

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SPACE FIELD IN AFRICA

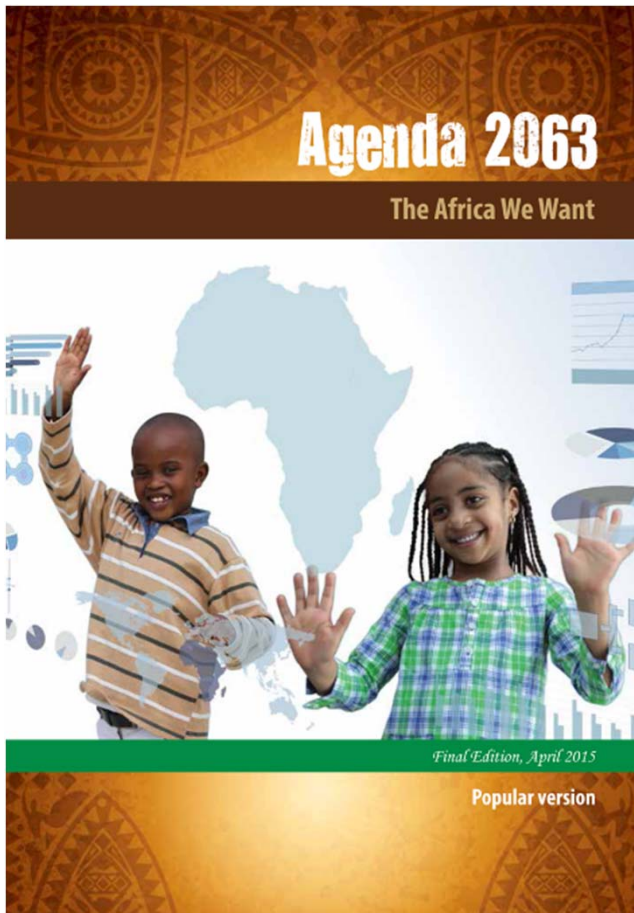
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GENDER AND SPACE: TWO KEY DRIVERS OF THE AGENDA 2063

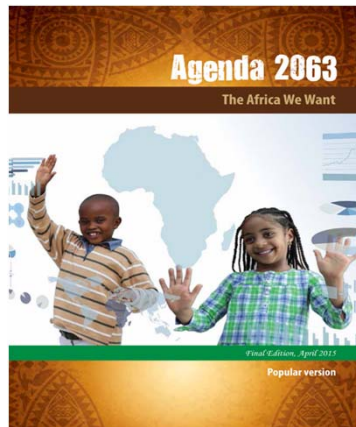


The Gender Policy of the African Union Commission

African Union (AU) declared 2015 as the 'Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa Agenda 2063''

The African Outer Space Program: a **FLAGSHIP** for the African Union Commission

AFRICAN UNION GENDER POLICY



- Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 calls for “An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children.”
- Agenda 2063 : more inclusive society where all the citizens are actively involved in decision making in all aspects and where no child, woman or man is left behind or excluded, on the basis of gender,
- Article 3 of the Protocol on Amendments of the Constitutive Act of the African Union recognises the critical role of women in promoting inclusive development and
- calls for the AU “to ensure the effective participation of women in decision-making, particularly in the political, economic and socio-cultural areas.”



The AU's African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa requires State Parties to combat all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legislative measures.

The Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) is the responsible for leading, guiding, advocating for and coordinating the AU's efforts to achieve gender equality and promote women's empowerment and ensuring African countries live up to the AU's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION INCLUDING SPACE FIELD IN AFRICA

STATUS:

Women are underrepresented in Science, Technology and Innovation around 30% in R&D

- Disparities span from places of work to levels of responsibility.
- Most of the African women scientists work with the academic and government institutions while the men are mainly working with the private sectors.
- Women have limited leadership opportunities.

CAUSES:

- Causes summarized in three: social, biological and institutional.
- The inequality, even if it persists, is not the only explanation of the situation of the women in science, technology and innovation.
- Indeed trade-offs between pursuing a career and raising a family, coupled with societal factors and gender expectations that can influence professional choices at a young age, are more likely to account for the shortage of women in some fields.

WAY FORWARD

To address the causes and improve the situation several initiatives and efforts have been undertaken at the continental level:

- The African Union Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards Programme (launched in 2008) is one of the holistic and deliberate measures taken by the Commission to promote and encourage African women participation to Science, Technology and Innovation
 - ✓ With the objective to give out scientific awards to top African scientists particularly the women.....
 - ✓ Jointly implemented by the Regional Economic Communities and the Commission.....
 - ✓ Implemented at national level for young researchers, **regional level for women scientists** and.... continental level open to all scientists.....
 - ✓ Prizes are awarded to top African scientists in each of the following two sectors (a) Life and Earth Sciences; and (b) Basic Science, Technology and Innovation at the national, regional and continental levels.

WAY FORWARD (2)

To address the causes and improve the situation several initiatives and efforts have been undertaken at the continental level (2):

- At **The REGIONAL LEVEL**, actions are being taken by the Regional Economic Communities.
 - ✓ The East African Community (EAC) promotes gender mainstreaming and gender equity in STI, entrepreneurship training and education through its Gender & STI Frameworks.
 - ✓ The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)'s Gender Policy, which supports equal access for girls and boys to science and mathematics education, as well as access for women and girls to tertiary education in non-traditional subject areas, is encouraging women's involvement in science.

WAY FORWARD (3)

RETAINING the women scientists already onboard and

..... ATTRACTING new young women scientist through specific actions that should be taken:

- Removing the persisting gender biases and stereotypes embedded within science, technology and innovation institutions.
- Developing **special programmes** to recruit women scientists, providing them with very clear career path as well as with coaching, mentoring and strong professional networks.
- Developing **gender-friendly policy frameworks**, which will encourage childcare facilities at the workplace and a career re-entry programmes to support and encourage women scientists that would like to come back and continue their career.
- The women scientists should be **treated equally** with their counterpart men for advancement in their career and getting the same salary when at the same level.

WAY FORWARD (4)

RETAINING the women scientists already onboard and

..... ATTRACTING new young women scientist through specific actions that should be taken:

The promotion of the full participation of the African women in science, technology and innovation is done by several players and stakeholders including emergence of African civil society organizations and Think-Tanks dedicated to raise awareness of STI:

- **Mobilizing and widening** the involvement of relevant segments of our population, private sector, civil society, parliamentarians and the Diaspora to participate in Africa's science and technology programmes encouraging women's participation.
- While welcoming the increase and the multiplication of the supports, one has to understand and make it clear that the success of involvement of African women in science, technology and innovation will reside in a better **coordination and integration** of all the undertaken actions.

The Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards Programme winners

- In 2015: **Algerian Professor Merzouk** and **Ethiopian Professor Yalemtehay**, both specialized in biology.

In 2016, the Programme honored five women:

- **Prof. Jane Catherine Ngila (Kenya)** - Analytical-Environmental Chemistry on water resource management.
- **Dr. Lamia Chaari Fourati (Tunisia)** - conception and validation of new protocols and mechanisms for quality of service provisioning over emerging networks technologies.
- **Associate Prof. Celia Abolnik (South Africa)** - avian respiratory viruses, (chicken and ostrich production).
- **Prof. Rokia Sanogo (Mali)** - Pharmacognosy (Traditional Medicines).
- **Prof. Olu-Owolabi Bamidele (Nigeria)** - development of sustainable alternative materials for water



Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai

The first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize

- A Kenyan biologist, anatomist and [environmental](#) political activist should be told to the new generation of women scientists.
- In 1977, Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement, an environmental non-governmental organization focused on the planting of trees, environmental conservation and women's right.
- In 1984, she was awarded the Right Livelihood Award and in 2004, she became the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for "her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace".
- Maathai was an elected [member of Parliament](#) and served as assistant minister for [Environment](#) and [Natural resources](#) between January 2003 and November 2005.
- She was an Honorary Councillor of the [World Future Council](#).



THANK YOU



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