathways to careers in STEM or vocational fields, perpetuating economic inequality.

Programs aimed at diversifying the curriculum, such as the inclusion of life skills and entrepreneurship education, have been slow to take root due to resource constraints and teacher training gaps.

Kenya introduced the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in 2017 to address the shortcomings of the previous 8-4-4 education system, which prioritized rote learning and examinations.

The CBC emphasizes digital literacy, critical thinking, and life skills. However, implementation challenges, such as inadequate teacher training, lack of infrastructure, and limited access to digital resources, particularly in rural areas, have hindered the curriculum's effectiveness (Wasonga & Mweu, 2019). For young women, the CBC holds potential to address gender disparities by promoting practical skills and gender-sensitive education, but these benefits are often lost due to the persistence of patriarchal norms. A case study in Turkana County showed that girls were often pulled out of school for household duties, limiting their ability to benefit from the new curriculum's emphasis on digital and entrepreneurial skills (UNESCO, 2021).

Zimbabwe's education system, once renowned for its high literacy rates, has faced significant challenges due to economic instability. The curriculum remains heavily theoretical and exam-oriented, with limited integration of skills relevant to the modern labour market (Nziramasanga, 1999). Efforts to reform the curriculum, such as the 2015 Curriculum Framework, aimed to include entrepreneurship education and STEM subjects. However, implementation has been hampered by teacher shortages, outdated teaching materials, and a lack of technological infrastructure (Maravanyika, 2020). For young women, these barriers are compounded by gender-based discrimination, limiting their participation in STEM subjects and vocational training. The disconnect between the curriculum and labour market needs has left many graduates, particularly women, without the skills required for economic independence or leadership roles.

### 2.3 Language barriers

One of the most prominent issues in African education is the continued use of colonial languages e.g English, French, and Portuguese as the language of instruction (Bamgbose, 2000). While these languages are often seen as necessary for global communication and access to higher education and employment, they are not the native languages of most African students. In many African countries, colonial languages are used as the medium of instruction from primary school through to university, despite the fact that the majority of students speak indigenous languages at home (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005).

This creates a significant barrier to learning, as students must navigate academic content in a language that may be foreign to them, hindering their comprehension and cognitive development (Cummins, 2000). The linguistic divide between urban and rural areas further exacerbates this issue. Urban students, who may have greater exposure to colonial languages, have an advantage over their rural counterparts, for whom these languages are often learned only in the classroom. As a result, students in rural areas often struggle with academic material, leading to higher dropout rates and lower academic performance (Brock-Utne, 2000). In this context, the use of a foreign language in education reinforces existing inequalities in access to quality education.

The language barrier is closely linked to poor academic performance and high dropout rates in African schools. Studies have shown that students who are taught in a language they do not fully understand often struggle to keep up with the curriculum, leading to academic failure and disillusionment with the educational system (Alexander, 2003). In countries where English or French is the primary medium of instruction, students who speak indigenous languages are at a distinct disadvantage, as they must learn both the foreign language and the academic content simultaneously.

## 2.4 Teaching Practice Challenges

Teaching practices in Africa face numerous challenges, including inadequate teacher training, high pupil-to-teacher ratios, and a lack of resources such as teaching materials and technology (Hardman et al., 2012). Teachers are often trained using outdated pedagogical methods that emphasize passive learning rather than interactive, student-centred approaches (Vavrus, Thomas, & Bartlett, 2011). This limits the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students.

Additionally, gender biases among teachers can negatively impact girls' learning experiences, with studies showing that teachers sometimes discourage girls from pursuing subjects traditionally dominated by males (UNESCO, 2015). In rural areas, the challenges are exacerbated by teacher shortages, poor infrastructure, and the deployment of unqualified or underqualified educators (Akyeampong et al., 2011). These challenges contribute to poor learning outcomes and hinder the ability of education systems to produce graduates capable of meeting 21st-century demands.

For example, in Zambia, particularly in rural areas, there is a significant shortage of qualified teachers. According to a study by the Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC), many schools struggle with high pupil-to-teacher ratios, sometimes exceeding 50 students per teacher. This results in reduced individual attention for students and a lower quality of teaching. Moreover, teacher training programs often do not adequately equip educators with the skills necessary for modern, interactive teaching practices. Teachers are frequently trained using traditional, lecture-based methods, which limit student engagement and critical thinking skills. Many rural schools have resorted to hiring unqualified teachers due to shortages, which further compounds the problem (ZANEC, 2017).

For many students, this double challenge is overwhelming, and they may eventually drop out of school, particularly in secondary and tertiary education, where the language barrier becomes more pronounced. For example, in countries like Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa, students from rural and lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to face difficulties with the language of instruction, leading to high dropout rates and limited opportunities for upward social mobility (Kamwendo, 2009). The lack of proficiency in colonial languages can also result in lower exam scores, further limiting students' educational and professional prospects (Trudell, 2009).

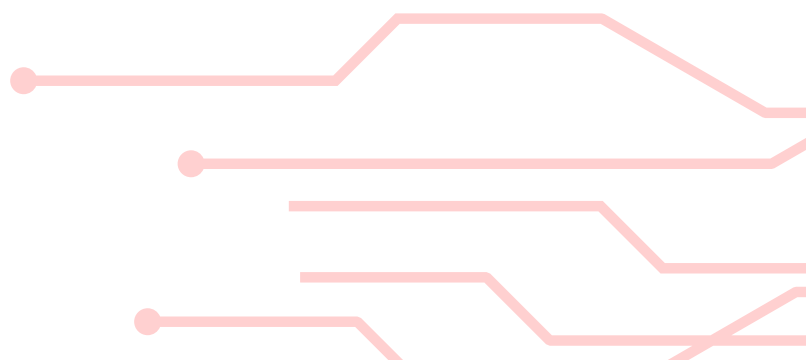
Some African countries have attempted to address the language barrier through bilingual or multilingual education policies. For instance, countries like Kenya and Ethiopia have implemented policies that prioritize the use of indigenous languages in early education, with a gradual transition to colonial languages in later grades (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004). Research suggests that such policies can improve student engagement, academic performance, and retention rates, particularly in the early years of schooling (Alexander, 2003). However, these policies often face significant challenges in terms of implementation, including a lack of resources, teacher training, and political will. In addition to linguistic concerns, language policies in many African countries are shaped by political and social factors, as the promotion of certain languages can reflect ethnic or regional power dynamics. In some cases, the official language of a country is chosen based on the dominance of a particular ethnic group, which can marginalize minority languages and exacerbate social divisions (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005). This political dimension complicates efforts to create truly inclusive language-in-education policies that address the needs of all students.

### 1. Possible Solutions

- **Curriculum Overhaul:** Align curricula with 21st-century skills, including entrepreneurship, digital literacy, critical thinking, and global citizenship.
- **Teacher Training:** Invest in teacher training to improve pedagogical skills and adapt to modern teaching methods.
- **Technology Integration:** Expand access to digital tools and the internet to bridge technological gaps.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensure marginalized groups, and those with disabilities, have equal access to safe and inclusive education.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborations with private entities and NGOs can enhance educational resources and infrastructure.

## 2. Way forward

- The African states need to do capacity building for the different educational curriculums as per each country needs.
- Resource allocation for the success and sustainability of the education systems (Trained teachers, Internet, School infrastructure, Power etc)
- Public participation of the key stakeholders, learners and trainers during the implementation of the education programs.



# Socio Economic Transformation

## Commission 3

### Overview



#### Understanding Socio-Economic Transformation

- Socio-economic transformation refers to deep structural changes in economic and social systems that enhance sustainable development, improve livelihoods, and reduce inequalities.
- Gender is a fundamental factor in this transformation as women and marginalized groups play a critical role in economic growth and societal progress.

#### Why Gender Matters in Economic Transformation

- Women make up nearly 50% of Africa's population but remain underrepresented in leadership, formal employment, and financial decision-making.
- Investing in gender equality can boost Africa's GDP by \$316 billion by 2025 (McKinsey Report).
- Inclusive policies foster innovation, social cohesion, and economic resilience.

#### Participating Countries in the Discussion

- Tanzania
- South Africa
- Nigeria
- Kenya
- Uganda
- Ethiopia
- Zambia
- Botswana
- Mozambique
- Eswatini

Each country shared case studies on gender-responsive economic policies and challenges in achieving true socio-economic transformation.

## **Key Drivers of Socio-Economic Transformation from a Gender Perspective**

### **Women in Leadership & Governance**

- Issue: Despite progress, women are still underrepresented in political and corporate leadership.
- Solution: Policies promoting female representation, mentorship programs and gender sensitive governance reforms.

#### **Case Example:**

- Rwanda's Gender Parity in Government
- Women hold 61% of parliamentary seats, the highest globally.
- Gender-sensitive policies have led to increased female participation in economic decision-making.

### **Economic Participation & Financial Inclusion**

- Issue: Limited access to financial services, land ownership and capital prevents women from scaling businesses.
- Solution: Gender-focused financial policies, micro-finance initiatives and skills training programs.

#### **Case Examples:**

- Nigeria's Women's Enterprise Fund
- Provides low-interest loans to female entrepreneurs, boosting SME growth.
- Ethiopia's Land Reform for Women
- New policies ensure joint land ownership for men and women, increasing women's financial security.

## **Key Drivers of Socio-Economic Transformation from a Gender Perspective Cont...**

### **Education & Skills Development**

- Issue: Gender disparities in education and technical skills limit women's participation in high-growth sectors like STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).
- Solution: Scholarship programs, mentorship, and gender-sensitive education policies.

#### **Case Example:**

- Kenya's Women in STEM Initiative
- Targets female students to bridge the gender gap in technology and innovation.

### Women in Agriculture & Industrialization

- Issue: Women account for 70% of agricultural labor but own less than 20% of land.
- Solution: Policies ensuring land rights, access to farming technology and market inclusion.

### Case Examples:

- Tanzania's Women-Led Agricultural Cooperatives
- Empower rural women to commercialize farming and access export markets.
- Uganda's Agro-Processing Hubs for Women
- Provides training and funding for women to engage in value-added agriculture.

## **Key Drivers of Socio-Economic Transformation from a Gender Perspective Cont...**

### **Gender & Digital Transformation**

- Issue: Women are less likely to own mobile phones or access the internet, limiting economic opportunities.
- Solution: Digital literacy programs and affordable technology access for women.

### **Case Example:**

Ghana's Digital Women Empowerment Program o Provides digital skills training and mobile banking access to rural women.

### **Challenges Hindering Gender-Inclusive Transformation**

- Cultural & Social Barriers: Patriarchal norms limit women's economic mobility.
- Financial Exclusion: Many women lack collateral for bank loans.
- Policy Implementation Gaps: Strong policies exist but enforcement is still weak.
- Limited Infrastructure: Poor transport and digital access hinder economic participation.

### **Policy Recommendations for Sustainable Gender-Inclusive Transformation**

- Increase Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Ensure national budgets distribute funds to empower women economically.
- Strengthen Women's Land Rights: Legal reforms to allow joint land ownership.
- Expand Digital & Financial Access: Promote mobile banking, fintech solutions and digital literacy for women.
- Invest in Women in STEM & Innovation: Encourage girls in tech fields to bridge the skills gap.

### **Conclusion**

- Gender-inclusive socio-economic transformation is not just a moral issue but an economic necessity.
- Africa's progress depends on harnessing the full potential of women and marginalized groups.
- Cross-country collaboration and strong policy implementation will accelerate Africa's inclusive growth.

## **Proposed resolutions to the Convention;**

### **Resolution 1: Promoting Girls' Education and Economic Empowerment**

We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for increased investment in girls' education, particularly in STEM fields.
- Promote policies and programs that support girls' and young women's economic empowerment, including entrepreneurship, vocational training, and access to finance.
- Support initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by girls and young women in accessing education and economic opportunities.

### **Resolution 2: Addressing Child Marriage and Early Childbearing**

We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that prevent and respond to child marriage and early childbearing.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge harmful social norms and promote healthy relationships.
- Support initiatives that provide safe spaces and support services for girls and young women affected by child marriage and early childbearing.

### **Resolution 3: Enhancing Women's Participation in Decision-Making**

We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that promote women's participation in decision-making at all levels.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge patriarchal norms and promote gender equality.
- Support initiatives that provide training and capacity-building for women leaders.

### **Resolution 4: Promoting Access to Healthcare and Reproductive Rights**

We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that promote access to comprehensive healthcare services, including reproductive health and maternal healthcare.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge stigma and promote healthy behaviors.
- Support initiatives that provide safe spaces and support services for girls and young women accessing healthcare services.

### **Resolution 5: Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls**

We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge harmful social norms and promote healthy relationships.
- Support initiatives that provide safe spaces and support services for survivors of violence.

### **Resolution 6: Promoting Women's Economic Participation and Financial Inclusion**

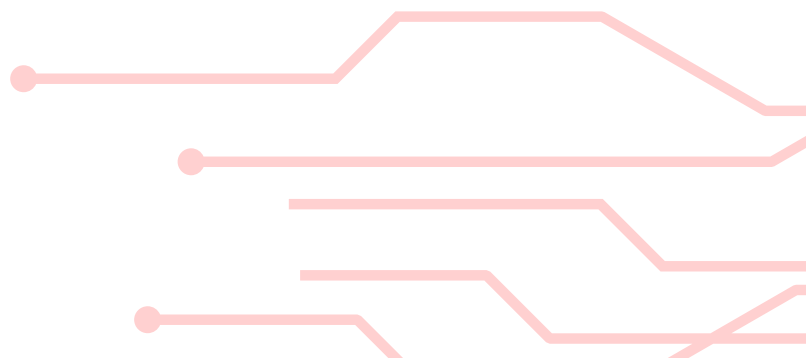
We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that promote women's economic participation, including access to finance, markets, and technology.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge patriarchal norms and promote gender equality.
- Support initiatives that provide training and capacity-building for women entrepreneurs.

### **Resolution 7: Enhancing Girls' and Young Women's Participation in STEM**

We, the participants of this convention, resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that promote girls' and young women's participation in STEM fields.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge stereotypes and promote positive role models.
- Support initiatives that provide mentorship, training, and resources for girls and young women in STEM.



# Peace and Stability

## Commission 4

### Overview



#### Challenges identified

- Long-term civil war and internal conflict
- Economic interests' conflict
- Power interests' conflict
- Patriarchal thinking on decision-making leading to Gender-based violence
- Peace negotiations limit women's representation
- Inadequate representation of women in peacekeeping missions
- In Equatorial Guinea, emotional instability leads to an unstable society, which is pre-requisite for crime
- Societal stereotypes on the family structure limit women's public participation

There is an erosion of women's role in decision-making in Africa from colonial times. Delegates shared their experiences in the countries they come from. They narrated different perspectives and forms of violence.

- Gender-based violence also has an impact on women's education, and this extends to child marriages
- Double standards concerning boys' and girls' education expectations

#### Solutions

- Creation of women's circles for empowerment and sisterhood
- Awareness campaigning (Deliberate and intentional)
- Counselling for victims of insecurity
- Advocacy for psycho-socio support for ourselves and other women
- Provide education to men on women's issues
- Capacitating women in peace and security organisations
- Advocate for discipline in the military and inclusion

## Resolutions

### Resolution 1: Promoting Young Women's Leadership in Peace-building

We resolve to:

- Advocate for increased recognition and support for young women's leadership in peace-building in Africa.
- Promote initiatives that provide mentorship, training, and resources for young women peace-builders.
- Support policies and programs that ensure young women's participation in decision-making processes related to peace and security.

### **Resolution 2: Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict**

We resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence in conflict in Africa.
- Promote awareness and education programs that challenge harmful social norms and promote healthy relationships.
- Support initiatives that provide safe spaces and support services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

### Resolution 3: Empowering Young Women in Post-Conflict Reconstruction

We resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that support young women's economic empowerment and participation in post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.
- Promote initiatives that provide training and capacity-building for young women in leadership and decision-making positions.
- Support programs that address the unique needs of young women in post-conflict settings.

### Resolution 4: Promoting Young Women's Role in Conflict Prevention

We resolve to:

Advocate for policies and programs that support young women's role in conflict prevention in Africa.

Promote initiatives that provide training and capacity-building for young women in conflict prevention and resolution.

Support programs that address the root causes of conflict and promote sustainable peace.

### Resolution 5: Ensuring Young Women's Participation in Peacekeeping and Security Sector Reform

We resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that ensure young women's participation in peacekeeping and security sector reform in Africa.
- Promote initiatives that provide training and capacity-building for young women in peacekeeping and security sector reform.
- Support programs that address the unique needs of young women in peacekeeping and security sector reform.

### Resolution 6: Addressing the Impact of Conflict on Young Women's Health

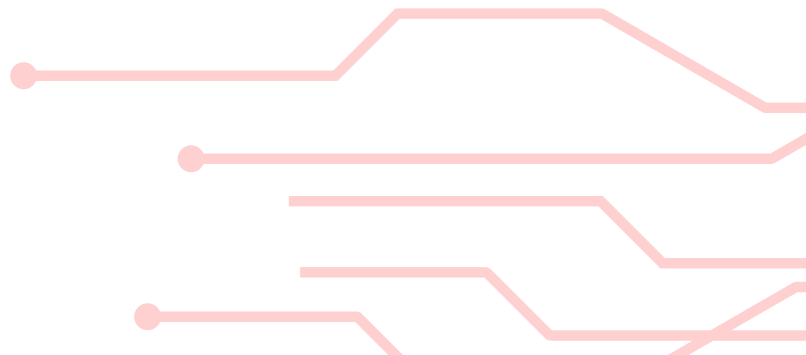
We resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that address the unique health needs of young women in conflict-affected areas in Africa.
- Promote initiatives that provide access to comprehensive healthcare services, including reproductive health and maternal healthcare.
- Support programs that address the psychological and emotional impacts of conflict on young women.

### Resolution 7: Promoting Young Women's Participation in Decision-Making Processes

We resolve to:

- Advocate for policies and programs that promote young women's participation in decision-making processes related to peace and security in Africa.
- Promote initiatives that provide training and capacity-building for young women in leadership and decision-making positions.
- Support programs that address the unique needs of young women in decision-making processes.



YWOWA 4TH ACC  
*Awards*



# YWOA Awards

**The following outstanding women and young women received the YWOA Queen Nzinga Mbande Award of Excellence at our 4th Annual Continental Convention in Ethiopia. Awards Category:**

## **1. Young Women Empowerment Award**

Recognizes individuals that have made significant contributions to empowering young women, promoting gender equality, and creating opportunities for their economic, social, and political advancement.

**1.1. East - Emma Kwaje (South Sudan)**

**1.2. North - Khadija Ali Mohammed (Western Sahara)**

**1.3. South - Modiehi Nkhabu (Lesotho)**

**1.4. West - Mabel Obeng (Ghana)**

**1.5. Central - Jocelyne Ngoie (DRC)**

## **2. Young Women's Health Advocacy Award**

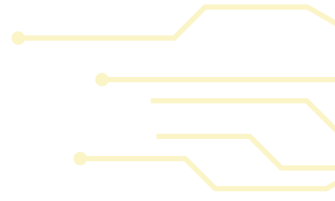
Honors individuals that have demonstrated exceptional advocacy efforts to promote young women's health, well-being, and access to healthcare services.

**Emmanuela Sunday (South Sudan)**

## **3. Organiser of the Year**

Recognizes the outstanding efforts of an individual that has demonstrated exceptional organizational skills, leadership, and commitment to delivering highquality initiatives.

**Grace Okello (Uganda)**



### **Awards Category:**

#### **4. African Business and Trade Advocacy Award**

Celebrates individuals that have made significant contributions to promoting African business and trade, advocating for policies and practices that support women's economic empowerment, and fostering entrepreneurship and innovation.

##### **Rose Togarepi (Zimbabwe)**

#### **5. Excellence in Leadership and Governance Award**

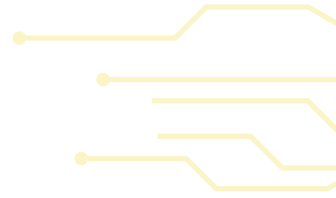
Honors individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills, strategic thinking, and a commitment to good governance, transparency, and accountability.

##### **Right Honourable Dr. Jemma Nunu Kumba (South Sudan)**

#### **6. Community Impact of the Year Award**

Recognizes individuals that have made a significant positive impact in their communities, demonstrating a commitment to social responsibility, community engagement, and creating lasting change.

##### **Mercy Kavivi Chana (Kenya)**



## **Awards Category:**

### **7. The Queen Nzinga Mbandi Lifetime Achievement Award**

Celebrates the outstanding contributions, achievements, and dedication of an individual over their lifetime, recognizing their lasting impact, influence, and legacy in their field or community.

**H. E Madam Eunice lipinge**  
**President of PAWO**

### **8. The YWOA Girl Activist of the Year Award**

Recognizes a young girl who has demonstrated exceptional activism, leadership, and commitment to creating positive change in her community, country, or continentally.

This award honors a girl who identified a social issue and developed or implemented a solution. She demonstrated exceptional leadership and advocacy skills and shown courage and resilience to make a positive impact.

**Una Nkuna (South Africa)**

### **9. YWOA Best Region of the year**

This award recognizes a region of the YWOA that has made significant strides in promoting women's empowerment, gender equality, and community development.

This award honors a region that has demonstrated exceptional leadership, implemented effective initiatives, fostered community engagement and participation and has shown significant progress and improvement.

**East Africa Region**

# YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA

Towards building a better Africa for young women!



## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual *Continental Convention*

Encouraging Gender-Sensitive  
Leadership to Promote Innovation and  
Economic Empowerment to Unlock  
Opportunities for  
*Young Women in Africa.*

AFRICAN UNION HQ  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

11-12 DECEMBER, 2024



YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA (YWOA)

CONTINENTAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION

MOBILISING YOUNG WOMEN FOR THE FUTURE: ELEVATING AFRICA FROM THE GRASSROOTS

MONTH	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED STAKEHOLDERS	STATUS
January	Launch of the YWOA Back to Class Campaign	This is a launch of the back to class campaign which will be implemented in all member countries and organisations. The programme encourages young women and girls who have dropped out of school to re-enroll and complete their studies. In the overall the campaign offers peer support and mentorship to young women and girls who intend to study at any level. The launch will be a week long programme having various activities in rural areas.	Host Country – Lesotho YWOA	Successfully Launched
February	Launch of the YWOA Annual Dignity and Sanitary Towels Drive	Each year since our establishment, we embark on the annual dignity and sanitary towels drive. We use this drive to sensitize communities on women reproductive health and menstrual health in particular. We also contribute sanitary towels to such communities. After this launch, we will	Host Country – Kenya YWOA	Successfully Launched Virtually by YWOA and a physical handover and event to happen on the 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 in Kenya, Homabay County, Kaswanga

		move to different countries to reach out to more disadvantaged young women and girls		
March	YWOA West Africa Regional Launch	The Launch of the West Africa Region of the YWOA	Host Country - Nigeria	Postponed to September 2025
March	YWOA Conference of Young Women in Leadership	<p>The YWOA Conference on Young Women in Leadership is a fantastic opportunity for young women to develop their leadership skills, network with like-minded individuals, and learn from experienced leaders.</p> <p>Conference Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empower young women to take on leadership roles in their communities and industries</li> <li>- Provide a platform for young women to share their experiences, challenges, and successes</li> <li>- Offer training, mentorship, and networking opportunities to support young women's leadership development</li> </ul> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased confidence and self-awareness among young women leaders</li> <li>- Improved leadership skills, including communication, problem-solving, and decision-making</li> <li>- Expanded professional and personal networks for young women leaders</li> </ul>	Host Country – YWOA Nigeria	Postponed to September 2025

		- A community of supportive and inspiring young women leaders who can learn from and motivate each other		
April	African Education Decolonisation Summit	<p>African Education Decolonisation Summit: Centering Young women</p> <p>The African Education Decolonisation Summit is a groundbreaking event that prioritizes the voices, experiences, and perspectives of young African women. By centering young women, the summit aims to:</p> <p><b>*Objectives*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>*Amplify Young Women's Voices*:</b> Provide a platform for young African women to share their experiences, perspectives, and solutions for decolonizing education.</li> <li><b>*Challenge Patriarchal and Colonial Systems*:</b> Examine the intersections of patriarchy, colonialism, and education, and explore strategies for dismantling these systems.</li> <li><b>*Foster Intergenerational Dialogue*:</b> Create opportunities for young women to engage with older generations of African women scholars, activists, and leaders.</li> </ol>	Host Country - Malawi	Upcoming

		<p>4. <b>*Develop Decolonial Education Frameworks*</b>: Co-create frameworks for decolonial education that prioritize African-centered knowledge systems, feminist perspectives, and social justice.</p> <p><b>*Key Themes*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Decolonial Feminism and Education*</b>: Exploring the intersections of decolonial thought, feminism, and education in Africa.</li> <li>2. <b>*Young Women's Leadership and Empowerment*</b>: Examining strategies for empowering young African women to take leadership roles in education and beyond.</li> <li>3. <b>*African-Centered Knowledge Systems*</b>: Discussing the importance of centering African knowledge systems and perspectives in education.</li> <li>4. <b>*Technology and Digital Activism*</b>: Exploring the role of technology and digital activism in promoting decolonial education and social justice.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Expected Outcomes*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Young Women-Led Initiatives*</b>: Support the development of young women-led initiatives and projects that promote decolonial education and social justice.</li> <li>2. <b>*Decolonial Education Policy Recommendations*</b>: Inform education</li> </ol>		
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		<p>policy and practice in Africa with decolonial and feminist perspectives.</p> <p>3. <b>*Intergenerational Networks and Collaborations*</b>: Foster networks and collaborations between young women and older generations of African women scholars, activists, and leaders.</p> <p>4. <b>*African-Centered Education Frameworks*</b>: Co-create frameworks for African-centered education that prioritize decolonial and feminist perspectives.</p>		
June	Young Women African Economic Symposium	<p>YWOA Young Women African Economic Symposium: Empowering a New Generation of African Women Leaders</p> <p>The YWOA Young Women African Economic Symposium is a premier event that brings together young African women leaders, economists, policymakers, and entrepreneurs to discuss the most pressing economic issues facing the continent. The symposium aims to:</p> <p><b>*Objectives*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Empower Young Women*</b>: Provide a platform for young African women to engage in economic discourse, build their capacity, and amplify their voices.</p> <p>2. <b>*Foster Economic Development*</b>: Discuss innovative solutions to Africa's</p>	Host Country – YWOA Zambia	Upcoming

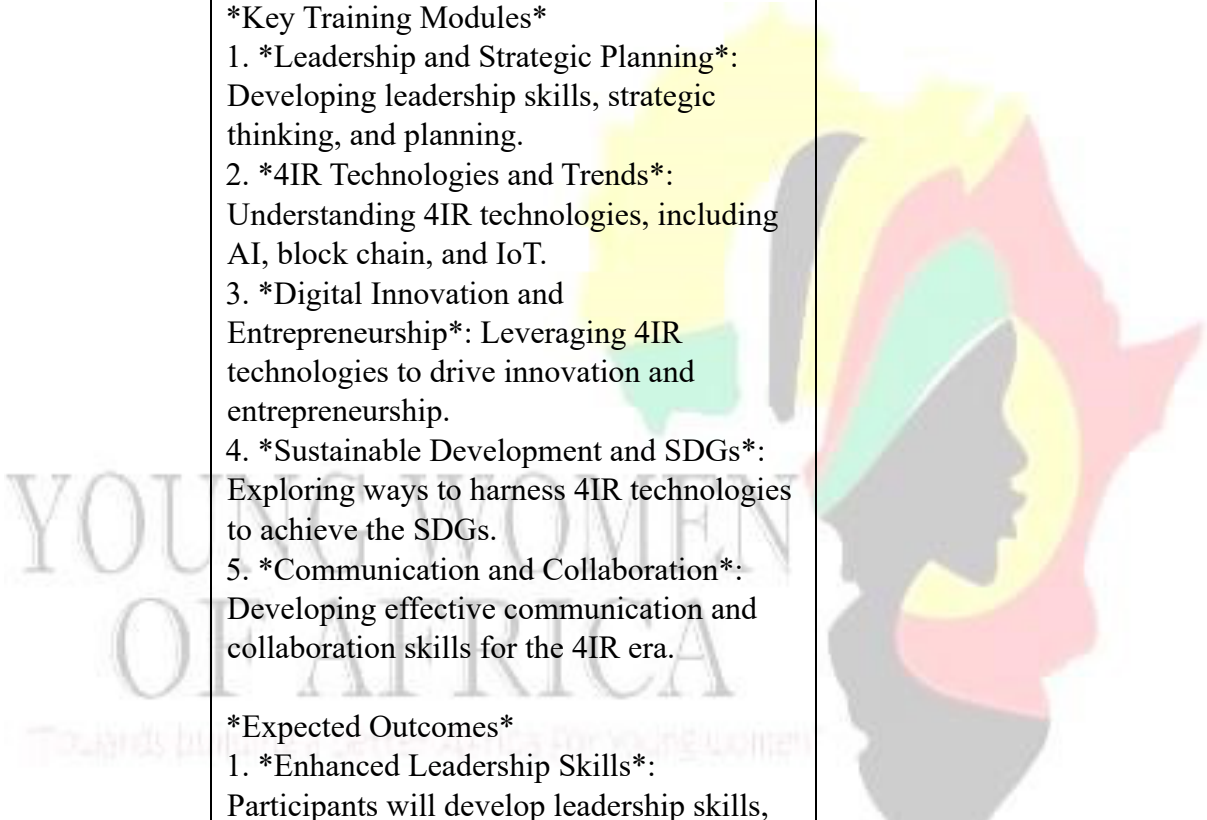
		<p>economic challenges, including poverty, inequality, and unemployment.</p> <p>3. <b>*Promote Inclusive Growth*</b>: Explore strategies for promoting inclusive economic growth, including increasing women's participation in the economy and addressing the gender pay gap.</p> <p>4. <b>*Build Networks and Partnerships*</b>: Facilitate networking and partnership-building among young African women leaders, entrepreneurs, and policymakers.</p> <p><b>*Key Themes*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*African Economic Development*</b>: Examining the current state of African economies, including challenges, opportunities, and trends.</p> <p>2. <b>*Women's Economic Empowerment*</b>: Discussing strategies for promoting women's economic empowerment, including access to finance, education, and training.</p> <p>3. <b>*Innovation and Entrepreneurship*</b>: Exploring the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in driving African economic growth and development.</p> <p>4. <b>*Policy and Governance*</b>: Analyzing the policy and governance frameworks that support or hinder African economic development.</p>		
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		<p><b>*Expected Outcomes*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Increased Economic Literacy*</b>: Enhancing the economic literacy of young African women leaders, enabling them to engage more effectively in economic discourse.</p> <p>2. <b>*Networking and Partnerships*</b>: Establishing a network of young African women leaders, entrepreneurs, and policymakers who can collaborate and support one another.</p> <p>3. <b>*Policy Recommendations*</b>: Developing policy recommendations that promote inclusive economic growth, women's economic empowerment, and African economic development.</p> <p>4. <b>*Inspiring a New Generation*</b>: Inspiring a new generation of African women leaders to take an active role in shaping the continent's economic future.</p>		
July	YWOA Central Africa Regional Launch	This is the launch of the Central African Region of the YWOA	Host Country – YWOA DRC	Postponed to December 2025 due to the conflict in the East of DRC
August	YWOA Agro Conference and Show: Advocating for women land ownership, penetrating Markets and creating a network of young women	YWOA Agro Conference and Show: Empowering African young Women in Agriculture The YWOA Agro Conference and Show is a premier event that brings together African young women in agriculture, policymakers,	Host Country – YWOA Zimbabwe	Upcoming

	<p>farmers and food producers across the continent.</p>	<p>entrepreneurs, and experts to discuss innovative solutions, share best practices, and showcase cutting-edge technologies in agriculture. The conference aims to:</p> <p><b>*Objectives*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Empower African young Women in Agriculture*</b>: Provide a platform for young African women in agriculture to share their experiences, challenges, and successes.</li> <li>2. <b>*Promote Agricultural Development*</b>: Discuss innovative solutions to Africa's agricultural challenges, including food insecurity, poverty, and climate change.</li> <li>3. <b>*Foster Entrepreneurship and Innovation*</b>: Showcase cutting-edge technologies, innovative business models, and successful entrepreneurial ventures in agriculture.</li> <li>4. <b>*Build Networks and Partnerships*</b>: Facilitate networking and partnership-building among African young women in agriculture, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and experts.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Key Themes*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*African young Women in Agriculture*</b>: Examining the role of African women in agriculture, including their challenges, opportunities, and successes.</li> </ol>		
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		<p>2. <b>*Sustainable Agriculture*</b>: Discussing innovative approaches to sustainable agriculture, including climate-resilient agriculture, organic farming, and agroforestry.</p> <p>3. <b>*Agricultural Entrepreneurship*</b>: Showcasing successful entrepreneurial ventures in agriculture, including value addition, processing, and marketing.</p> <p>4. <b>*Technology and Innovation*</b>: Exploring the role of technology and innovation in transforming African agriculture, including precision agriculture, drones, and mobile applications.</p> <p><b>*Expected Outcomes*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Increased Empowerment*</b>: Empowering African young women in agriculture with knowledge, skills, and networks to improve their livelihoods and contribute to Africa's agricultural development.</p> <p>2. <b>*Improved Agricultural Productivity*</b>: Identifying innovative solutions to improve agricultural productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, and enhance food security.</p> <p>3. <b>*Enhanced Entrepreneurship and Innovation*</b>: Fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in agriculture, including the development of new business models, products, and services.</p>		
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		<p>4. <b>*Strengthened Networks and Partnerships*</b>: Establishing a network of African women in agriculture, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and experts to collaborate, share knowledge, and support one another.</p>		
September	YWOA Leadership Training and embracing the 4IR to serve better	<p>YWOA Leadership Training: Embracing 4IR for Enhanced Impact</p> <p>The YWOA Leadership Training program is designed to equip young women leaders with the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to excel in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) era. By embracing 4IR technologies and trends, participants will be empowered to serve their communities more effectively, drive positive change, and contribute to Africa's sustainable development.</p> <p><b>*Training Objectives*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Leadership Development*</b>: Enhance leadership skills, including strategic thinking, communication, and problem-solving.</li> <li>2. <b>*4IR Literacy*</b>: Develop an understanding of 4IR technologies, including artificial intelligence, block chain, and the Internet of Things (IoT).</li> <li>3. <b>*Digital Transformation*</b>: Learn how to leverage 4IR technologies to drive digital</li> </ol>	Host Country - YWOA Tanzania	Upcoming

		<p>transformation and innovation in various sectors.</p> <p>4. <b>*Sustainable Development*</b>: Explore ways to harness 4IR technologies to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and address Africa's development challenges.</p> <p><b>*Key Training Modules*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Leadership and Strategic Planning*</b>: Developing leadership skills, strategic thinking, and planning.</li> <li>2. <b>*4IR Technologies and Trends*</b>: Understanding 4IR technologies, including AI, block chain, and IoT.</li> <li>3. <b>*Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship*</b>: Leveraging 4IR technologies to drive innovation and entrepreneurship.</li> <li>4. <b>*Sustainable Development and SDGs*</b>: Exploring ways to harness 4IR technologies to achieve the SDGs.</li> <li>5. <b>*Communication and Collaboration*</b>: Developing effective communication and collaboration skills for the 4IR era.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Expected Outcomes*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Enhanced Leadership Skills*</b>: Participants will develop leadership skills,</li> </ol>		
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		<p>including strategic thinking, communication, and problem-solving.</p> <p>2. <b>*4IR Literacy and Competence*</b>: Participants will gain an understanding of 4IR technologies and develop the competence to apply them in various contexts.</p> <p>3. <b>*Innovation and Entrepreneurship*</b>: Participants will learn how to leverage 4IR technologies to drive innovation and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>4. <b>*Sustainable Development Impact*</b>: Participants will explore ways to harness 4IR technologies to achieve the SDGs and address Africa's development challenges.</p>		
October	Young Women Conference on Conflict in Africa	<p>Young Women's Conference on Conflict in Africa: Amplifying Voices, Building Peace</p> <p>The Young Women's Conference on Conflict in Africa is a groundbreaking event that brings together young women leaders, peace builders, policymakers, and experts to discuss the impact of conflict on African communities and the role of young women in building peace. The conference aims to:</p> <p><b>*Objectives*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Amplify Young Women's Voices*</b>: Provide a platform for young women to</p>	Host Country – YWOA Madagascar	Upcoming


		<p>share their experiences, perspectives, and solutions for building peace in Africa.</p> <p>2. <b>*Address Conflict and Its Impact*</b>: Examine the root causes of conflict in Africa, its impact on communities, and the role of young women in conflict prevention and resolution.</p> <p>3. <b>*Build Peace and Stability*</b>: Discuss strategies for building peace and stability in Africa, including the role of young women in peacebuilding, mediation, and conflict resolution.</p> <p>4. <b>*Foster Networking and Collaboration*</b>: Facilitate networking and collaboration among young women leaders, peacebuilders, policymakers, and experts to promote collective action and support.</p> <p><b>*Key Themes*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Conflict and Its Impact on African Communities*</b>: Examining the root causes of conflict in Africa and its impact on communities.</p> <p>2. <b>*Young Women's Roles in Peacebuilding*</b>: Discussing the roles of young women in peacebuilding, mediation, and conflict resolution.</p> <p>3. <b>*Peace and Stability in Africa*</b>: Exploring strategies for building peace and stability in Africa, including the role of young women.</p>		
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		<p>4. <b>*Empowering Young Women for Peace*</b>: Discussing ways to empower young women to become agents of peace and change in their communities.</p> <p><b>*Expected Outcomes*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Increased Awareness and Understanding*</b>: Raising awareness and understanding of the impact of conflict on African communities and the role of young women in building peace.</p> <p>2. <b>*Empowered Young Women Leaders*</b>: Empowering young women leaders with the knowledge, skills, and networks necessary to become agents of peace and change.</p> <p>3. <b>*Networking and Collaboration*</b>: Establishing a network of young women leaders, peace builders, policymakers, and experts to promote collective action and support.</p> <p>4. <b>*Policy Recommendations*</b>: Developing policy recommendations that support the empowerment of young women and promote peace and stability in Africa.</p>		
November	Young Women and Men Colloquium on violence against women and children	Young Women and Men Colloquium on Violence Against Women and Children: Breaking the Silence, Building a Safer Future	Host Country – YWOA South Africa	Upcoming

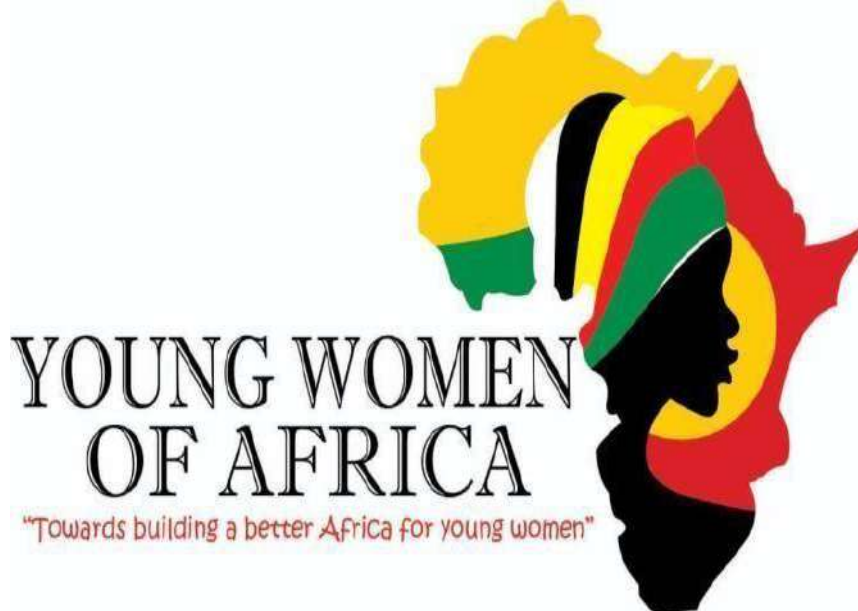
		<p>The Young Women and Men Colloquium on Violence Against Women and Children is a groundbreaking event that brings together young women and men, policymakers, experts, and advocates to discuss the pervasive issue of violence against women and children. The colloquium aims to:</p> <p><b>*Objectives*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Raise Awareness*</b>: Raise awareness about the prevalence, causes, and consequences of violence against women and children.</li> <li>2. <b>*Break the Silence*</b>: Create a safe space for young women and men to share their experiences, perspectives, and solutions for preventing violence against women and children.</li> <li>3. <b>*Build a Safer Future*</b>: Develop strategies and recommendations for preventing violence against women and children, and promoting a culture of respect, equality, and justice.</li> <li>4. <b>*Foster Collaboration and Partnerships*</b>: Establish partnerships and collaborations among young women and men, policymakers, experts, and advocates to promote collective action and support.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Key Themes*</b></p>		
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		<p>1. <b>*Understanding Violence Against Women and Children*</b>: Examining the root causes, consequences, and impact of violence against women and children.</p> <p>2. <b>*Breaking the Silence and Stigma*</b>: Creating a safe space for young women and men to share their experiences and perspectives on violence against women and children.</p> <p>3. <b>*Prevention and Intervention Strategies*</b>: Developing strategies and recommendations for preventing violence against women and children, and promoting a culture of respect, equality, and justice.</p> <p>4. <b>*Policy and Legislative Frameworks*</b>: Examining policy and legislative frameworks that address violence against women and children, and recommending reforms and improvements.</p> <p><b>*Expected Outcomes*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Increased Awareness and Understanding*</b>: Raising awareness and understanding about violence against women and children, and its impact on individuals, families, and communities.</p> <p>2. <b>*Empowered Young Women and Men*</b>: Empowering young women and men with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become agents of change and advocate for</p>		
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		<p>the prevention of violence against women and children.</p> <p>3. *Collaborative Action and Partnerships*: Establishing partnerships and collaborations among young women and men, policymakers, experts, and advocates to promote collective action and support.</p> <p>4. *Policy and Legislative Reforms*: Informing policy and legislative reforms that address violence against women and children, and promoting a culture of respect, equality, and justice.</p>		
December	YWOA North Africa Regional Launch	This is the North African launch of the YWOA	Host Country – YWOA Algeria	Upcoming
December	5 <sup>th</sup> Annual Continental Convention	We will commemorate our 5 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the YWOA and A concept Note will be issued.	Host Country – Ethiopia	Upcoming
All Months	Monthly Webinars	<p>YWOA Monthly Webinars: Empowering Young Women through Virtual Learning</p> <p>The YWOA Monthly Webinars are a series of online events hosted by the Young Women of Africa (YWOA) movement. These webinars aim to empower young women across Africa with knowledge, skills, and networks necessary to become leaders and change-makers in their communities.</p>	Online	Ongoing – Successful for January and February

		<p><b>*Objectives*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Knowledge Sharing*</b>: Share knowledge and experiences on topics relevant to young women's empowerment, leadership, and development.</li> <li>2. <b>*Capacity Building*</b>: Build the capacity of young women to become leaders, entrepreneurs, and change-makers in their communities.</li> <li>3. <b>*Networking*</b>: Provide a platform for young women to connect, network, and collaborate with each other and with experts in various fields.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Webinar Topics*</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Leadership and Empowerment*</b>: Leadership development, self-awareness, and confidence building.</li> <li>2. <b>*Entrepreneurship and Innovation*</b>: Entrepreneurship, innovation, and business management.</li> <li>3. <b>*Social Justice and Activism*</b>: Social justice, activism, and advocacy for women's rights and gender equality.</li> <li>4. <b>*Personal Development and Wellness*</b>: Personal development, wellness, and self-care.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Benefits*</b></p>		
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		<p>1. <b>*Access to Knowledge and Expertise*:</b> Access to knowledge and expertise from renowned experts and thought leaders.</p> <p>2. <b>*Networking Opportunities*:</b> Opportunities to connect and network with young women from across Africa and beyond.</p> <p>3. <b>*Personal and Professional Growth*:</b> Opportunities for personal and professional growth, leadership development, and capacity building.</p> <p><b>*Target Audience*</b></p> <p>1. <b>*Young Women*:</b> Young women aged 18-35 from across Africa.</p> <p>2. <b>*Youth Leaders*:</b> Youth leaders, activists, and change-makers.</p> <p>3. <b>*Development Practitioners*:</b> Development practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders interested in women's empowerment and youth development.</p>		
All Months	Monthly Continental Executive Meeting	Scheduled YWOA Meetings to process Organisational issues	Physically and online	Ongoing – Successful January and February
All Months	Monthly bilateral meetings with other organisations	Scheduled meetings to strengthen relations with other organisations	Physically and online	Ongoing
Quarterly	Quarterly Regional Meetings	Scheduled meetings to process organisational issues	Physically and Online	Ongoing



## **THE STATUTE**

### **1. ESTABLISHMENT AND NAME**

- 1.1. The movement shall be called THE YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA (Herein the YWOA Movement)
- 1.2. The Young Women of Africa movement is hereby established in accordance with the provisions of this statute and the laws of member countries.
- 1.3. Established on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. We are a movement of young women united in building a cognitive and militant organisation for young women of the continent who aspire to transform the quality of life of young women and our social economic condition on the continent. We are drawn from liberation movements, revolutionary and progressive political organisations, progressive women organisations, civil society and gender activists from Africa.
- 2.2. We resolved to form this movement after a series of meetings which were attended by young women from the continent who decried the state of women in general and young women in particular.
- 2.3. We noted how there are many progressive continental women organisations and we agreed on the need to bring together young women from the continent to contribute to the ongoing struggle for women emancipation and gender equality. We identify with all progressive movements in the continent and beyond.
- 2.4. We noted the high levels of divisions in the continent and we agreed to form a uniting movement of young women that dismantles the legacy of colonialism and refuse to define

ourselves according to our colonial past. We therefore strive for inclusivity and unity of African young women.

2.5. We noted the gap between politically active young women and those in apolitical spaces and movements such as NGOs, we agreed to bridge that gap and form a movement that will bring young women from civil society and political parties together uniting in transforming Africa and making it a better continent for ourselves. We are the change we want to see.

2.6. Having endured imperialism in our different Countries violently, we agreed to form a movement of young women that will fight capitalism and decolonisation of our continent, its education system, and also the economy of our countries and continent as a way of empowering women.

### **3. VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES**

#### **3.1. VISION**

3.1.1. Africa where young women are empowered, valued, and recognized as leaders and change-makers, driving transformative social, economic, and political change.

3.1.2. To build a better Africa for young women and the girl child

3.1.3. Striving for the emancipation of women and our social economic development in the continent.

3.1.4. Incubate and develop young women leadership and second layer leadership.

3.1.5. To establish a grassroots African movement that places young women at the Centre of their own development and struggle for the solutions Africa needs.

3.1.6. To bring an end to xenophobia, regionalism, racism, patriarchy and all forms of oppression and injustice.

3.1.7 To work with progressive organisation on the continent to fight for gender equality.

#### **3.2. MISSION**

"To unite, empower, and mobilize young women across Africa to drive positive change, promote gender equality, social justice, and human rights, and amplify their voices and contributions to Africa's development."

### **3.3. CORE VALUES**

1. **\*Solidarity\***: We believe in the power of solidarity and collective action among young women.
2. **\*Empowerment\***: We are committed to empowering young women with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to drive change.
3. **\*Inclusivity\***: We strive to create a platform that is inclusive, diverse, and representative of all young women in Africa.
4. **\*Social Justice\***: We are dedicated to promoting social justice, human rights, and gender equality in all aspects of African society.
5. **\*Accountability\***: We hold ourselves accountable for our actions, decisions, and impact, and strive for transparency and integrity in all our endeavors.

### **4. OUR LOGO, COLOURS AND SLOGAN**

- 4.1. Our logo is the Map of Africa with the face of an African young Woman inside the map. The face looks into the sun. The African map represents our continent. The young woman represents all young women of our beautiful continent, the sun represents the hope we have for a bright and better future for ourselves
- 4.2. The Colour Red represents the blood of our fallen martyrs that fought for the liberation of our continent and the blood of African women that continues to be spilled due to war, injustices and violation. We strive to fight against all forms of injustices and violation on women
- 4.3. The Colour Green represents the natural resources and vegetation of Africa. We wish for Africa and her children to use their natural resources and vegetation for her development and growth and for their benefit
- 4.4. The Colour Orange represents the mineral resources of Africa. We will work for an Africa that fights to keep its resources in the continent and open up free continental trade, manufacturing, production, and industrialisation for Africa by Africans in particular women.
- 4.5. The colour Black represents the people of Africa in particular the women
- 4.6. Our Slogan is **YOUNG WOMEN OF AFRICA: TOWARDS BUILDING A BETTER AFRICA FOR YOUNG WOMEN**

4.7. All rights with regards to the logo, colours and slogan of the YWOA are reserved by the YWOA under the Continental Executive.

#### **4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **5.1. AIMS**

1. Contribute in changing the lives of young women of Africa for the better by uniting and empowering them across Africa to drive positive change. and promote gender equality.
2. Restore the dignity and integrity of Africa and her people by encouraging African patriotism, regional integration and cooperation of our member countries.
  3. Fight against regionalism, xenophobia, racism, patriarchy and imperialism.
  4. Develop young women who will be selfless game changers and ready to make a difference in the transformation and decolonisation of Africa in all forms by providing a platform for young women to amplify their voices, share their experiences, and learn from each other.
  5. Promote dialogue and accountability of Africans to resolve disputes, conflict and wars. We promote social justice, human rights, and sustainable development in Africa.
  6. Strive for a safe continent and safe migration for young women in the continent. This will assist us to confront human trafficking and forced sex work on the continent.
  7. Fight for the economic emancipation of women in the continent. We will develop solutions to confront hunger and poverty, accelerate the participation of women in the African economy and position women as the solution to the economic development of Africa.
  8. Confront oppressive cultural, religious and traditional practices on the continent that perpetuate patriarchy and the continuous oppression of African young women and girls.
  9. Support, develop, and lobby for African women representation and leadership in decision making bodies in our Countries, Continent, and all spheres of life both in governments and private sector.
  10. Decolonise and transform the education system of our member Countries and the continent. Promote research and African thinking for the development of Africa.
  11. Strive for inclusivity and intersectionality on the African continent by supporting all oppressed people of Africa like rural women and disabled women, the under – privileged, the marginalised communities of different origins on our continent. This is a movement of all African Young Women in all their forms and kinds who agree with the aims and objectives.

12. Promote unity, peace, security, stability and solidarity of African people and women in particular

13. Advance democracy and promote human and women rights

## **5.2 OBJECTIVES**

### **1. \_Empowerment\_ :**

- To build the capacity and confidence of young women to take leadership roles in their communities.

- To provide training, mentorship, and networking opportunities for young women.

### **2. \_Advocacy\_ :**

- To advocate for policies and laws that promote gender equality, social justice, and human rights.

- To raise awareness about issues affecting young women in Africa, such as gender-based violence, climate change, education, and socio – economic empowerment.

### **3. \_Community Development\_ :**

- To support community development projects that promote leadership and empowerment for young women.

- To partner with local and multinational organizations and communities to drive positive change.

### **4. \_Networking and Collaboration\_ :**

- To build partnerships with other organizations, governments, and stakeholders to advance the interests of young women in Africa.

- To facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing among young women across Africa.

### **5. \_Research and Policy Development\_ :**

- To conduct research on issues affecting young women in Africa and develop policy recommendations.

- To influence policy decisions that affect young women in Africa.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP**

6.1. All organisations wishing to join shall apply for membership and after once off approval by the leadership of YWOA, they will be expected to pay subscription/joining fees.

- 6.2. Membership shall be granted by paying a subscription/joining fee renewable every five years.
- 6.3. Every member of the YWOA shall duly pay the appropriate subscription which shall be fixed by the YWOA Executive. Membership records shall be kept by the Secretary General and transmitted to the Headquarters/Secretariat where a central register of members shall be kept
- 6.4. A paid-up member, for the purpose of this statute, is a member who has paid the required subscription and the paid money having been received by the YWOA head office
- 6.5. Only persons, organisations and Countries that believe and agree with our aims and objectives, vision and mission will be granted membership
- 6.6. Membership will be suspended or taken away from individuals, Countries and organisations that go against what we stand for or our policies and resolutions
- 6.7. The membership fee will be determined by the Continental Executive of the YWOA every five years
- 6.8. All progressive women organisations with Young women Desks or sectors, young women civil organisations, young women NGOs and feminists can take up membership.
- 6.9. All member organisations and movements in good standing have a right to vote in the continental young women assemblies and conventions.
- 6.10. Members shall resolve and take decisions through persuasion and failure to which shall be through a vote and acquiring a simple majority of the meeting
- 6.11. Voting shall be by secret ballot by all members in good standing
- 6.12. Honorary members are non-voting delegates in all our meetings
- 6.13. The leadership of the YWOA will confer honorary membership to outstanding women who have contributed extensively in the struggle for women emancipation in Africa
- 6.14. Honorary lifetime membership will also be granted to former leaders of the YWOA and they will serve as an advisory council to the current leadership of the YWOA.
- 6.15. The YWOA shall have members, associate members and honorary members. Associate members are those who are above the ages defining a young woman by internationally accepted African standards and/or as resolved by the continental executive or the continental convention or assembly. Honorary members are those who have achieved in fighting for women and have been invited to the advisory council as honour. The advisory

council will be chaired by the continental convener. Associate and Honorary members have no voting rights in the assembly of the YWOA.

## **6. THE CONTINENTAL YOUNG WOMEN ASSEMBLY**

7.1. The Continental Young Women Assembly will be the highest decision making body of the YWOA Movement. The Assembly shall have the power to endorse, reverse or amend decisions and motions of all structures of the YWOA

7.2. It is attended by members in good standing.

7.3. It will seat every five years and among its responsibilities will be to elect leadership of the YWOA movement.

7.4. Receive, review and adopt political, secretariat and other reports from the executive

7.5. Amend and adopt the statute

7.6. Amend and adopt all policy positions of the YWOA

7.7. Amend and adopt resolutions for implementation

7.8. Amend and adopt motions

7.9. Amend and adopt rules and procedures. All such rules and procedures shall be consistent with the norms of the YWOA. Rules and regulations shall only become operative when approved by the Mid – term continental young women assembly

7.10. Amend the composition structure of the leadership of YWOA

7.11. The Continental Young Women Assembly will rotate in different regions of the Continent

7.12. The decisions of the Continental Young Women’s Assembly shall be binding on all member countries and member organisations and can only be changed by another assembly of the same nature

7.13. Shall rotate in different member countries

## **7. THE MID – TERM CONTINENTAL YOUNG WOMEN ASSEMBLY**

8.1. The Mid – term continental young women assembly shall seat between the five-year term to the continental young women assemblies

8.2. Shall receive and adopt political, secretariat and other reports from the executive of the YWOA and assess the work done in between continental young women assemblies

8.3. Recommend amendments of statutes, policy positions, and resolutions to the continental young women assembly

8.4. Adopt motions

8.5. Adopt rules and procedures. All such rules and procedures shall be consistent with the norms of the YWOA. Rules and regulations shall only become operative when approved by the Mid – term continental young women assembly

8.6. Recommend amendments to the leadership composition of the YWOA movement

8.7. Shall rotate in different member countries

## **8. CONTINENTAL CONVENTIONS, REGIONAL YOUNG WOMEN ASSEMBLIES AND COUNTRY ASSEMBLIES**

9.1. The continental conventions shall seat annually to receive reports, adopt a programme of action, and make recommendations to the continental young women assembly.

9.2. The Regional assemblies shall seat every three years to elect regional leadership, receive reports, adopt a programme of action and make recommendations to the continental young women assembly.

9.3. The Country Assemblies shall seat every year to elect country leadership, receive reports, adopt a programme of action and make recommendations to the regional and continental young women assemblies.

## **9. STRUCTURE OF THE YWOA**

10.1. The Continental Executive of the YWOA shall be comprised of the following;

- The President
- The Deputy President
- Regional Vice Presidents (East, West, North, Central and Southern Africa)
- The Continental Secretary General
- The Continental Deputy Secretary General
- The Regional Secretaries, East Africa, West Africa, North Africa, Southern Africa, and Central Africa
- The Continental Resource mobiliser and Finance Secretary

- Continental Head of Policy and Research Committee
- Continental Head of Communication and media Committee
- Continental Head of Economic and Social Transformation Committee
- Continental Head of Education transformation Committee
- Continental Head of Young Women empowerment Committee
- Continental Head of Rural development

10.2. The Regional Executive of the YWOA shall comprise of the following;

- Regional Executive Secretary (Head)
- Vice President
- Regional Heads of portfolios appointed by the continental executive as they deem fit
- Country Representative ( Heads)
- Country Executive Secretary

10.3. The Country Executives of the YWOA shall comprise of the following;

- Country representatives (Head)
- Country Executive Secretary
- Country heads of portfolios appointed by the regional executive as they deem fit, in consultation with the Continental Executive.

## **10. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YWOA GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES**

11.1. The YWOA structures shall seat meetings every three months

11.2. Coordinate the work of the YWOA

11.3. Oversee the programmes and campaigns of the YWOA

11.4. Adopt reports, the budget, financial model and policies of the YWOA which will be rectified by conventions and assemblies of the YWOA at all levels.

11.5. The Continent Executive shall be voted for in the continental young women assembly every five years, every three years for the regional executive in the regional assembly and every year for the country executive in the country assembly.

- 11.6. Responsible for running the affairs of YWOA on behalf of member Countries and organisations at all levels. The decisions of upper structures shall hold on all lower structures.
- 11.7. The continental Executive shall receive applications and grant requests for membership
- 11.8. Shall convene the Young Women Assembly and the mid-term young women assemblies every mid-term.
- 11.9. Shall appoint different committees including the Disciplinary Committee
- 11.10. The structures of the YWOA shall implement the Programme of Action of the movement without fail.
- 11.11. Regional meetings shall be constituted by member countries and member organisations from each region in the Continent
- 11.12. Shall adopt rules and procedures. All such rules and procedures shall be consistent with the norms of the YWOA. Rules and regulations shall only become operative when approved by the YWOA structures.
- 11.13. The YWOA continental executive shall have the power to frame a Code of Conduct for all structures, officials, office bearers and members of the YWOA.
- 11.14. All YWOA leaders at all levels are expected to comply with the following;
- Leadership – Provide strategic leadership and vision to the organization, guiding its overall direction and goals.
  - Representation - Represent YWOA at national, regional, and international forums, conferences, and meetings, promoting the organization's interests and values.
  - Policy Development – Develop, implement, and review policies and programs that promote the empowerment and development of young women in Africa.
  - Decision-Making - Make key decisions on behalf of the organization, in consultation with the Executive Committee and other relevant stakeholders.
  - Resource Mobilization – Mobilize resources, including funding, partnerships, and expertise, to support the organization's programs and activities.
  - Networking – Build and maintain strategic partnerships and networks with other organizations, governments, and stakeholders to advance YWOA's objectives.

- Membership Engagement - Foster a sense of community and belonging among YWOA members, promoting their active participation and engagement in the organization's activities.
- Conflict Resolution - Resolve conflicts and disputes within the organization, ensuring that they are addressed in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.
- Reporting – Provide regular reports to the Executive Committee, members, and other stakeholders on the organization's progress, challenges, and achievements.
- Ambassadorial Role – Serve as a role model and ambassador for YWOA, promoting its values, mission, and vision to a wider audience.

## **11. SECRETARIAT, HEADQUARTERS AND OPERATIONS IN COUNTRIES**

### **12.1. SECRETARIAT AND HEADQUARTERS**

1. The Secretariat will be the Headquarters of the YWOA movement
2. The Headquarters shall rotate in different member Countries
3. The period of the secretariat in a Country shall be determined by the continental executive.
4. Countries shall volunteer or get voted for by a meeting to be the headquarters

### **12.2 OPERATIONS IN COUNTRIES**

1. The YWOA shall establish national chapters in countries where it operates or as the Executive deems fit derived from our continental existence.
2. All Country Chapters established are done so in accordance with the provisions of this statute and the decisions of the continental Executive.
3. Any country which establishes itself without the permission and written approval of the continental executive is null and void. The continental executive reserves the right to establish country structures in line with the provisions of this statute.
4. YWOA shall establish monitoring and evaluation systems to track its progress in each country and shall conduct regular impact assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs.
5. YWOA shall comply with all relevant laws and regulations in each country where it operates and shall comply with all relevant international laws and treaties.

## **12. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 13.1. Disciplinary Proceedings shall be confined in violation of the basic principles and rules of the YWOA.
- 13.2. Such proceedings shall not be used as a means of stifling debates or denying members their basic rights neither will they be means to suppress members, or interfere with their activities as Countries and organisations.
- 13.3. Proceedings shall normally be conducted at levels where the alleged violation has taken place without prejudice to the right of the YWOA to initiate such proceedings at any time
- 13.4. Any Country or member organisation to appear for disciplinary proceedings shall have the right to receive reasonable notice of any hearing and of the basic allegation against them. Shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to prepare and present her defense.
- 13.5. Any person adversely affected by the outcome of any hearing have the right to have a matter reviewed by the appellate or review committee set up by the YWOA.
- 13.6. In addition to misconduct which directly violated the norms of the YWOA, any abuse of office, corruption, harassment or misappropriation of funds shall give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 13.7. Proceedings may also be brought against members who behave in a disgraceful way which brings the organisation into disrepute or manifest a flagrant violation of the moral integrity expected of members.
- 13.8. Penalties for the proven violation of the statute, norms and decisions of the YWA shall include counselling, reprimand, apology, demotion, suspension, and payment of compensation, the performance of useful tasks or expulsion.
- 13.9. YWOA shall establish a Disciplinary Committee which shall have the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings against members in serious cases.
- 13.10. The Disciplinary Committee shall have a minimum of five and a maximum of seven members and shall decide by majority vote, with the chairperson having a casting vote. The Committee shall serve for a period of five years, with vacancies being filled by the YWOA.
- 13.11. An appeal from the Disciplinary Committee shall lie with the YWOA Continental Young Women Assembly whose decision shall be final and binding.

## **13. CODE OF CONDUCT**

14.1. As a member of YWOA, I pledge to:

1. Uphold the values and mission of YWOA
2. Respect the dignity and rights of all members and stakeholders
3. Maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive information with care
4. Avoid conflicts of interest and declare any potential conflicts
5. Refrain from harassment, bullying, or discriminatory behavior
6. Comply with YWOA's policies and procedures
7. Account for my actions and decisions as a representative of YWOA

#### **14.2. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

1. **\*Investigation\***: The Executive Committee will investigate any alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.
2. **\*Notification\***: The member will be notified in writing of the allegations and the investigation.
3. **\*Response\***: The member will have the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing.
4. **\*Hearing\***: A disciplinary hearing may be convened to discuss the allegations and the member's response.
5. **\*Decision\***: The Executive Committee will make a decision based on the evidence presented.
6. **\*Sanctions\***: Sanctions may include:
  - Warning
  - Suspension
  - Expulsion
  - Other measures as deemed appropriate
7. **\*Appeal\***: The member may appeal the Continental assembly.

#### **14.3. GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

1. Breach of the Code of Conduct
2. Misconduct or unprofessional behavior
3. Failure to comply with YWOA's policies and procedures
4. Harassment, bullying, or discriminatory behavior

5. Misuse of YWOA's resources or assets

#### **14.4. CONFIDENTIALITY**

1. All disciplinary proceedings will be treated as confidential to protect the rights and reputation of all parties involved.

#### **15. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

- 15.1. The organization's financial year shall commence on January 1st and end on December 31st.
- 15.2. The Finance Secretary shall be responsible for managing the organization's finances and shall present a detailed audited financial report to the Assembly and ACC.

#### **16. AMENDMENTS**

- 16.1. Any amendments to this statute shall be by two-thirds majority vote at the continental Young Women's Assembly or the Annual Continental Convention.
- 16.2. Notice of intent to propose any amendments the assembly or the ACC should be forwarded to the office of the Secretary General at least two months before such an assembly, and proposed amendments must be circulated to members at least one month before the assembly
- 16.3. The amendments to this statute shall come into effect immediately upon adoption by the Continental Convention or the Assembly.
- 16.4. The Continental Executive Committee shall ensure a smooth transition and implementation of the amended Constitution.

#### **17. DISSOLUTION**

- 15.1. The Continental Young Women's Assembly may dissolve the YWOA by two-third majority of delegates present and voting and transfer the assets and liabilities of the YWOA in such a manner as determined by the assembly.

## **ADOPTION**

This amended statute was adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Continental Convention (ACC) of the Young Women of Africa on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at the African Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

YWOA – Young Women of Africa

Signed by the continental President

Names: Precious Banda

Signature: PB

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Signed by the Continental Secretary General

Names: Helena Chiuissa

Signature: H. Chiuissa

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025



YOUNG WOMEN  
OF AFRICA

Towards building a better Africa for young women