



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 27: Measures towards Gender Equality at ICAO and the Global Aviation Sector by 2030**

**MEASURES TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN  
EMPOWERMENT IN THE AFI REGION**

(Presented by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) on behalf of 54 African States<sup>1</sup>)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper presents the efforts being made by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and the African Union (AU) to promote gender equality in Africa and the place of women in aviation in all African States. The Paper outlines ongoing initiatives to improve gender equality and the need for the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and African States to step up their efforts in order to realise success in the issue of gender equality.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) request ICAO to continue to support Member States in the AFI Region in advancing gender equality and women empowerment through advocacy, the development and dissemination of analysis, reports and guidance to support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goal 5;
- b) request ICAO to facilitate reporting of gender statistics by Member States;
- c) urge Member States to develop implementation plans in line with the developed roadmap and to share experiences;
- d) urge Member States to adopt mentorship programmes to empower women within aviation and ensure more women in leadership positions;
- e) urge States to ensure participation of women in aviation forums and meetings;
- f) urge ICAO and Member States to consider the effects of COVID-19 on women and prioritise them in recovery programmes; and
- g) urge Member States to ensure women take advantage of fellowships, sponsorships, and development programmes whenever such opportunities arise.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to all Strategic Objectives.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Medium
<i>References:</i>	Assembly Resolution A39-30, A40-WP/426, A40-WP/31, AFCAC and AU Policy

<sup>1</sup> Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 2016 ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-30 on the ICAO Gender Equality Programme called for several actions to be taken by Member States and Regions.

1.2 The Assembly urged the international aviation industry to demonstrate strong, determined leadership and commitment to advance women's rights and to take the necessary measures to strengthen gender equality by establishing supporting policies, as well as the establishment and improvement of programmes and projects that would advance women's careers within the aviation sector.

1.3 The African Union (AU) Gender Policy calls for the advancement and achievement of gender equality between men and women, and the principle of equality and non-discrimination between men and women is enshrined in the founding legal instrument of the AU.

1.4 As a specialised agency of the AU, AFCAC in collaboration with Member States will place great emphasis on promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in order to achieve equal participation of women and men in the aviation industry. One of the Strategic Objectives of AFCAC is to ensure sustainable human resources development for African aviation and aims at inspiring and encouraging women to join the Aviation industry.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Following the first Global Gender Aviation Summit, a number of African States have hosted events that are aimed at promoting gender equality and closing the gender gap within the aviation sector.

2.2 Some of these events include:

- a) The National Aviation Gender Summit held annually by South Africa to explore topics like "Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future". The most recent summit held in August 2021 was named "National Aviation Gender Summit: 2021 Conversations" and the dialogues were in line with ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-30. The past summit debated on burning issues affecting equality for women in the civil aviation space, such as the increasing global gender gap and the crushing effect of COVID-19 on women's careers. The discussions also focused, among others, on issues such as safety for women in the workplace, mental wellness during the pandemic, and the role of mentorship and gender-conscious leadership in advancing the Generation Equality debate.
- b) The AFCAC through the MoU for Human Resource Development with partner organizations continues to offer fellowship for training in various aviation fields. (Example is the Civil Aviation Regulations and Air Law Course, 13 to 17 February 2022 offered by the State of Qatar through AFCAC - women and young aviation professionals were encouraged to attend this course).
- c) In the field of technical Cooperation, AFCAC has assisted Member States in accelerating human capital development and training for African aviation professionals, by improving cooperation Agreements with other non-African States and Regions. Revised MoUs between AFCAC and its international partners, offer improved scholarships schemes to African States which include provisions to promote women in aviation.

- d) The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) launched a Women Mentorship Programme in March 2022. Topics that were discussed included challenges faced by women in the world of work and corporate environments, and benefits of empowering women in the workplace through mentorship. This programme will go a long way in achieving some of the action plans agreed on to address gender equality.
- e) Improving skills and competencies is one of the key areas and South Africa nominated six women who are in technical roles who now participate on the iSASO and European Union (EU)-ASA project in collaboration with the National Safety Inspector (NSI) project, aimed at capacity building.
- f) States have programmes in place to attract and promote the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) studies but the need to draw in more girls remains an important element of preparing for gender equity in the future.

2.3 With the exception of cabin crew, women are still a small percentage of this male-dominated industry. The few women that have risen to positions of influence have proven to be great influencers and continue to push boundaries. This is evident from the programmes in place to support gender equality and the accolades and recognition received by regional and national entities, of women leaders who are Directors of Civil Aviation or in leadership roles within the aviation sector and many other women who play a vital role in aviation on the African continent.

2.4 The global pandemic has exacerbated gender-related stressors and the cascading effect of a struggling economy on women, families, and ultimately all of society.

2.5 Women participation in aviation meetings and forums should be encouraged as it will enhance their knowledge and build skills and capacity.

2.6 Member States are taking different approaches for women empowerment, and in order to give a clear approach to achieve gender equality by 2030, an implementation plan within the AFI Region is required.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Africa remains committed to ensuring gender equality and to drive initiatives and programmes to achieve this, however, challenges and progress in implementation of the roadmap/action plans remain a concern as Member States are not aligned in their approaches to address gender equality. States are encouraged to allocate more resources to prioritise gender equality programmes.