

**A GENDER AUDIT OF THE EAST AFRICAN
COMMUNITY VISION 2050 DOCUMENT -
GAINS AND GAPS**

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STUDY OBJECTIVES

- To clarify the importance of increasing gendered policy making in the EAC.
- Review commitments made in the EAC Vision 2050 document, their gendered dimensions (if any), existing gaps on the pillars and priorities of the policy document.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. To what extent is EAC Vision 2050 gender responsive and informed by a gender analysis?
2. What are the milestones in attaining gender commitments for the EAC region?
3. What needs to be done to close the gender gap as we look towards 2050?
 - Key drivers of gender inequality in the EAC countries.
 - Progress and challenges faced in realizing gender equality in EAC partner states.
 - Opportunities provided by Vision 2050.
 - Relevant lessons from other regions to improve opportunities for gender gains through the EAC Vision 2050.

METHODOLOGY

Approaches

- Desk study built around six themes.
- Presents status quo in each country interwoven with chapters in Vision 2050.
- Centre piece is a critique of EAC Vision 2050.

Key Limitation

- Information on gender equality in the region is dated, repetitive and not chronologically comparable for all states.

FINDINGS: COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY

- Constitutions of all EAC states outlaw gender-based discrimination.
- States are party to major regional and international treaties on gender equality and have laws addressing specific gender issues.
- Constraints: inadequate resources, low technical capacity, poor enforcement, patriarchal culture, conflict between statutory and customary law and resistance.

FINDINGS: COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY

- Common vision for EAC: “A globally competitive upper-middle income region with a high quality of life for its population based on the principles of inclusiveness and accountability”.
- Gender equality is vividly missing from the statement of vision.
- Gender dimensions of the 14 aspirations of East Africans are not articulated hence their use as entry points for gender mainstreaming is missed.
- No regional and international gender mainstreaming frameworks are included among the reference documents used to develop the vision document.
- Gender and women’s empowerment are listed as enablers for achieving the vision but there is no elaboration on how to achieve gender equality.
- Gender equality is neither mentioned as a fundamental value on its own nor articulated as a dimension of the values to cement and hold the pillars of the vision.

FINDINGS: POWER AND DECISION MAKING

- Vision 2050 is conspicuously silent on gender equality in leadership and decision making positions although commitment to human rights and social justice provides an opportunity for mainstreaming.
- Gender equality in power and decision making structures is not articulated as an enabler for realisation of the vision.

FINDINGS: THE ECONOMY AND POVERTY

- Gender equality is conspicuously missing from the areas of concern and the pillars EAC Vision 2050.
- Gender is mentioned under implementation plan but it is not clear how something not analysed and planned for in the situation analysis and the priorities can be implemented.
- The discussion of infrastructure pays no attention to gender.
- The SWOT analysis is surprisingly missing on gender inequality as one of the region's weaknesses.
- There is no gender disaggregation of statistics on economic trends.
- Identifying education as key for youth to enter the labour market is true but a classical utilitarian perspective which does not show the role of education in modifying gender relations.
- The statement that “women and children constitute the majority of the most affected groups” adds no value unless demonstrated with statistics and analysis and tends to imply that men and boys are immune to poverty.

FINDINGS: THE ECONOMY AND POVERTY

- Gender dimensions of urbanisation are not identified.
- Mention of the effects of unclean energy on women and children demonstrates some sensitivity to gender, it is inadequate in articulating sectoral gender issues.
- The interface between industrialisation and gender is not shown.
- Gender variables in realising a green economy are not identified.
- Chapter Eight is gender blind and leaves a number of questions unanswered e.g. What are the negative impacts of tourism from a gender perspective? How does the service industry contribute to employment by gender?

FINDINGS: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- No attention to gender variables in education.
- Section on market-led research does not include research on gender dynamics.
- Progress in school enrolment rates and projections are not gender disaggregated.
- Literacy rate not gender disaggregated, causal factors not identified and gender implications not specified.

FINDINGS: HEALTH

- Chapter 10 commits partner states to “work to ensure that health systems provide the necessary information and health services addressing the sexual and reproductive health of women”.
- While positive, this is a classical approach that stereotypes sexual and reproductive health as only women-focused and does not factor in gender power relations.

FINDINGS: INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER

- Vision 2050 document is not in sync with institutional machinery in place in EAC countries.
- Consignment of gender to cross-cutting issues marginalises it.
- Focus on women's reproductive roles and facilitation of productivity through credit fall under the welfare and efficiency models of development that are barely transformative.
- Chapter II does not articulate gender mainstreaming as a strategy for implementation.
- Gender-related instruments to inform implementation are not referred to.
- Scant reference to gender under monitoring and evaluation.

CONCLUSIONS

- Progress on gender equality has been realised due to: affirmative action; constitutional and legal reforms; national gender policies; institutional mechanisms for implementation and accountability; economic empowerment measures; and sector-specific policies.
- However, achievement of gender equality is hampered by: deficient political will in some countries; inadequate resources and technical skills; conflict between statutory and customary law; and captivity to patriarchal attitudes, beliefs and practices.
- *EAC Vision 2050* is top-heavy on classical economic development, is not diagnostic of gender variables and is hardly useful for gender planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The document should:
 1. Explicitly acknowledge gender inequality as an impediment to development.
 2. Stipulate practical implementation steps applicable in all states.
 3. State gender-specific targets for each theme.
 4. Institute time bound accountability measures including mandatory reporting.
 5. Incorporate gender equality in the overall vision.
 6. Have gender situation analysis of projects under each chapter or theme.
 7. Articulate an unequivocal commitment to having gender built into planning using exhaustive gender analysis and gender disaggregated data.
 8. Use the frameworks of national, regional and international instruments which partner states are party to as primary anchors on gender equality.
 9. Build on the gains so far on gender equality in EAC.