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PRESENTING THE EGDC

The ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC) was set up in January 2003 through Decision A/DEC 16/1/03 of the Conference of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government to provide ECOWAS with a specialized agency on gender and development.

This decision follows the ECOWAS Revised Treaty of 1993 which, in its Article 63, urges "Member States ... to develop, harmonize, coordinate and establish appropriate policies and mechanisms for the improvement of economic, social and cultural conditions and cultural women ". EGDC is under the supervision of the Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender of the ECOWAS Commission. It is a Centre of Excellence where actions promoting equity and gender equality converge in the ECOWAS region.



1. Vision, Mandate and Mission of EGDC

Vision: EGDC works for the emergence of a West African society where justice and security prevail and in which women and men can participate, decide, control and benefit from all development activities.

Mandate: EGDC is a specialized agency of ECOWAS with the mandate to initiate, coordinate and facilitate capacity building through knowledge-based training and skills transfer, program development and management for women and men in the public and private sectors to address the issue of equity and gender equality in ECOWAS integration strategies.



The mission of EGDC is to:

a. Initiate, develop, facilitate co-ordinate and monitor strategies for mainstreaming gender issues into Community programs;

b. Ensure the adequacy of actions with the Beijing Platform, African priorities, the Strategic Vision of ECOWAS as a whole, as well as with any other instrument for the promotion of gender;

It works together with ECOWAS Member States, regional and international development structures, the private sector and civil society organizations.

1. EGDC focus areas

Institutional and organizational capacity building of national mechanisms for the promotion of equality and gender

- ▶ Gender and equitable access to basic social services with primary focus on education and health
- ▶ Economic Empowerment of Women with Focus Areas, Trade, Environment, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries
- ▶ Democracy, Governance, Human Rights, Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Peace and Security
- ▶ Gender and Migration
- ▶ Child Protection

EGDC'S OBJECTIVES AND INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK**Goals:**

- ▶ Create mechanisms for cooperation between key gender actors,
- ▶ Raise awareness and advocate on issues of gender equality and women's empowerment,
- ▶ Promote learning and skills development to achieve, at the regional level, effective mainstreaming of gender in development programs and policies at the level of the ECOWAS Commission and its 15 Member States,
- ▶ Support the education of boys and girls in scientific and technical fields,
- ▶ Take into account the reproductive health of women and girls by facilitating access to basic social services,
- ▶ Contribute to the empowerment of women in their fields of activity through technical and financial support,
- ▶ Develop networks and partnerships with relevant agencies and institutions in the field of gender promotion,
- ▶ Mobilize key actors (development agencies, private public sectors, civil society) for the adoption of common strategic policies and programs aimed at improving the living conditions of the population.



EGDC'S Intervention Framework

- ▶ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- ▶ Resolutions 1325 and following of the United Nations Security Council
- ▶ Agenda 2063 of the African Union
- ▶ ECOWAS 2020 VISION
- ▶ Supplementary Act on equal rights for women and men for sustainable development in the ECOWAS region (2015) and its roadmap (2017)
- ▶ Gender and Migration Action Plan (2015)
- ▶ Gender and Trade Action Plan (2015)
- ▶ ECOWAS Action Plan to Fight Obstetric Fistula in West Africa (2017)
- ▶ ECOWAS Strategic Framework on Gender and Elections and its Action Plan (2017)
- ▶ Action Plan of the Women, Peace and Security Component of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (CPCC) (2017),
- ▶ ECOWAS Strategic Framework to Strengthen Child Protection Systems against abuse, 2017

**"GENDER EQUALITY IS AN ESSENTIAL
CONDITION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA"**

EGDC'S ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Equitable access of men and women to basic social services

1. Education component

It is done through the support provided for the promotion of girls and boys in the sector of specialized technical and vocational training, through the provision of excellence scholarships.

790 excellence scholarships are awarded each year to bright girls from poor families in the 15 ECOWAS Member States, with a 20% quota granted since 2015 and to boys in 5 pilot countries in the region.



► Health component

By supporting the care of women suffering from obstetric fistula through the 3Rs: REPAIR fistula, REINTEGRATE healed women into their communities and RESTORE their dignity.

1,500 women were cared for, trained and supported financially on women's entrepreneurship issues and then reintegrated into their respective communities.



- 1. ECOWAS via EGDC also committed itself to the rehabilitation of national reference centres for the management of obstetric fistula in 14 countries (except Cabo Verde). ; this makes it possible for sick women to be treated in their countries of residence, to benefit from a family environment that is conducive to effective healing and to reduce the costs of transferring patients to foreign countries. EGDC also initiated a reproductive health program in Cabo Verde (a country that has not registered fistula cases).



Gender and agricultural processing

- Proving support to activities of Women Processors of Agricultural, Fishery and craft Products by promoting their access to resources, building their economic capacities and improving the visibility of their contribution to the regional economy.
- This program combats the increasing feminization of poverty in West Africa, lack of access to land ownership, lack of skills in management, marketing and other techniques, as well as poor access to credit.



1. Strengthening national and regional mechanisms through:

- The adoption of Gender Policy Documents by ECOWAS Heads of States and Government
- The organization of training workshops in the 15 ECOWAS Member States for about 1200 key actors (since 2010) for gender focal points of line ministries, ECOWAS National Cells, women's groups, civil society, gender activists, members of the ECOWAS Parliament, judges and staff of the Court of Justice of the ECOWAS Commission, lawyers, journalists and private sector operators.
- The Support to Member States when shaping their national gender policies and ensuring consistency with international instruments to promote equity and equality.

2. Promoting Peacekeeping, Security, Good Governance and Migration in the ECOWAS Area in collaboration with Civil Society

- ▶ Creation of the West African Network of Young Women Leaders (WANYWL) in February 2009 and the Women's Peace and Security Network in the ECOWAS region (NOPSWECO) in July.
- ▶ 2009, two major networks of civil society organizations whose mission is to support the integration program and political and social stability in the ECOWAS region.



1. Establishment of monitoring and early warning systems during elections in West Africa
2. Support in the conduct of solidarity missions by NOPSWECO in conflict-affected countries
3. EGDC - Women for Africa Collaboration on a project entitled "Malian Women in Action for Peace" to build Malian women's capacity in mediation and peace dialogue. Implementation of innovative projects to promote Gender and Migration in the ECOWAS region.

PARTICIPATIONS OF EGDC IN GENDER MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- ▶ EGDC institutionalized the annual meeting of ECOWAS Ministers in charge of gender issues.
- ▶ First Ladies Forum of ECOWAS Member States in order to garner ECOWAS First Ladies high-level political commitment on the elimination of obstetric fistula, child protection and the fight against gender-based violence and female genital mutilation (Niamey 2017).



- * Regional Consultation on the Rights of Women, in collaboration with UN Women and African Women Jurists' Federation in West Africa
- * Regional Consultation on Gender and HIV / AIDS in collaboration with the West African Health Organization
- * Regional Consultation with Religious Leaders of ECOWAS Member States
- * Regional Consultation on Girls' and Women's Education in the ECOWAS Area
- * Regional Consultation for the Adoption of an Advocacy Strategy on Women's Rights
- * Participation in the work of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held annually in New York, including the General Debate, parallel activities and advocacy on agreed conclusions.

EGDC PARTNERSHIP

Over the years, EGDC has been able to build a strategic partnership with the ECOWAS Commission Institutions and stakeholders involved in promoting women's empowerment and gender equality in the ECOWAS Area, including:

- The Directorates of the Social Affairs and Gender Commission
- ECOWAS Departments and institutions;
- Women's and gender organizations,

- EGDC national gender focal points and other public structures of the Member States
- National Parliaments and the ECOWAS Parliament
- Committees charged with the evaluation of regional and international instruments for the promotion of gender
- National, regional and international NGOs
- The Private Sector / Business Community
- Researchers
- Civil Society Organizations
- Specialized Agencies in the United Nations System
- The bilateral and multilateral donor community

Since 2017, EGDC has implemented:

13. The **"50 MILLION WOMEN SPEAK PLATFORM"** Project

This project is an initiative of the African Development Bank (AfDB), in partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC). It aims to facilitate the empowerment of women through the creation of a virtual platform for networking and information sharing to improve their ability to have access to financial and non-financial information.



PERSPECTIVES FOR 2019

Human Capital Development and Empowerment:

- ▶ **Fighting fistula:** 250 women cured of obstetrical fistula (OF), subsidized and accompanied in 14 MS; 10 awareness-raising and prevention campaigns on OF in 10 MS; 03 MS supported in their efforts to integrate OF into their national health program;
- ▶ **Reproductive health:** 30 girls affected by the Reproductive Health Program in Cabo Verde;
- ▶ **Excellence Scholarships:** at least 400 young scholarship recipients in 15 MS hold a professional position (80% girls and 20% boys); 5 excellence scholarships for PhD thesis on Gender and

Development and / or on innovative and technical issues such as energy, climate change, natural resource management, etc.

* 400 young people and their parents sensitized on early marriages and pregnancies; at least 3 partnership agreements signed with companies and / or the private sector to support the Excellence Award Program;

- ▶ **Agricultural processing:** 05 multifunctional platforms and / or agricultural processing equipment set up in 06 MS; 05 national networks of women processors set up in 06 MS.

Capacity building of national gender mechanisms and the influence of ECOWAS in the international gender agenda.

▶ **Capacity building :**

* 09 national action plans on the Additional Act put in place by 9 MS;

* 5 projects in 5 MS to combat the radicalization of women and girls;

* 5 projects on Gender, Migration, Human Rights and Development carried out in 5 ECOWAS MS;

* 20 State and non-State actors trained on Migration, Human Rights and Development;

▶ **Reference Centre on Gender Equality in West Africa**

* 1 feasibility study carried out

* 1 e-documentation set up

* 1 ECOWAS Gender Barometer tool carried out.

▶ **Child Protection**

* 3 Integrated Child Protection Centres supported;

* 1 Desk review carried out on the implementation of the recommendations of the Forum of First Ladies of the ECOWAS Niamey 2017.

▶ **Strengthening the influence of ECOWAS:**

* EGDC participation at the CSW;

* 1 partner round table organized in New York during the 63rd CSW after which at least 5 partnership projects will be established.



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