



FROM DATA TO POLICY ACTION: TACKLING GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION IN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

VIRTUAL POLICY DIALOGUES IN WEST AFRICA

BACKGROUND

The OECD Development Centre's Social Institutions and Gender Index ([SIGI](#)) sheds light on formal and informal laws, social norms and practices that constitute structural barriers that women and girls face throughout their lifetime, while the Africa Gender Index ([AGI](#)) jointly produced by the African Development Bank Group and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa offers a comprehensive picture of gender equality in Africa today. Despite some progress in recent years, women in West Africa still face gender-based discrimination across all spheres of life. Such discrimination not only negatively affects women's rights and empowerment opportunities but also decreases countries' potential for economic growth and sustainable development.

In order to move this conversation forward, the [OECD Development Centre](#), in partnership with the OECD's [Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat](#), the [African Development Bank Group](#) and the [United Nations Economic Commission for Africa](#) is organising a series of policy dialogues within its project, SIGI Africa that is supported by the Austrian Development Agency. The policy dialogues will bring together a range of stakeholders including policy makers, international and regional organisations, as well as grassroots organisations, civil society and research organisations, think tanks, gender experts and advocates and foundations.

The outcomes of the dialogues, together with subsequent policy dialogues organised in Southern and East Africa, will feed into [the forthcoming SIGI 2021 Regional Report for Africa](#), as well as the [Africa Gender Index 2022 Regional Report for Africa](#), with concrete policy actions to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the West Africa policy dialogues will be to:

- **Present insights into the current status of gender equality and women's empowerment in the region** and share policy recommendations to effectively integrate gender in policy, project and programme planning, implementation and monitoring for policymakers and practitioners;
- **Identify key challenges as well opportunities**, including through the exchange of good practices on addressing gender-based discrimination and promoting women's and girls' rights;
- **Identify a set of context-specific policy options** to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in West Africa, and build a shared consensus on a roadmap for action to address gender-based discrimination in social institutions.



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FORMAT

The policy dialogues are being organised in **three separate sessions**:

EVENT	DATE & TIME	REGISTRATION
A grassroots workshop on gender equality with grassroots organisations, civil society and research organisations, think tanks, gender experts and advocates, as well as foundations	27 April 2021 10 AM - 1 PM (GMT +2)	Event has already passed
A policy workshop with policy makers, as well as international and regional organisations	29 April 2021 10 AM - 1 PM (GMT +2)	Event has already passed
A plenary virtual policy dialogue with all stakeholders	12 July 2021 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM (GMT)	Register here

The workshops included:

- a presentation of results and findings specific to East Africa from the SIGI 2019 and the AGI;
- thematic sessions focusing on three different themes:
 - Women’s health deprivation and restricted reproductive autonomy
 - Women’s economic empowerment and access to productive and financial resources
 - Women’s political voice, leadership and agency;
- discussion on policy options to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The plenary meeting will:

- bring all stakeholders together in a spirit of mutual learning and exchange;
- take stock of the key outcomes from the workshops, especially the proposed policy options;
- provide a space for dialogue among stakeholders to agree on policy recommendations and key messages for the forthcoming SIGI Regional Report for Africa and the Africa Gender Index Report, based on a roadmap.

The dialogues will continue on social media using the hashtags: **#SIGIAfrica** and **#SIGI**

Tag us with: [@OECD_Centre](#), [@Wikigender](#), [@SWAC_OECD](#), [@AfDB_Group](#) and [@ECA_OFFICIAL](#).

FURTHER READING

- African [Development](#) Bank and UNECA (2020), Africa Gender Index Report 2019: What the 2019 Africa Gender Index tells us about gender equality, and how can it be achieved, <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/africa-gender-index-report-2019-analytical-report>.
- OECD (2019), [SIGI 2019 Global Report: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities, Social Institutions and Gender Index](#), OECD Publishing, Paris
- Bouchama, N., G. Ferrant, L. Fuirot, A. Meneses and A. Thim (2018) [Gender Inequality in West African Social Institutions](#), West African Papers, No. 13, OECD Publishing, Paris ([en français](#))

ABOUT US

About the OECD Development Centre: The OECD Development Centre was established in 1962 as an independent platform for knowledge sharing and policy dialogue between OECD member countries and developing economies, allowing these countries to interact on an equal footing. Today, 26 OECD countries and 29 developing and emerging economies are members of the Centre. The Centre draws attention to emerging and systemic issues likely to have an impact on our global development and more specifically the challenges faced by today’s developing and emerging economies. It uses evidence-





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based analysis and strategic partnerships to help countries formulate innovative policy solutions to the global challenges of development. The OECD Development Centre's gender programme aims to identify the root causes of gender inequality and to feed policy dialogue by producing data and evidence-based analysis, in line with the 2030 Agenda. It focuses on discriminatory social institutions, i.e. formal and informal laws, social norms and practices, which adversely affect women's and girls' lives and consequently curtail their empowerment opportunities.

About the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC): Created in 1976, The West Africa and Sahel Club (SWAC) is the most ancient solidarity and partnership initiative between Africa and OECD. Previously dedicated to food security, the SWAC has then widened its expertise areas by working on diverse issues such as urbanization, Securities and borders as well as Employment or Climate Change. Conceived as a monitoring, a foresight and a political dialogue instrument the SWAC aims to contribute to enhance the consistency and the efficiency between all stakeholders' policies in order to help the sub-region better meet its future challenges. Currently, 10 OECD countries are members of the SWAC as well as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Permanent interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). In regards of gender issues, SWAC plays a proactive role to promote the SIGI index results in order to pledge for women rights as well and fight against gender discriminations in West Africa.

About the African Development Bank (AfDB): The African Development Bank is the premier multilateral development finance institution fostering economic growth and social progress in Africa. The Bank's primary goal is to reduce poverty and improve the living standards of all Africans by mobilizing resources in and from out of Africa. The Bank is dedicated to tackling the full range of complexities and challenges of development on the continent by providing financial and technical assistance to development projects and programs in regional member countries. It has integrated operations of lending directly to the public and private sectors through a variety of financing instruments as well as providing advisory services. The Bank, through its High 5 priorities (Light-Up Africa, Feed Africa, Industrialize Africa, Integrate Africa, and Improve the Quality of Life for the people of Africa), intends to accelerate the continent's economic and social transformation. Reducing gender gaps and accelerating women's empowerment are part of the core objectives of the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy (2013-2022) and its High 5 priorities to ensure sustainable and inclusive development in its regional member countries. As the leading development institution on the continent, the Bank is championing the production of sex-disaggregated data to adequately address the gender gaps and develop responses that leave no one behind.

About the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA): Established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (UN) in 1958 as one of the UN's five regional commissions, ECA's mandate is to promote the economic and social development of its member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development. Made up of 54 member States, and playing a dual role as a regional arm of the UN and as a key component of the African institutional landscape, ECA is well positioned to make unique contributions to address the Continent's development challenges. ECA's strength derives from its role as the only UN agency mandated to operate at the regional and sub-regional levels to harness resources and bring them to bear on Africa's priorities. The contribution by ECA to the task of carrying forward the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 is centred on the Commission's three core functions, namely its convening function, its function as a think tank and its operational function. ECA's mission is to deliver ideas and actions for an empowered and transformed Africa, informed by the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

