

## Event Title: "Creating a Just and Inclusive Future for All African Women and Girls."

### Event Description:

Akina Mama wa Afrika, Education as a Vaccine, Malala Fund, CREA, African Women's Development and Communication Network, FEMNET, Volunteer Services Overseas, VSO Uganda, and African Young Women Leadership and Advocacy Alliance are working together to host a virtual panel discussion on "Creating a Just and Inclusive Future for African Women and Girls." In line with the theme of the Regional Forum, the panel will provide insights on the interlinkages and interconnectedness of education, health, gender justice, climate justice and disability justice and how to build a better forward by connecting the dots. Disruptions to the education sector have increased recently, with a disproportionate impact on adolescent girls and young women in their diversities. More and more, solutions to the problems that face us on the continent require multidimensional analyses and multi-component approaches. According to the Malala Fund Report, "**A greener, fairer future: Why leaders need to invest in climate and girls' education,**" Climate change, if not addressed, will prevent at least 12.5 million girls from completing their education each year. And we know a large percentage will be from sub-Saharan Africa. And the SDGs make that very clear. Women and girls on the continent do not lead single-issue lives, and to achieve agenda 2030 and 2063; we must amplify and understand the interlinkages in the analyses and the solutions. By showing the progress and the gaps in Goals 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17 and how the progress and gaps reinforce each other, we are promoting a deeper understanding of why we all must work together and not in silos on these issues, especially as it affects women and girls in all their diversities.

Women and girls, especially women and girls with disabilities, traditionally have been marginalised in accessing education which requires specific gender and disability focus to address these issues. Due to the Covid19 pandemic, economic crises, natural disasters, and insecurity, it is clear that we cannot ignore the devastating impact on the education system, the safety of young women and adolescent girls and the resilience of communities for a sustainable future that pushes the furthest behind further behind. African countries are battling insecurity, such as Nigeria, are suffering from its crippling impact on the education system with increasing risks of attacks on schools and abductions that has led to the closure of schools by the government as a way of addressing the insecurity, which further widens the gap on girls' access to education and reaching their full potential. According to [Ms Agnes Nyalongie](#), Minister of Education of Malawi at the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference, natural disasters are "destroying schools", and she is "struggling to provide quality education that protects girls and gives them a chance to become leaders of today and tomorrow."

Additionally, cultural perception and impact of the pandemic have led to debates on the return of adolescent girls who are pregnant or nursing to school. Across the continent, many girls and young women are pregnant due to gender-based violence and child marriage worsened by the impact of the pandemic, conflict, and schools' closures. Even with increasing gender parity in education, especially in primary school enrollment, according to [UNESCO](#), "in sub-Saharan Africa, for every 100 boys of primary school age out of school, there are 123 girls denied the right to education." Women and Girls with disabilities had already been left out of the education system due to culture,

biased perception, and lack of accommodations to attend schools. There is no infrastructure, trained human resources or inclusive environments to support the education of women and girls with disabilities. Then add on the impact of the pandemic and increased targeting of women and girls, particularly those with disabilities in GBV (Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda), then education becomes a pipe dream for this specific demographic.

The five panellists will provide learnings on the interlinkages and the need to adopt an intersectional lens to improve education access for all women and girls, specifically women and girls with disabilities. The panellists will include a young woman (Education and Climate Justice Activist), a young woman with disability, Malala Fund Representative, A representative from Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, and Ministry of Education Representative ( Kenya or Uganda) who will share strategies, lessons learned, and ways to create a just and inclusive future for the continent that reaches the furthest behind and truly leaves no one behind.