



NOTE 4



WOMEN'S MACHINERY IN AFRICA

Photo: UN Women

Women's machinery

Women's machinery in Africa consists of the following bodies:

- **Regional level:** Women, Gender, and Development Directorate (WGDD);
- **Sub-regional level** for East and Southern Africa: IGAD, EAC and SADC;
- **National level:** Ministry of Gender/Women Affairs and gender unit/focal points in line ministries; and
- **Sub-national level:** Departments and Offices of Women Affairs managed or coordinated by the Ministry of Gender/Women Affairs.

Regional level

The Women, Gender, and Development Directorate (WGDD) is responsible for leading, guiding, defending, and coordinating the African Union's (AU) efforts on gender equality and development and promoting women's empowerment by ensuring that African countries comply with the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA). The Directorate designs programmes and projects based on the policies and frameworks adopted by the AU Member States.

It also oversees the development and harmonisation of gender policies; defines strategies for gender mainstreaming within the Commission, AU organs, and the Member States; and supports capacity building by providing training on gender policies and instruments.

The Directorate advances gender equality and women's empowerment at the continental and international levels to give new impetus to the commitments agreed at the global and regional levels in the following areas; poverty and women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship; agriculture and food security; women's health, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS; education, science, and technology; environment and climate change; peace and security; violence against women; governance and legal protection; finance and budget; women in decision-making positions; promotion of youth (women and men) and women in gender equality; and the empowerment of women.

National women's machineries

"National women's machineries" (or "national machineries for women's advancement") are government offices, departments, commissions or ministries that provide leadership and support to government efforts to achieve greater equality between women and men.

"A national machinery for the advancement of women is the central policy-coordinating unit inside government." Its main task is to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective in all policy areas.



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