AFRICAN UNION
International Centre for Girls’ and Women’s Education in Africa

UNION AFRICAINE
Centre International pour l’Education des Filles et des Femmes en Afrique

WORKSHOP
STRENGTHENING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN EDUCATION SYSTEMS

ADDIS ABABA-ETHIOPIA, 28-30 NOVEMBER 2017

Norwegian Embassy

CONCEPT NOTE
I. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

In line with its Strategic Plan and recent initiatives to promote girls’ and women’s education, the African Union/International Center for Girls’ and Women’s Education in Africa (AU/CIEFFA) is organizing a three-day workshop on Strengthening Learning Opportunities for Youth in Mainstreaming Gender in Education Systems.

This is all the more important as it makes it possible to start a conversation on the main objectives of AU/CIEFFA, which stresses the need for girls and young women to access the education system, stay and optimize their participation in the learning process. Considerations are being given to identify strategies that make learning contents relevant enough to keep girls and boys in the education system; and offer teaching and learning opportunities that respect their aspirations, valorizes their full potential, while offering them the opportunity to acquire adequate knowledge, specific skills and global abilities and values and preparing them for the job of their choice. It should be noted that the above reflection and proposals have not always considered the opinions of the target group concerned.

Yet, Nelson Mandela rightly said that "nothing for you without you," and it is a challenge for all of us. Therefore, it is essential to create a space for all the components of literate and illiterate youth (women and men) to understand the link between gender equality and gender equity and education on the one hand, and the challenges they face, their needs as well as the strategies to put in place to overcome obstacles for a better construction of their future, including the empowerment of women, on the other hand.

II. JUSTIFICATION

Confirmed progress have been achieved in the processes of reflection and debates in the quest for adequate actions and strategies to make teaching and learning pertinent enough to justify why girls and young women should come and stay in school. In fact, during the past year, AU/CIEFFA has held an important number of gatherings for the sake of awareness and searching for most appropriate response in favor of retention and quality achievement of girls and women throughout the education systems.

The Call for Action which came up from the AU/CIEFFA Forum held in Mauritius defined strong strategies to bring and keep girls in STEM and TVET and support recommendations from others previous key activities organized by the AU/CIEFFA. Namely the Breakfast meeting on "Why invest in girls ‘education" held in the margins of the 29th AU Summit in Addis Ababa on 30th June 2017, the Dialogue with traditional and religious leaders of Burkina Faso on 26 May 2017 related to the "Retention of girls at school"; preceded by the Capacity Building Workshop for Parliamentarians held on the 13th May 2017 at the Pan African Parliament (PAP) in Midrand (South Africa) on "Enhancing our Institutional and Legal Environment for the Rights of Girls and Women’s Education".

The foundation of these initiatives started with recommendations from the High Level Dialogue on "Gender and Education" held on 26 January 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on the margins of the 28th AU Summit and preceded by the joint Seminar
organized by the AU/CIEFFA and UNESCO at UNESCO headquarters from 14-15 December 2016 in Paris.

Indeed the Paris Seminar on “Fostering quality education for girls in Africa: ensuring access, retention and transition” laid the foundation for more inclusivity of the real beneficiaries of the AU/CIEFFA’s mandate. It is important for both genders to understand that specific needs exist from each side and that this gender gap in education system needs to be closed.

Speaking on gender and education entails both genders whose opinions are necessary to understand the root causes of violence against girls and women, sexism and all forms of discrimination against girls and women existing in the African society. This mindset should be corrected at the onset of the society and involve boys to understand that girls’ right to education is a universal human rights.

Furthermore, girls must be tutored with boys to have the same level of understanding about these rights with the support of role models like parents, teachers, leaders, champions and advocates among so many actors.

III. OBJECTIVES

The forum aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify girls and young women and young men from various spheres to speak about challenges faced and needs vis-à-vis education systems
2. Create and facilitate contact and sharing of experiences with the invited role models
3. Create learning spaces for interaction among young women and young men and Role models
4. Initiate networks opportunities among participants through social media and other means to exchange trends related to girls and women’s education.
5. Establish a communication channel and reporting mechanism as a way forward

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

At the end of this Workshop, the following outcomes will be expected:

a) Youth are equipped with notions/concepts on gender and education as well as gender mainstreaming in education systems
b) Learning space is made available and utilized by participants to identify the challenges, to propose strategies and to express their training’s needs on gender and education.

c) established connections with role models and setting up of platforms with girls and young women as required for sustainable and meaningful support
d) Networks established with strategies to strengthen communication and training opportunities to exchange on gender equality/equity and education

e) Capacity building activities identified on gender and education for youth and other stakeholders in the education system and recorded for future capacity building

V. METHODOLOGY - FORMAT OF THE FORUM

The Workshop will be divided into three (3) mains components

a) ROUND TABLES DISCUSSION
Participants will discuss around three sub thematic areas in line with gender equality in education

b) BREAK-AWAY SESSIONS
Participants will be divided into groups to propose recommendations on the way forward such as: network on sharing experiences and challenges and champions to advocate for girls’ and women’s education

c) AWARD
Participants will be awarded a certificate at the end of the workshop for their commitment to girls’ and women’s education.

VI. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Sixty (60) participants (more females) have been selected from the 5 African regions with age ranged from 19 to 33 years as students, drop-outs, illiterate, people living with disabilities. Participants are learners from mainstream education, TVET and STEM domains. Some are practitioners working in male-dominated areas or women dominated-areas while others despite difficult learning and teaching environment have now success stories to share. Female role models will be invited to share their experience in STEM and TVET with participants.

VII. DATE AND VENUE

The Workshop will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission (AUC) from 28th to 30th 2017. An information note indicating the exact Meeting’s Room and logistic arrangements to facilitate your travel and stay to Addis will be communicated to you shortly.

VIII. LANGUAGE OF THE MEETING

Only English and French interpretation will be available during this workshop.

IX. INFOLINE& CONTACTS

For more information, kindly contact the persons below:

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