



**ECOSOCC**  
Economic Social & Cultural Council




The voice of the  
African Citizenry



# ECOSOCC POLICY BOOKLET

On African Union Theme  
of The Year 2021

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**ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE:**  
Levers for Building the Africa we Want

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*This policy booklet is a publication of the ECOSOCC Resource Centre.*

**About AU-ECOSOCC:** The Economic, Social and Cultural Council is an advisory organ of the African Union, established during the third Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2004 under the provisions of articles 5 (i) and 22 of the AU Constitutive Act.

The organ is mandated to actively engage civil society in the processes and work of the Union, with particular regard to Africa's integration and development. ECOSOCC comprises various social, private sector and professional groups of member states of the Union and the African diaspora and functions primarily as a bridge through which the African Union can partner and engage with civil society organizations on the continent.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACSRT	African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism
ACH	Arts, Culture, and Heritage
ACHR	African Charter of Human Rights
AFDB	African Development Bank
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
APCI	African Productive Capacity Initiative
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
APS	African Partnership Station
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ARIPO	African Regional Intellectual Property Organization
ATAF	African Tax Administration Forum
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUCC	Chairperson of the AU Commission
AU. COMMIT	African Union Commission Initiative against Trafficking
CADSP	Common African Defense and Security Policy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDO	Citizens and Diaspora Directorate of the African Union
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CFTA	Continental Free Trade Area
CDSF	Capacity Development Strategic Framework (NEPAD)
CSI	Corporate Social Investment
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DFI	Development Finance Institution
EAC	East African Community
EBID	ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOSOCC	Economic, Social and Cultural Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FfD	Financing for Development
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
GGC	Gulf of Guinea Commission
GVCs	Global Value Chains
HDI	Human Development Index
ICA	Infrastructure Consortium for Africa
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	Investment Promotion Agency
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
NEPAD	The New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCRD	Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development
PSC	Peace and Security Council
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
RMCS	Regional Monitoring Control and Surveillance Centers
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Inequality Index
SME	Small and Medium Scale Enterprise
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
S2TF	Strategic Special Task Force
TEVET	Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
UN	United Nations
UN. GIFT	United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking
UNCOMTRADE	United Nations Commodity Trade
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDP/BCPR	United Nations Development Program Bureau for Crises Prevention and Recovery
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
VAT	Value Added Tax
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WBG	World Bank Group
WCO	World Custom Organization
WEMZ	West African Monetary Zone
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization



## FOREWORD

The fundamental mandate of ECOSOCC as an advisory organ is to provide high level technical input into the programs and policies of the African Union. Following the establishment of a standalone secretariat in Lusaka, ECOSOCC has accelerated its campaign to infuse a 'civil society first' tradition into AU proceedings and processes, to ensure that civil society is afforded the space to contribute to the ongoing development and integration agenda of the Union. The AU Theme of the Year 2021, the AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the African We Want, sets out the overarching program priority for the entire Union and mobilizes the full range of AU organs, agencies, and institutions behind a unified continental roadmap for the delivery of policy and program interventions within the identified theme.

This is why ECOSOCC considered it of vital importance to facilitate a virtual workshop series with the ultimate aim of developing a policy booklet that highlights the policy interconnections between the AU Theme of the Year 2021 and four policy themes of strategic importance to the AU, namely:



This policy booklet evaluates the above themes and offers actionable policy recommendations at various levels, including the African Union system, AU member states, and civil society. Contributions from the virtual consultations emphasized the importance of centering the needs and aspirations of African citizens in the development of the Arts, Culture and Heritage (ACH) sector and developing focused activities with monitoring and sustainability plans to ensure the meaningful impact of the AU Theme of the Year. Furthermore, attention was paid to the significance of innovative and sustainable financing for ACH, and the provision of operational and technical support to the AU and RECs to support the implementation of ACH commitments. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of linking the development of the ACH sector to the advancement of the SDGs and the AfCFTA, and centering the leadership, empowerment and engagement of women and youth in the development of the ACH sector in Africa.

William Carew  
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# 1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*The guiding principles below have been crafted to inform the various processes that culminated in the drafting of this policy booklet. These principles articulate the intentions of those who have contributed to the process and continue to inform the collective work of developing the African Arts, Culture and Heritage (ACH) sector.*

## **Principle 1: African Leadership**

African leadership of the ACH agenda on the continent requires not only an acknowledgment of the historical and present challenges that exist in the sector, but also appropriate response and resolution.

As a result of historic factors, ACH in Africa has a political rather than a technical or economic positioning. This needs to be transformed by, inter alia, the African Union (AU) providing strategic leadership and oversight of ACH, continentally and globally, as well as through setting the terms of engagement for all actors involved in ACH processes on the continent.

## **Principle 2: National and Local Ownership**

ACH processes should be aligned to local needs and aspirations, enhance a common understanding of a shared vision, and maximize public support and ownership. Partnerships, particularly at the national level, are critical to successful, nationally driven ACH processes.

## **Principle 3: Substantive National Ownership**

ACH processes should uphold substantive national ownership of national resources and capacities, based on a framework that centers inclusivity, equity, and non-discrimination. The formulation of ACH should appropriately adapt and make effective use of all suitable resources and capacities for ACH development and growth before seeking support from external sources.

## **Principle 4: Shared African Values**

ACH processes and programs should be premised on shared values relating to Pan-Africanism, non-discrimination, peace and security, justice, reconciliation, and human rights as elaborated in various AU instruments.

## **Principle 5: ACH Elements in Conflict or Transitional Contexts**

When integrating ACH elements to respond to conflict and humanitarian situations, a balance should be upheld between the instrumental and the intrinsic role of ACH. Support should be extended to relevant socio-economic development programs that assist individuals whose livelihoods have been disrupted by poverty, inequality, climate change, conflict, recurrent violence, and marginalization.

## **Principle 6: Women, Youth, and Generational Dimensions of ACH**

The ACH sector should give particular attention to the harmful impact of patriarchy, misogyny, sexual and gender-based violence as well as patterns of inequality on representations furthered by ACH. All efforts must be taken to ensure that ACH is neither abused, misused, nor unwittingly invoked to perpetuate harmful stereotypes that contribute to the marginalization of women and young people.

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**Principle 7: Cooperation and Coherence**

ACH processes should enhance regional and continental cooperation and coherence to ensure that all engagements respond to the mutual needs and priorities of different countries and peoples.

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**Principle 8: Capacity Building for Sustainability**

All ACH processes should support the attainment of sustainable development, peace, justice, and accountability. ACH processes should also prioritize the building and/or strengthening of sub-regional, national, and local capacities.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The AU Theme of the Year 2021 presents a unique opportunity for Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States of the AU, African civil society, private sector, and other ACH stakeholders to lead and facilitate the achievement of the visions, goals, and objectives of the AU, including Agenda 2063. Arts, Culture and Heritage are central to the realization of people-to-people integration as envisaged in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

The African Union and member states can transform the economic and developmental impact of ACH, by creating enabling environments, and establishing an ACH governance architecture that harmonizes and coordinates a system-wide approach to ACH policies, programs, and investments by different stakeholders, including ECOSOCC. In particular RECs should integrate ACH-specific benchmarks and milestones into their strategic plans that shape the economic, social, cultural, environmental, governance, peace, and security conditions on the continent.

The African Union should also establish sustainable and innovative financing mechanisms and policies that adopt a Pan-African and Afrocentric approach to artistic and cultural expression, mediums, education, and development programming.

This booklet suggests practical approaches to realizing the social, economic, environmental, and political impact of ACH, as an integral part of Agenda 2063. The proposed recommendations are rooted in a recognition of the importance of adopting a holistic, Pan-African, and Afrocentric approach to ACH.

### 3. KEY MESSAGES

*The African Union is strongly encouraged to establish an ACH policy framework with an associated architecture to implement, monitor, and evaluate progress towards the development of the African ACH sector. Furthermore, AU and Member States to:*

Provide resources and capacity to AU institutions to implement ACH strategies and policies;

Recognize the inputs provided by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on ACH developmental processes, and to take the necessary action to implement these recommendations;

Establish ACH for Peace at local, national, regional, and continental levels;

Establish an ACH Chamber of Commerce within the the African Union ecosystem;

Recognize traditional and cultural events that are observed in various countries;

Support the promotion of African ACH by African news media;

Accelerate the implementation of Pillar 5 of Agenda 2063, with consideration of the authorities and policy formulation required to advance Agenda 2063;

Include ACH as a part of the mandate of the AU Youth Envoy;

Fully ratify and domesticate all relevant constitutional frameworks on ACH;

Champion and galvanize ACH declarations and policies;

Introduce African ACH studies within all levels of education curricula and academia; and

Recognize the integral role of volunteers in contributing to the development of the ACH sector by integrating ACH within the volunteer program of all Departments within the AU Commission.

## 4. INTRODUCTION

This policy booklet articulates the aspirations of African citizens with respect to Arts, Culture and Heritage. The contributions reflected in this booklet proffer the conceptualization of a Pan-African vision of ACH governance and approaches and explores the intrinsic and instrumental value of ACH in African economic structural transformation, governance and peace and security.

It also highlights the urgency of creating an enabling environment for ACH at the national, sub-regional and continental levels; leveraging the dual opportunities presented by the adoption of the AfCFTA and the AU Theme of the Year to elevate ACH into a key developmental pillar of the AU at all levels. This booklet also highlights the importance of addressing the specific needs of historically marginalized groups such as women, youth, persons living with disabilities, as well as ethnic and religious minorities.

*Owing to historical, colonial, and other developments, African heritage has been devalued, distorted, and insufficiently integrated into development planning and the political economy of Africa.*

Recalling the AU's vision of a people-centered approach to drive the growth and development of African heritage, as contained in aspiration 5 of the Agenda 2063, it is imperative to leverage our common heritage as a critical factor in Africa's re-emergence on the global stage. Furthermore, the commitment to foster an African Renaissance presents an opportunity for the continent to maximize the numerous gains that heritage offers including increased connectivity and digitalization, innovation, and diversification of tourism portfolios, but most importantly, to be restored to our collective identity that was distorted by brutal external interactions, including slavery and colonization.

The vision of the African Union is, "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena." Aspiration 5 of Agenda 2063 envisages an "Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics." The aforementioned sees the cultural economy as an essential pillar to Africa's economic transformation. A renascent Africa requires leaders and citizens that engage the rest of the world on autonomous terms. The continent needs to prioritize the collective preservation of African ACH and establish the institutions that create an enabling environment for the realization of an assertive, cohesive, and coherent ACH economy.

The African ACH economy has been peripheral to policymaking and public investment, which has resulted in the fragmentation and neglect of the sector. Data and evidence suggest that ACH activities have the potential to derive significant commercial value. However, this potential is stunted by inadequate policy/regulation, monitoring and evaluation, issues of trade tariffs and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTB), infrastructure, access to market, and budgeting. There is a real opportunity to capacitate the sector through structuring an ACH economy that is inclusive and sustainable, growing not only the economic value but the normative value of an Afrocentric ACH sector. Member states of the AU have committed to support and grow the ACH economy, but they now need to turn their existing commitments, and imperatives set out in this policy booklet, into concrete actions and measures.

## 5. BACKGROUND

Africa has recorded significant achievements following the attainment of independence and the founding of the AU. Across the continent, substantive economic growth has firmly taken root, with increased exports and foreign direct investment. If the current growth trajectory is maintained, incomes are projected to double in the next two decades. Furthermore, with a few exceptions, political stability, peace and security and reforms in governance have changed the political landscape. Women and youth are progressively attaining a greater voice in decision-making and the continent is increasingly financing its own development, thanks to export earnings, trade, and remittances, among others. The AfCFTA marks a decisive milestone in the progress towards greater economic integration through increased intra-African trade, including ACH goods and services.

However, these positive developments are juxtaposed with significant challenges. The positive outlook masks significant variations across regions, as well as between and within countries. The recent resurgence of violent armed conflicts, inter-communal violence, violence related to disputed elections and violent extremism in the Horn of Africa, Gulf of Guinea, the Sahel, and portions of the Mano River Basin suggest a level of backsliding and the need for greater vigilance by and amongst all African stakeholders. A detailed situational analysis presented in Chapter 2 of the Agenda 2063 Framework Document, namely: Africa the Last Fifty Years and the Present: Progress, Challenges and Implications for Agenda 2063 is a sobering reminder of the critical role that African citizens can and should play in partnership with African governments to build strong social contracts, durable peace, responsive institutions, and more accountable leadership.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

The recommendations in this policy booklet are drawn from multi-stakeholder consultations that ECOSOCC facilitated within the ACH sector drawn from the six regions of the African Union. Focus group discussions were used to promote discourse and to draw findings for the policy booklet. The key contributors included civil society representatives, policy makers, practitioners, and academics.

## 7. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### ■ A New Approach to Arts, Culture and Heritage

Consultations revealed the importance of centering African experiences to influence sustainable development and governance interventions. It was noted that the promotion of ACH should be aligned with the ideals of Pan-Africanism. The challenges associated with colonial exoticification of African ACH was also raised, which encouraged an external ACH orientation that sought to satisfy the curiosity and biases of imperial centers, colonizers, and tourists. Noting this history, it is therefore imperative to support the emergence of Africa's leadership, control, and ownership of the entire process of developing ACH services and products that serve the continent and its diaspora.



The maximization of African ownership of the regional integration agenda will be achieved through its continuous alignment with African people's development needs and priorities and a more systematic reliance on citizens to shape the evolution of that agenda. This will support strategic linkages between the policies, programmatic strategies, and institutions of the Union with African people, including the African Diaspora.

### ■ **Integration and Harmonization**

The second cluster of feedback is related to the role of ECOSOCC, AU Annual Theme approaches and other strategic partners' experience, lessons learnt and emerging strategies. Among these, is the realization that activities and interventions of the AU/RECs are often spread too thinly and may thus lack focus and meaningful impact. Additionally, measures to assess institutional capacity and monitor progress in the areas covered by the Theme of the year were assessed to be inadequate.

The long-term sustainability of efforts to enhance institutional capacity development was found to be in doubt due to inadequate institutional capacity assessments at the planning stage and the absence of focused institutional development plans. Furthermore, there were no clear exit strategies and sustainability plans following the media coverage and other highlights associated with the Theme of the year.

The findings reflect an emerging consensus to limit recommendations to clearly defined program areas with fewer outputs; and, secondly, to emphasize capacity development interventions, underpinned by rigorous capacity assessments and systematic investment and policy development strategies. The consultations reveal the need to strengthen regional and pan-African institutions with an eye on improving coherence and synergies between regional and country programs and interventions in the ACH sector. Given the varied and transformative roles played by women in the ACH sector, better integration of gender equality and environmental concerns are emphasized throughout the findings. Data and statistics are critical to supporting the advancement of evidence based and sustainable ACH interventions.

### ■ **An ACH Sector Rooted in African Realities and Emerging Priorities**

*This policy booklet is premised on the belief that any programmatic or policy intervention that is not firmly rooted in the realities of the continent are bound to fail, unless preceded by, and based on, solid analytical work regarding trends on the ground across different regions and countries.*

ECOSOCC has undertaken some preliminary analytical work in developing the recommendations contained in this policy booklet. Notably, a lot more nuanced and thorough work still needs to be done by other appropriately qualified institutions such as African universities, research institutions, civil society, media, and practitioners in the sector.

### ■ **Strategic Partnerships**

Considering their central role in promoting regional integration, the AU and the RECs will need greater operational and technical capacity to develop and implement ACH programs. They ought to develop technical and financial

support to ACH-related initiatives, programs, institutions, and regional frameworks. This will serve to ensure policy coherence and consistency in implementation across themes and geographies covered by the AfCFTA and other instruments. Duplication will be avoided by ensuring that the sub-regional and continental programs are focused on enhancing regional capacities.

The development of innovative strategic partnerships with civil society organizations, academic/research institutions, traditional/religious leaders and networks as well as with the private sector is recommended. This will require joint implementation strategies that support a sector-wide approach to ACH within the AU, building on previous cooperation, and ensuring a division of labor based on the comparative advantages of different stakeholders.

### ■ **Linking ACH, AfCFTA, and the SDGs**

The consultations recognized and reiterated the centrality of ACH in the achievement of Agenda 2063, the aspirations of the AfCFTA, and the SDGs. The deliberations called for the continent to optimize her comparative advantage, which lies in its holistic, cross-sector approach to ACH as a vehicle for social, economic, cultural, political, environmental, and human development.

The consultations noted the importance of operationalizing ACH-specific programmatic and policy instruments to give expression to this approach to achieve the SDGs and other aspirations of the African Union linked to governance, peace and security, regional integration, the AfCFTA, youth employment and gender equality. The consultations further noted the paramount positioning of regional, national, and local organizations as primary drivers of the development of the ACH sector.

Furthermore, the deliberations emphasized a multi-sectoral approach that recognizes the linkages between socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and political factors in the governance of the ACH sector. As such, key considerations articulated included creating an enabling environment for good governance, supporting the elaboration of a regulatory framework, and combatting corruption as critical to advancing the development of the ACH sector in Africa.

Maximizing the linkages between ACH, AfCFTA and the SDGs should also include a focus on expanding the capacity of governance institutions to deliver goals for gender equality, youth empowerment, eradication of poverty and inequality, crisis reduction and environmental protection.

### ■ **Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

Consistent with Agenda 2063 and AU Shared Values instruments, an approach to ACH that will specifically promote and support gender equality and women's empowerment in the trade in goods and services under the AfCFTA was highlighted by the consultations. This requires a nuanced and expansive definition of ACH goods and services. The booklet recommends both stand-alone and mainstreaming approaches to strengthening the gender dimensions of ACH within the context of AfCFTA.

Deliberate steps need to be taken to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the various categories of ACH goods and services. Specific activities should include diagnostic institutional assessments of gender equity frameworks

and levels of women's participation in national, regional, and continental ACH institutions, processes, and sectors. In addition, the consultations illuminated the role that the AU/RECs and Member States should play in supporting efforts aimed at developing and implementing women's empowerment strategies, including tools and instruments to monitor progress at multiple levels.

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*Given the gendered nature of ACH, any custom, tradition, cultural or religious practice that is inconsistent with the rights of African women as outlined in the Maputo Protocol, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Agenda 2063 should be discouraged.*

#### ■ **Centering Youth Engagement, Leadership and Empowerment**

The African ACH sector is largely dominated by African youth in the supply of goods and services. African youth constitute the majority (75%) of stakeholders within the creative economy and yet benefit the least from the proceeds of their creative labor.

AU member states should leverage their ACH policies to give effect to the rights, freedoms, and duties of young people, and adopt laws to domesticate and institutionalize the African Youth Charter and the African Charter on the Rights of the Child. Any custom, tradition, cultural or religious practice that is inconsistent with these rights is discouraged.

The AU should specifically protect the rights and interests of children and youth. Youth and children within the ACH sector should be allowed to enjoy their rights and freedoms regardless of their race, ethnic group, sex, language, religion, political or other intersectional factors. More specifically, children and youth should be encouraged to voice their opinions, and those opinions should be heard and taken into consideration. Specific funds, policies and intermediate support organizations should be established to support the ACH field across the continent. Barriers to participation need to be identified and removed, possibly requiring changes to laws, policies, institutions, and environments. There is also a need for more accessible, integrated, and well-coordinated multidisciplinary services.

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*Focus should be paid on promoting art and healthy cultural practices that reduces or eliminates stigmatization and enables vibrant young persons living with disabilities to contribute effectively to the development of society. The AU and Member States should adopt legislative policies to curb unhealthy cultural practices and customs that disenfranchise young people living with disabilities within the ACH sector.*

#### ■ **Development of Regional and Continental ACH Value-Chains**

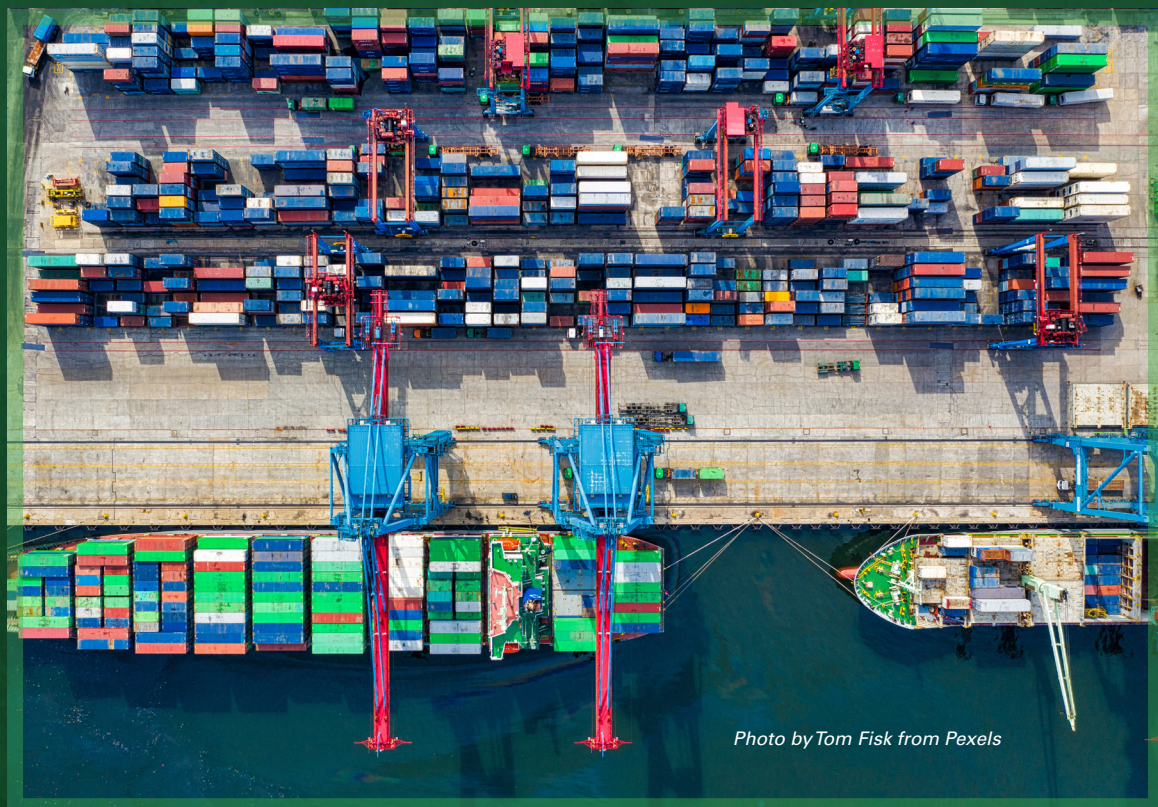
To address the oft-repeated concern with regard to the weak link between national, sub-regional and continental initiatives, the consultations framed several strategies. First, continental ACH initiatives should be developed in alignment with country programs and vice-versa, to complement and mutually reinforce each other. ECOSOCC has interfaced with many country-level ACH programs from which key lessons for regional and cross-border ACH programming can be derived. Secondly, efforts should be made to ensure that Members of Parliament, media houses and institutions responsible for ACH at the country, sub-regional and continental levels are fully briefed on ACH policies, initiatives, and programs of the African Union.

Modalities should be developed to maximize the value addition of harmonized ACH initiatives at the state, regional and continental levels. ECOSOCC, working closely with relevant AU Departments and STCs, should play a central role in supporting alignment. Focused support to strategic country level ACH initiatives in conflict affected and transitional settings was proposed, in close collaboration with the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) interventions of the AU Commission Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

The AU Commission, AfCFTA Secretariat, and ECOSOCC should work closely to facilitate regular exchanges between country and regional programs and explore approaches to synergize these for the advancement of the ACH sector. ACH policy advisory and technical expertise based in the RECs, national level and in the Diaspora could be mapped and deployed to support the implementation of innovative and robust ACH initiatives.

## 8. THEMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS





# POLICY THEME 1:

The African Continental  
Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)





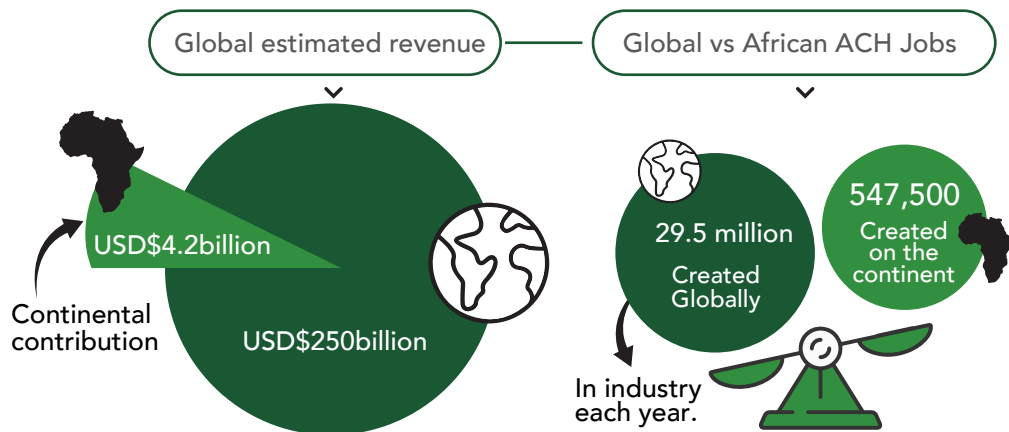
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## POLICY THEME 1:

### The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

#### Contextual Analysis:

The AfCFTA provides an opportunity to leverage the economic and developmental value of ACH. Africa's share of the global ACH industry is very minimal. According to the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), the continent only contributes USD\$4.2billion to the global estimated revenue of USD\$250billion and generates 547,500 jobs in comparison to the 29.5 million jobs available in the industry each year. This calls for a major strategic review to maximize opportunities for African people.



AfCFTA protocols on trade in goods and services will facilitate an entrepreneurial ecosystem that fosters job creation, poverty reduction and the eventual attainment of the SDGs through a holistic approach to ACH markets, products, and services. Further, the AfCFTA will create the enabling environment, frameworks, and opportunities for the development of an African common market for ACH.

*It should be underscored that ACH stakeholders such as artists, creatives, and developers, in addition to contributing to economic development, have also contributed to the struggle for political emancipation.*

African artists such as Fela Kuti, Miriam Makeba, Hugh Masekela and Angélique Kodjo have played a significant role in the fight against racial injustice and human rights abuses on the continent and beyond. Equally in the diaspora, legendary artists of African descent such as Harry Belafonte, Bob Marley, James Brown, Maya Angelou, and others played important roles in the emancipation of people of African descent from economic, political, and racial injustice.

Through the establishment of a continental ACH market within the context of the AfCFTA, the continent can boost its soft power and harness the talents of its people. Existing policy instruments seek to harness the potential of African Arts, Culture and Heritage. However, available evidence relative to the impact of these policies suggests that the full potential of the sector is not yet fully exploited.





## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



### African Union

*African Union organs and institutions are encouraged to:*

- Integrate continental ACH commitments into national development strategies and ensure that both existing and new pools of ACH goods and services are sufficiently competitive to ensure Africa's comparative advantage in the ACH market.
- Support the genuine development of the sector by creating an Inclusive Common Market of ACH in Africa within and beyond AfCFTA.
- Establish an AU ACH Flagship Program aligned to the AfCFTA as part of Agenda 2063's second ten-year implementation plan, with other ongoing continental programs promoting trade in ACH sectors.
- Undertake a continent-wide audit of ACH related legislation and policies, including Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), data, statistics, and knowledge management.
- Develop an ACH Trade and Investment Observatory to monitor and evaluate the ratification, domestication, and implementation of ACH commitments by all stakeholders.
- Develop ACH Innovation hubs, accelerators, and centers of excellence across all regions aligned to AfCFTA implementation structures and processes.
- Strengthen ACH by eliminating or reducing economic and other barriers to the freedom of movement and rights of residence for ACH entrepreneurs, creatives, and service providers, including the guarantee of just trade.
- Strengthen the supply and demand-side of the ACH development ecosystem, including unconditional support, ecological reparations, corporate accountability, and anti-dumping laws, amongst others.
- Align RECs' trade and investment policies and infrastructure to support regional initiatives by women and youth within the context of ACH and AfCFTA.

*To improve market access, ACH should be integrated into AfCFTA by addressing:*

- Rules of origin to cover art and cultural products;
- Removal of tariff and Non-Tariff Barriers;
- Visa relaxation in accordance with the AU Continental Free Movement Protocol;
- Encourage cross border collaborations in ACH;
- Roll out an extensive data collection process for effective policy making and product mapping for market access;
- Adoption of digital technology for marketing ACH sites for tourism;
- Marketing of public, historical monuments and heritage sites in Africa as important heritage tourism destinations; and
- Review national and regional policies and legislation that impede the contribution of ACH to economic development.





### Member States

*African Union member states participating in the AfCFTA are urged to:*

- 1** — Recognize and support the instrumental and intrinsic value of ACH goods and services through appropriate legislation and policies.
- 2** — Support the internal socio-cultural democratization of Africa through the expansive realization of human rights.
- 3** — Develop capacity building programs and strengthen institutions that manage ACH sites by:
  - Promoting the entry into force of the Charter for the African Cultural Renaissance through acquisition of ratifications by Member States.
  - Adopting the use of technology to provide training and education in art and culture, integrating indigenous knowledge at all levels of education systems.
  - Encouraging the media to promote cultural artefacts and performances.
  - Working in partnership with traditional leaders to identify new markets and heritage sites.
  - Enhancing competitiveness of ACH products and services through targeted training using relevant instruments at the AU and REC levels.
  - Providing training on AfCFTA protocols, market entry requirements, trade barriers, rules of origins, intellectual property regimes and quality standards; and
  - Providing training with a focus on business skills and enterprise development, building technical and financial skills, marketing, as well as skills related to branding and packaging.
- 4** — Develop infrastructure that supports Art, Culture and Heritage including:
  - Developing transport infrastructure supported by services for greater accessibility of cultural centers and national heritage sites.
  - Supporting the development of business incubators, industrial parks / hubs which will adhere to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles across African regions to transform and enhance the ACH sector.
  - Through public-private partnerships (PPPs), developing infrastructure for tourism, including modern national art galleries, theatres, and associated infrastructure such as hotels and banks around heritage sites.

# AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA.

Creating One African Market



## RECs

The Regional Economic Communities are called upon to:

- Encourage Public-Private Partnerships to promote investment in Arts, Culture, and the development of heritage sites by:
- Encourage financial institutions to introduce financing for the ACH sector;
- Support National and Regional Investment Agencies to promote foreign direct investment in the sector;
- Advocate for Increased budget allocations by national governments to support the promotion of the sector;
- Offer incentives for local, regional, and international investors in the sector;
- Facilitate reciprocal fiscal agreements that eliminate double taxation in the sector;
- Review and strengthening the protection of Intellectual Property Rights in collaboration with the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
- Provide technical support using WIPO's pro bono programs on acquisitions of intellectual property rights by actors within ACH who have no means to access services;
- Develop SMEs and catalyze private investment for early-stage enterprise and entrepreneurs. Support cross border market linkages through Business Development Services (BDS) to enable commercialization and access to markets to foster economic growth in ACH sectors;
- Encourage the development of regional value chains for the sector; and
- Facilitate investment in new technology for the development of artefacts.



## Civil Society

Civil society and private sector actors should:

1. Advocate for the establishment of an ECOSOCC ACH observatory to enable different actors across the continent to monitor and evaluate the delivery and implementation of commitments related to AfCFTA and ACH.
2. Establish capacity development programs for civil society, generally, and ACH stakeholders that work in civil society.
3. Convene dialogues, debates, events, trade fairs and exhibitions in partnership with AfCFTA secretariat and other relevant partners.
4. Generate data and statistics in partnership with African academic and research institutes.





*A contingent of female soldiers with the African Union peacekeeping mission  
Credit: Enough / Laura Heaton*

# POLICY THEME 2:

Peace and Security





2.

## POLICYTHEME 2: Peace and Security

### Contextual Analysis:

Historically, ACH has been associated with peace and security from the aspect of peacebuilding, reconciliation initiatives in transitional settings and in conflict resolution – usually at community or interpersonal levels. While this association is important, equally notable is the use of ACH in insecurity and conflict. Often, conflicts are manifested through disputes over cultures and cultural practices, threats to heritage symbols and systems and the destruction of artistic symbols and instruments during conflict. There is, therefore, an established association between ACH and peace and security. Any continental initiative to bring attention to the arts, culture and heritage must therefore take cognizance of this close linkage.

*The continent's history is replete with examples of the use of, and impact of, ACH on peace and security as the following demonstrates:*

- Music, painting, drawing, sculpture, poetry, prose, and oral history, amongst others, are all useful in communities articulating, preserving, and communicating their experiences of violence, conflict, and insecurity as well as identity formation, social struggle, and generational contestations. Key examples in this regard are artists such as Bibi Titi Mohammed, Nike Davies-Okundaye, Miriam Makeba, Roy Lewis, Wax Dey, and Chaibia Talal amongst others. Many African artists have for centuries curated and documented the lived realities of their societies through these mediums which are vital for historical recordkeeping and even more useful in post conflict processes like truth seeking and accountability processes.
- The use of cultural practices in countries like Mozambique (magamba spirits) Rwanda (Gacaca courts) and Uganda (Mato-Oput used by the Acholi in Northern Uganda) as mechanisms to advance justice, accountability and truth-seeking processes or reintegration after gross violations of human rights.
- The use of the arts – music, drama, poetry, drawing, and painting are also used in intra- and inter-community reconciliation processes, especially in communities where the written form is not centered.
- Conflict around heritage, ideas, and history as demonstrated in the recent destruction of Timbuktu in Mali.

Africa needs to consolidate the gains that have been achieved in peace and security by harnessing all potential ACH avenues and opportunities that contribute to conflict prevention, management, and resolution. The continent could consolidate peace and security efforts, as well as the commitment to 'Silence the Guns', by deliberately strengthening continent-wide investment in programs that promote ACH for peace and security.

Harnessing the potential of ACH through national and regional policies will ensure that strong institutions, value chains, capacities, and competencies as well as benefits accrue to artists, cultural performers, and heritage sites. In turn, these are positioned to contribute to the fostering and consolidation of African peace and security, including reconciliation and justice. Existing AU commitments reflect an understanding of the interface between ACH and peace and security, as demonstrated by their inclusion in the AU's charters, protocols, policies, resolutions, and strategic plans.





## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the prevalence of conflicts linked to violent extremism and radicalization from groups such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, a balance must be struck between the instrumental and intrinsic role of ACH, including in fostering peace and reconciliation on the one hand and responsibility and accountability on the other hand. In this regard, the AU/RECs and AU member states should, in partnership with African citizens, civil society, private sector, academic and research institutions, undertake the following:



### African Union

African Union organs and institutions are encouraged to:

- Integrate Arts, Culture and Heritage into the African Peace and Security Architecture. This includes the promotion of African cultural practices such as the use of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms at community level, aimed at promoting peace and security as envisaged in the AU policy frameworks on Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development.
- Actively promote the involvement of traditional leaders in boundary dispute resolution and inter-communal/ethnic relations to support conflict mediation.
- Leverage heritage sites for the enhancement of social cohesion, nation building, healing, and reconciliation as a means of addressing both the root causes and consequences of conflict.
- Establish and promote an Africa Week for Arts, Culture, and Heritage, with particular emphasis on the role of ACH in preventing conflict and building solidarity between and among people.
- Deploy ACH mechanisms in the advancement of the peace and security agenda of the continent with due regard to the requirements of the social, cultural, economic, and political integration of African people. It should also promote participation, inclusion, impartiality, due process, accountability, and peaceful coexistence.

*Because the deployment of ACH as a vehicle for peace and security in Africa requires political will and institutional capacity, the AU should explore opportunities to incorporate high-level advocacy and institutional capacity building into the implementation of AU frameworks on peace and security. African Union organs with a mandate to advance peace and security should be supported with resources and training to design and implement modalities for integrating ACH at all levels of the conflict cycle.*

# SILENCING THE GUNS.

Towards a Peaceful and  
Secure Africa



### Member States

*African Union member states are urged to:*

- 1 — Recognize and support the instrumental and intrinsic value of ACH goods and services through appropriate legislation and policies.
- 2 — Align ACH processes to local needs and aspirations, by enhancing a common understanding of a shared vision that maximizes public support and ownership.
- 3 — Establish arts, cultural and heritage galleries and shops (online and physical) in AU member states as a means of fostering solidarity and national cohesion.
- 4 — Establish or support national institutions with a mandate to educate citizens on shared values, arts, culture, and heritage, such as the Republic of Ghana's National Centre for Civic Education.
- 5 — In the formulation of ACH-based peace and security initiatives, member states should leverage the ECOSOCC national chapters as key stakeholders in the design and implementation of national peace and security initiatives.
- 6 — Promote ACH through African diplomatic missions, consulates, embassies, and other diplomatic channels.
- 7 — Create ACH initiatives and platforms that engage the private sector as a partner in national peacebuilding.



### RECs

*The Regional Economic Communities are called upon to:*

- Increase cooperation and collaboration between regional institutions including regional civil society platforms and the private sector, the AU Peace and Security Council, the African Governance Architecture and ECOSOCC.
- Develop regional sensitization and advocacy campaigns aligned to AU and ECOSOCC programs to popularize arts, culture, and heritage as key vehicles in the maintenance of peace and security and the prevention of conflict.



### Civil Society

*Civil society and private sector actors should:*

1. Assist ECOSOCC to leverage its brand equity as well as its CSO networks across the continent to support the implementation and monitoring of relevant continental frameworks that operate at the intersection of ACH and peace and security, including the Agenda 2063, the Peace and Security Council Protocol, the Livingstone Formula and other mechanisms operating at the regional level.
2. Integrate into their programming ACH related capacities to monitor government policies and programs delivering ACH objectives.



Photo by Andrea Piacquadio from Pexels

# POLICY THEME 3:

Gender and Women's  
Development







3.

### POLICYTHEME 3: Gender and Women's Development

#### Contextual Analysis

Women are often seen as the first educators of cultural and behavioral norms, including exposing children to the arts, culture and heritage found within their families, society, and environment.

At present, however, women are marginalized in all aspects of life, facing varied layers of impediments from access to markets, finance, and opportunities to equitable participation. These realities prevent women from developing their full potential, and so inhibit their social and economic inclusion.

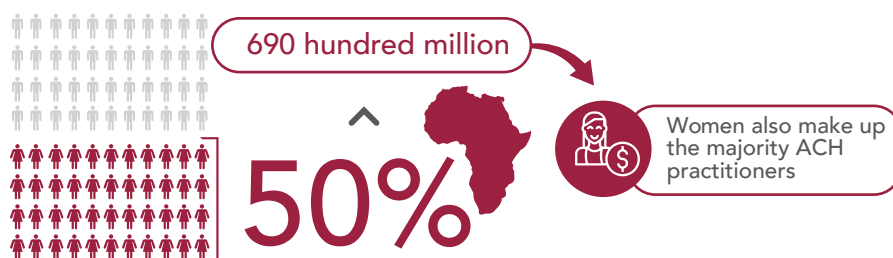
ACH, as a sector, has always been on the periphery of African economies. African economies have in turn been historically dominated by external capital and patriarchy. Women have dominated certain components of ACH, and because ACH is often on the periphery, women, and the issues important to women's economic upliftment remain marginalized in economic and development planning.

Consequently,, the intersection of ACH and gender is defined by patriarchy and discrimination which has an exclusionary effect on the very people who are the first educators, builders, and drivers of ACH transfer to the next generation. For ACH to become a structural component of African economies in all aspects, the issues important to women's upliftment and empowerment should always be viewed and treated as intertwined.

In addition, ACH governance and decision-making structures, as well as sub-sectors of the industry, are characterized by gender imbalance. The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Policy of the African Union for 2018-2028 presents a framework to realize Aspiration 6 of the African Union's Agenda 2063, which envisions:

*"An Africa where development is people driven, relying upon the potential offered by people, especially its women and youth and caring for children"*

Furthermore, the principles enshrined in Article 4 (I) of the AU's Constitutive Act position the promotion of gender equality as pivotal continental and global commitments. Women make up 50% of the continent at just over 690 hundred million. They also make up the majority of ACH practitioners and yet remain marginalized within and beyond the ACH economy.



Within the context of the ACH sector, it is necessary to espouse an introspective and critical view to understand and explain the power relations and hierarchies that underpin the discriminatory practices embedded in African societies, institutions, and structures at all levels, starting with the family structure, belief



systems, and associated practices. Rural women are the holders of traditional knowledge and practices of their communities, from a religious, medicinal, cultural, and behavioral perspective. Posterity of this knowledge could be impacted by urbanization and the erosion of traditional knowledge systems. It is critical to ensure that while urbanization and mobility of African people is increasing, the promotion of traditional knowledge is invested in and supported.

**The stories, histories, and narratives of African women have not been told, recorded, and published as much as those of their male counterparts in literary, artistic, cultural, political, or economic domains. These narratives have a place in the heritage of any society, and the erasure of women's histories has resulted in a great loss of historical knowledge and memory. As the ACH sector positions itself within African economies, the dissemination of African women's histories and narratives should be prioritized.**

The absence of a clear commitment to advance women's empowerment in the ACH sector limits its potential to clearly define and articulate the requirements and milestones for progress. Furthermore, the impact of gender equality policies not being ratified, implemented, and domesticated at all levels in Africa's governance structures is demonstrated through:

- The inability of the informal sector to support the meaningful participation of women in African economies. This situation is exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that resulted in a regression in all aspects of women's economic empowerment;
- Limited access to finance and funding for women, as well as inequitable distribution of funding;
- Hindered attempts to resolve the feminization of poverty, including its intersections with climate change;
- Lost opportunities to ensure gender balance in education and academia across disciplines; and
- Limited legislative gains demonstrated by recent legal frameworks and policies not including women or gendered considerations more broadly.

The policy development of the African ACH sector needs to be aligned with gendered approaches to ACH. Data collection, statistics, and analysis is critical to close the information gaps to support the advancement of women's empowerment and gender equality in Africa.

Noting the intersections between gender and ACH, arts, culture and heritage could be leveraged to address gender-based violence, inimical cultural practices such as Early and Forced Child Marriage (ECFM) and Forced Genital Mutilation (FGM). Such approaches should involve a broad set of stakeholders, working in partnership with each other to prevent, reduce and end violence and harmful practices targeted at women and girls.

This policy booklet positions ACH as a critical asset to be harnessed for Africa's regional integration, economic development, political and social transformation. This booklet also acknowledges women's leadership role in this regard, and therefore identifies issues of women's empowerment as critical to the development of ACH, at all levels.



## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:



### African Union

*African Union organs and institutions are encouraged to:*

- Update the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Policy of the African Union to specify ACH-related provisions, including:
  - Implementation of the gender parity principle at all levels including promotion and facilitation of the inclusion of women and girls in AU-led initiatives with traditional leaders such as the African Union platform of the Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa (COTLA);
  - Access to market and visibility in the ACH sector;
  - Alignment to the 2020-2030 Decade of African Women's Economic and Financial Inclusion, including special funds for women, capacity building initiatives, tax incentives, affirmative procurement with associated M&E, and targeted programs that aim to expand the space and capacity of women-owned businesses in the ACH sector; and
  - Enhanced capacity building and support for women and girls in the creative industry, with a focus on IPRs, copyrights, patents, and trademarks.
- Develop and implement gender sensitive curricula on African culture in all educational institutions.
- Review, monitor, and evaluate curriculum in line with trends and issues relating to women and gender in society.
- Formalize mentorship of children and youth in respect to ACH practices.
- Establish special sections in continental, regional and national museums of history to celebrate women's histories. Establish an all-female task force devoted to the collection of women's histories that transcend gender stereotypes at all levels.
- Develop a policy to celebrate an Africa Week for Arts, Culture, and Heritage dedicated in part to promoting African ACH from the perspective of women, with dialogues and conversation on patriarchy using the various forms of arts and indigenous languages.
- Establish a committee governing the Women and Youth-related Protocols of the AfCFTA.



### Member States

*African Union member states are urged to:*

- 1 — Set clear ACH-specific commitments to support gender equality and the empowerment of women and develop approaches to monitor and evaluate progress on these commitments.
- 2 — Integrate ACH targets as a key component of Gender and Women's Development strategies and policies at the national level.
- 3 — Implement policies and instruments that support the redistribution of public funds dedicated to the ACH sector.
- 4 — 'Formalize' the ACH sector to enhance its resilience through the provision of government support in times of crisis and ensure that women are supported to access support.
- 5 — Reform laws and policies to remove the cultural barriers that limit women's ownership of, access to, and control over land, capital, technology, and other productive resources.
- 6 — Develop policies, investment, and infrastructure to close the gender gap in the digital economy.



### RECs

*The Regional Economic Communities are called upon to:*

- Facilitate and co-ordinate the implementation of ACH policies, strategies, and programs of the African Union.
- Develop gender responsive ACH programs and commit funding for effective implementation.
- Monitor and evaluate regional performance and provide progress reports to support the distribution of resources and best practices.
- Create systems and processes for engagement with regional CSO platforms on ACH matters.



### Civil Society

*Civil society and private sector actors should:*

1. Enhance the inclusion of ACH themes in their programs.
2. Formalize the role of CSOs as a partner in monitoring progress on ACH-related commitments on the continent.





Photo by Keira Burton from Pexels

# POLICY THEME 4:

Youth Development



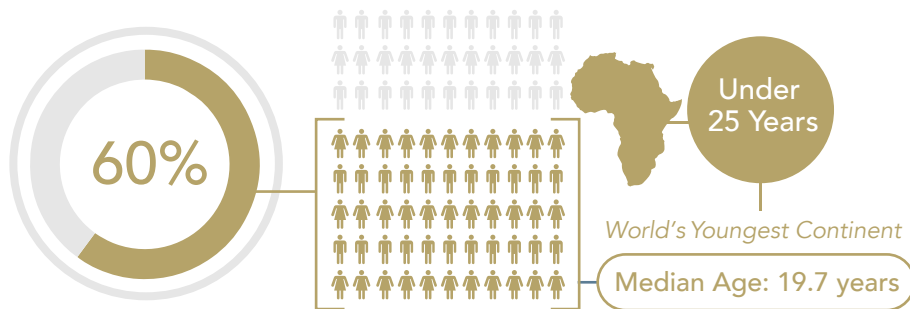


4.

## POLICYTHEME 4: Youth Development

### Contextual Analysis:

Africa is the world's youngest continent with 60% of its population under the age of 25. The continent also boasts a median age of 19.7 years.



Africa is in a great position to take advantage of the tremendous amount of innovation and energy that its young people offer to drive rapid development in various sectors of the economy. Despite the potential for youth contributions to the Arts; structural challenges prevalent in the cultural and creative industries on the continent engender conditions where ACH is neither attractive to, nor favors, the contributions of young people. Nevertheless, with the growing use and influence of social media and digitalization, there is an enormous potential to develop the ACH sector in Africa leveraging the skills, innovation, and technological know-how of young Africans.

In 2017, the African Union Theme of the year called for 'harnessing the demographic dividends through investment in youth'. Though significant effort has been expended since then to deliver on that call to action, including the launch of the One Million by 2021 program by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, a lot more needs to be done to maximize the potential of young people in diverse sectors.

Approximately 3.7 million jobs are created each year in the African labor market, whereas as many as 11 million young people enter the labor market annually. This results in most new entrants navigating structural unemployment at the prime of their potential contributions<sup>1</sup>. Rising unemployment amongst African youth has been associated with insecurity in some communities. ACH has the potential to create gainful employment for African youth as they fulfill their passions and purpose.

African youth can also serve as ambassadors of the continent through various forms of ACH engagement. In addition, there is a great need for young people to be involved in decision making spaces on ACH and to build their capacity to shape the development of the sector.

<sup>1</sup> The Burgeoning Africa Youth Population: Potential or Challenge?  
<https://www.citiesalliance.org/newsroom/news/cities-alliance-news/%C2%A0burgeoning-africa-youth-population-potential-or-challenge%C2%A0>





## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



### African Union

*African Union organs and institutions are encouraged to:*

- Facilitate the strategic deployment of AU Youth Volunteers across various continental and regional institutions working on Arts, Culture, and Heritage.
- Review and strengthen the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) with a view to create opportunities for innovative financing for youth-led projects that advance the promotion and conservation of Africa's heritage.
- Integrate ACH into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of African countries as means of earning carbon credits.
- Expand the mandate of the African Union Youth Envoy to include the strengthening and promotion of ACH as a critical means for broadening and deepening youth participation in economic, social, cultural, peace and security programs of the African Union.
- Encourage member states to ratify, domesticate and implement efforts to ensure the ratification of the Statute of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) and mobilize support for the Republic of Kenya on the operationalization of the AACC Temporary Secretariat to boost the development of the creative industry on the continent.
- Involve young people and the AU Youth Envoy in the establishment of the Great Museum of Africa (GMA), a Flagship Project of Agenda 2063.
- Promote the exchange of ideas, experience and research relating to intellectual property and ACH. Assist Member States, where appropriate, in the acquisition and development of technology relating to intellectual property matters.
- Urge member states to expand, deepen and broaden the membership of ARIPO to cover all regions of the continent and strengthen its engagement nationally in the promotion of IPR and trademarks of African ACH goods and services.
- Support African and Diaspora - based universities, colleges, and schools to integrate African studies - encompassing African culture and heritage - into their curriculum across disciplines.
- Promote the development and harmonization of intellectual property laws, and support collaboration between AU member states in this regard.



### Member States

*African Union member states are urged to:*

- 1 — Establish national mechanisms and initiate negotiations for the restitution/return of cultural property and heritage illicitly stolen and trafficked from the continent using the AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property (2018), the Common African Position developed by the African Union Advisory Board on





Corruption (AU-ABC), UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import,

- 2 — Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970) and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (1995) as legislative frameworks.
- 3 — Establish common services or mechanisms that support the coordination, harmonization, and capacity development of youth stakeholders in law, policies, and other relevant issues within the ACH sector.
- 4 — Invest in the digitalization and digitization of African culture and museums that will leverage e-commerce to maximize access to the global market.
- 5 — Establish and promote the use of local languages as a medium of learning in pre-schools to enable the uptake of indigenous African languages from an early age in the face of extinction threats facing some African languages.
- 6 — Member States with heritage sites should allocate a percentage of their annual budget to supporting youth-led projects and initiatives aimed at developing the site for more sustainable commercial gains, while leveraging opportunities provided by e-commerce.
- 7 — Member states should ensure the empowerment and integration of youth with disabilities in the development of arts culture and heritage, ensuring non-discrimination and sensitivity to their needs.



#### RECs

*The Regional Economic Communities are called upon to:*

- Invest in the human capital development of young Africans that will drive the continent's growth and economy in arts, culture, and heritage.
- Promote educational and regional exchange programs that build the capacity of young people in ACH.



#### Civil Society

*Civil society and private sector actors should:*

1. Build effective and strategic partnerships with member states and other stakeholders for the advancement of the ACH sector.
2. Invest in the capacity building of young people in arts, culture, and heritage and support their access to further education and training, where possible.
3. Support ECOSOCC to create awareness on the importance of youth engagement in decision-making spaces of the ACH sector.
4. Invest in ACH projects that support regional integration.
5. Affirm ACH as a part of African identity and way of life which is not regressive or abhorrent.

## 9. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

*In addition to the thematic recommendations contained in this policy booklet, the following general proposals are further highlighted for policy consideration by the African Union and member states.*

- Develop an ECOSOCC ACH Observatory: categorized by the four themes of AfCFTA, Youth, Women and Gender and Peace and Security, to monitor and evaluate the ratification, domestication, and implementation of ACH commitments by all stakeholders.
- Create capacity development platforms for stakeholders involved in ACH trade in goods and services to strengthen their global competitiveness and enhance their understanding of the enterprise components of ACH.
- Facilitate the establishment, in partnership with AfCFTA Secretariat and other relevant partners, of ACH dialogues, debates, events, trade fairs and exhibitions.
- Establish effective partnerships with African research and knowledge institutions for the purposes of enhancing the quality of Afrocentric knowledge and data, in order to deepen the evidence base for trade in ACH goods and services.

## 10. CONCLUSION

This policy booklet identifies and analyzes the linkages between Arts, Culture and Heritage (ACH) and four themes of strategic importance to the African Union, namely, peace and security; gender and women's development; youth development and the implementation of AfCFTA. It further outlines specific findings from virtual multi-sectoral consultations, including policy recommendations targeted at the African Union, RECs, member states, civil society, and funding partners.

*The need to develop, ratify and domesticate ACH-related policies is emphasized throughout this booklet, alongside the importance of implementing, monitoring, and evaluating progress.*

Increased engagement, attention, and investment in the ACH sector are recommended, including engagement with the African Heritage Fund to advance the growth and development of the ACH sector. Most importantly, a continental spotlight on ACH, led by women and young people will be paramount in achieving the Africa we want.

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