“Education is the most powerful weapon, which you can use to change the world”

Nelson Mandela

WORKSHOP ON

INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE

RIGHTS OF GIRLS AND WOMEN’S EDUCATION,

7-8 DECEMBER 2016

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CONCEPT NOTE
I. INTRODUCTION

African Union (AU) Member States have placed education at the center of its development programs and have adopted and ratified various legal instruments and frameworks on Education and particularly on girl’s and women’s education not only to accelerate the social changes in this domain, but also to process the inclusive socio-economic development in Africa. During the course of the last 20 years, Africa has put together remarkable efforts and actions at both political and technical levels to improve access of girls and women in education and enable them to participate in innovative initiatives. Improvements are observable, statistics show progress almost everywhere. However, there are still challenges remaining such as the effective inclusion and the use of efficient rights-based approaches enabling parity, equity and equality. Therefore, it appears that Africa must engage in a paradigm shift to accelerate and sustain these changes, to bring more quality and sustainability in changing mentalities, and cultural behavior.

AU/CIEFFA would like to explore and truly engage AU Member States in an institutional and legal pathway to consider how well instruments should be implemented so as to ensure quality in girls’ and women’s education.

II. RATIONALE

AU CIEFFA is organizing a workshop in Ouagadougou from 7 to 8 December 2016 to acquaint stakeholder on the status of existing legal instruments, policies and any other frameworks pertaining directly or indirectly to girls’ and women’s education in Africa.

The highlight of this workshop will be the presentation of a compendium on existing texts (regardless of its nature but related to girls’ and women’s education.). Beyond listing the existing, the meeting will discuss the challenges related to the implementation of what exists already and what is hindering the emancipation of the African girl and woman so as to fully enjoy this universal and human right to education.

Last but not the least, the meeting will determine the strategies to be developed for adoption, ratification and effective implementation of legal instruments focusing on girl’s in Africa.
III. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

This workshop has the following objectives:

- encourage reflection on available institutions, instruments and global legal environment in Africa,
- consider continental, regional and national efforts, principles and conditions put in place to improve in girls and women education;
- consider the reasons retention, transition and achievement rates are still very low in Africa and draw lessons from the relation between institutions and the use of available, adopted or ratified instruments.
- identify key actions to develop the Strategy on the compendium development of legal and institutional framework on girls & Women’s education (implementation for efficient use of legal instruments)
- Finally envisage how to strategize, while developing a compendium of credible institutions and relevant legal instruments taking into consideration the existing success stories, constructive experience in the same domains as implemented in some countries

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The workshop will lead to the following outcomes:

- Better understanding of the requirements attached to the development of a compendium of institutions and legal frameworks or instruments in favor of girls education
- Clearer formulations of strategies, actions and mechanisms to inform and develop a Compendium of institutions and legal instruments for girls & Women’s Education in view of improving inclusion in education and conducting proper analysis of implementation and effectiveness of legal frameworks related to girl’s education in Africa,
- Proposing additional Legal instruments if required to enhance girls’ and women education.
V. METHODOLOGY

The workshop will be developed in various formats, mainly in
1. Plenary sessions and debates
2. Group reflection, exchange, strategies proposal
3. Experience sharing
4. Field visits (to be confirmed)

VI. WAY FORWARD

- The outcomes of this workshop will be presented during the AU High level Dialogue on Gender Equality and Education on the margins of the AU Summit in January 2017 for consideration
- The second step of this process will be the adoption by the AU Policy Organs (STC, Executive Council & Assembly)\(^1\) of a continental legal and binding framework on girls’ access, retention and transition for a quality education in Africa.

\(^{1}\) STC (SpecializedTechnicalCommittee)