A WORKSHOP ON GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION SYSTEMS KICKED-OFF IN ADDIS ABABA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 28 November 2017-
In further recognition of the important role of women and girls in driving the achievement of Agenda 2063’s wide-ranging economic, environmental, socio-cultural, political, scientific and technological goals, a capacity building workshop on strengthening learning opportunities for youth in mainstreaming gender in educational systems commenced today in Addis Ababa.

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

During the opening ceremony Ms. Beatrice Njenga, acting Director of the Human Resources, Science and Technology Department (HRST) delivered opening remarks on behalf of the AU Commission.

Ms. Beatrice Njenga encouraged young Africans to make their voice heard “During this workshop, you-young African people-will strategize on establishing a pan-African network of exchanges via social media, in order to contribute your voice to the continent’s debates on education and development, for the emergence of a continent that cares about quality education of African daughters and women as well as its boys; ensuring that all are endowed with skills in every field,
particularly in scientific and technological fields, to make you more competitive in the local and international labor markets”.

Finally, Ms. Beatrice Njenga expressed the AU Commission’s appreciation to the government of Norway for its support to the AU/CIEFFA’s programs and its commitment for girls’ education in Africa.

Ms. Rita Bissoonauth, AU International Center for Girls’ and Women’s Education in Africa (AU CIEFFA) Coordinator gave a presentation on the work of CIEFFA, citing that girls in the continent have 60% less chance of getting an education compared to boys. "AU/CIEFFA agenda focus on making sure girls and women in African Continent are empowered in all spheres with equal political, social and economic rights and opportunities. CIEFFA is working to increase the retention of girls in schools” said Rita Bissoonauth.

The representative of the Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa reinstated the commitment to work with CIEFFA to help the continent to empower young women and girls.

At the end of this Workshop, which will conclude on 30th November 2017, the following outcomes will be expected:
- CIEFFA will exchange with young people and more particularly with young girls and women on their understanding of more gender-sensitive education system that will contribute to increase the enrollment rate of girls at school but especially their retention at school and their transition from secondary to the university cycle.
- Develop with young people realistic and simple but efficient strategies for greater inclusion of girls and women throughout the process of planning programs and projects on girls' education in Africa.
- To learn from each other different experiences on their learning and careers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) domains, the challenges and obstacles encountered for various reasons; or where the fields are generally considered as male domains

The workshop organized by the AU International Center for Girls’ and Women’s Education in Africa (AU CIEFFA) under the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology (HRST) with the support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ethiopia.

The workshop attended by young women and men 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 general education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) domains.

Notes to the Editor:

AU/CIEFFA aims to provide necessary policies, lines of actions, strategies and guidance to all relevant stakeholders to address gender equality, equity, leadership and advocacy in learning environment in order to create gender sensitive schools, to increase girls’ access and retention in education systems in the African continent.
The goal of the AU/CIEFFA is to promote girls and women’s education with a view towards their full participation in the eradication of poverty and the edification of a peaceful world for sustainable human development.

AU/CIEFFA will contribute to building an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa by ensuring that all girls and women have the required competencies to respond to life challenges, as well as sustaining Africa’s sustainable development.

The mission of AU/CIEFFA is in line with that vision of the Agenda 2063, which outlines that the African woman will be fully empowered in all spheres, with equal social, political, and economic rights and opportunities and enabled to fight against all forms of violence and discrimination.

As a reference Centre, the AU/CIEFFA seeks to fulfill the following:

- Coordinate actions in favor of the promotion of girls’ and women’s Education on the continent;
- Promote gender mainstreaming in developmental policies and programs;
- Build the operational capacities of the different African countries and regional economic communities in the area of girls’ and women’s Education;
- Set up an information and exchange systems and network for girls’ and women’s Education;
- Develop a multiform and creative advocacy to promote girls and women’s Education.
- Support research with data and resources in the area of girls’ education and women’s’ Training; and
- Conduct observation activities pertaining to the situation of girls’ Education and women’s Training in Africa.

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