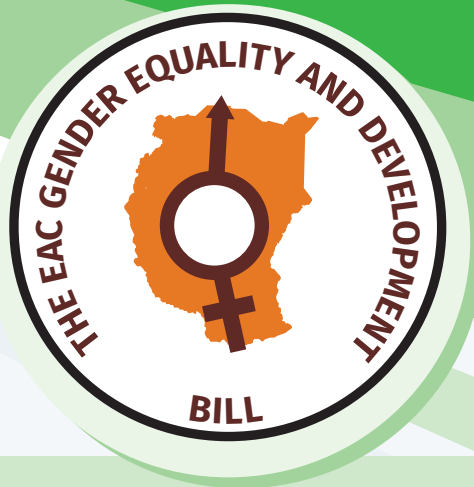




The EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill



The East African Community (EAC Partner) States have signed and ratified various regional and international instruments relating to gender equality and women's rights. They also have national legislations on gender equality. However, these are either not extended to fully protect women's rights or efforts to implement them are insufficient. That is why EASSI and Partners are campaigning for one consolidated and legally binding document to advance gender equality and equity in the EAC.

THE EAC GENDER EQUALITY & DEVELOPMENT BILL

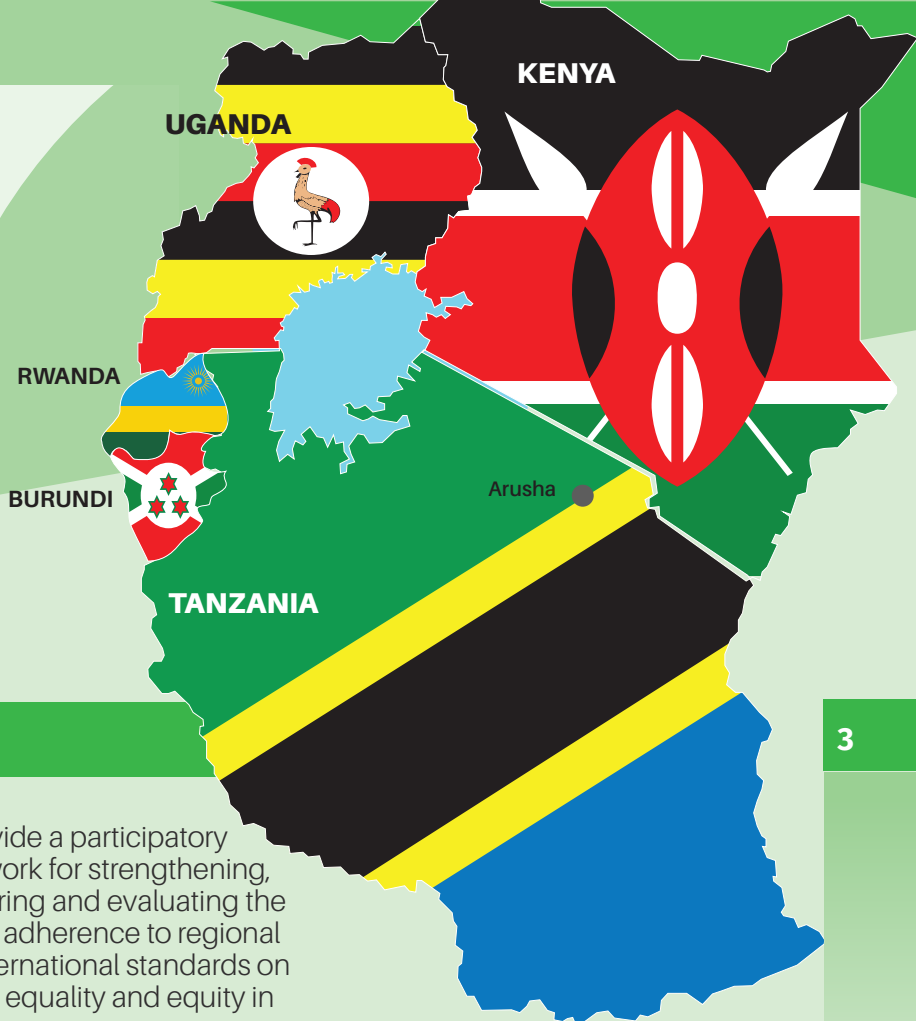
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The overall purpose of the proposed EAC Gender and Development Bill is to advance Gender Equality across the 5 EAC Partner states in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres. The bill will benefit women and men by consolidating into one legally binding document, the various instruments to which the EAC partner states are party or signatory at the continental and International levels. (*The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, CEDAW, the protocol to the African charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the rights of women in Africa and the Recent Sustainable Development Goals.*)

The **GOAL** of the campaign is to contribute to gender equality, equity and sustainable development in the EAC partner states.

What are the Objectives of the EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill?

- To harmonise the national laws of the EAC Member States with regional and international standards of protection and promotion of gender equality and women's human rights.
- To enhance the level of implementation of women's rights instruments through the incorporation of emerging development issues and gender concerns.
- To promote non-discrimination and gender equality in the processes of governance for strengthened regional integration and sustainable development of the Community.



- To provide a participatory framework for strengthening, monitoring and evaluating the level of adherence to regional and international standards on gender equality and equity in the EAC partner states.
- To promote the equal participation of women and men in regional trade by entrenching enabling policies and macro-economic frameworks that are gender sensitive and responsive.

Pillars of the EAC Gender Equality Campaign

1. A strong EAC alliance through consultations with the key stakeholders
2. EAC Gender Barometer report (Benchmarking from the South African Development Cooperation (SADC) Gender protocol Declaration process)
3. Communication, Information Sharing and Networking



Regional Gender Concerns that the Bill Will Address

The bill seeks to empower women and Girls in the EAC with the Voice, Choice and Control in the following areas;

- a. Legal and State Obligations to Protect Human and Women's Rights (Including Violence Against Women and Girls)
- b. Women's Engagement in the Media
- c. Equal access to quality education
- d. Respect for women's health rights as human rights
- e. Respect for gender parity in Power and Decision Making by 50-50 ratio
- f. Women's Economic Empowerment
- g. Gender issues in Agriculture and Food Security
- h. Realisation of women's rights to access, own and control Land
- i. Trade
- j. Peace and Security:
- k. Gender issues in environmental Management
- l. Gender parity in Extractive Industries
- m. The rights of Marginalized Groups
- n. Gender responsive budgeting

Key Milestones

- 2008, a regional campaign for an East African Declaration on Gender Equality, (the EADGE Campaign) started and was renewed in 2010.
- The Declaration later changed to a Gender Bill, which has been tabled in the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) as a Private Members Bill.
- In 2012, a gender analysis of the EAC Roadmap was conducted to highlight the implementation deficit on gender commitments of the EAC Treaty.
- In 2013, the first attempt at the EAC Gender Barometer was made. The status report informed a scorecard on selected areas of women's rights in the EAC partner states.
- Later, an EAC Gender audit was conducted and it resulted into a handbook on mainstreaming gender in the EAC partner states.
- 2015- the Gender Bill, which was tabled before the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) Parliament by an MP from Kenya, Hon. Nancy Abisai where it received overwhelming support.

Current status of the Bill

- In 2016, The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) will intensify sensitisation on the EAC Gender Equality bill through National Public hearings in the 5 partner states. EASSI and her National Focal Points will mobilize masses for the public hearings in each partner state. Thereafter the bill will be tabled before EALA for the second and third reading before it is enacted.

- In addition to that, the status of women's rights in the region will be tracked using an EAC Gender Barometer which will also serve as a key advocacy tool. The Gender Barometer will provide a synthesized measure of gender equality that is both easy to understand and will enable meaningful comparisons between partner states.

Expected Results

- Consolidated national, regional, and international laws and policies on Women's rights and Gender Equality into one legally binding EAC gender and development act.
- Accelerated Implementation of gender equality commitments by regional and national actors in the EAC partner states.
- Strengthened EAC citizens' capacity to demand and secure accountability from Governments on gender responsive governance.



EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill will strengthen citizens' capacity to demand for accountability.

National Focal Points

EASSI's National Focal Point Organizations will coordinate the strengthening of an EAC advocacy Alliance for the EAC Gender and Development Bill;

Country	EASSI's National Focal Point/ Alliance Coordinator
Uganda	National Association of Women's Organisation in Uganda (NAWOU)
Kenya	Women's Rights Awareness Programme (WRAP)
Tanzania	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)
Rwanda	Profemme Twese Hamwe
Burundi	Collectif des Associations et ONGs Feminines du Burundi (CAFOB)

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PEOPLE CHANGING THE WORLD

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