



The African Women's Development and Communication Network

ANNUAL REPORT 2011



Mobilizing African Women to Participate and
Contribute to Developing Africa

Vision

African women's collective leadership for equality, peace and sustainable development.

Mission

FEMNET seeks to facilitate and coordinate the sharing of experiences, ideas, information, and strategies for human rights promotion among African women's organisations through networking, communication, capacity-building and advocacy at the regional and international levels.

Core Values

Commitment and passion for women's advancement;

Integrity, credibility, transparency and accountability;

Unity in diversity, solidarity, inclusiveness, respect and tolerance;

Professionalism, effectiveness, creativity and responsibility;

Justice, equality and democracy.

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About FEMNET

The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) is a pan-African, membership based organization that was established in 1988. It is governed by a Constitution and has a governance and administrative structure. It operates through its Regional Secretariat that links up with Sub-regional members and partners and National Focal Point (NFPs) organizations most of which are national women's networks, consortia or umbrella organizations.

Objectives of FEMNET:

- To strengthen the role and contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focusing on women's development and the integration of women into the development process in Africa.
- To create an infrastructure and channel through which women's associations and organizations working on women's issues can reach one another and share crucial information, knowledge and experiences and thereby sharpen and improve their inputs into Africa's development.
- To initiate, develop, coordinate and maintain close working contacts with United Nations agencies, the African Union (AU) and other national, regional, or international bodies and NGOs having objectives altogether or in part similar to the objectives of the Network.
- To develop a database on scientific, technical, economic and other information considered relevant or material to the objectives of the Network.
- To initiate, develop, provide and maintain channels and means for communication on matters relating to African women's development, particularly to advise members of the Network of national, regional and international initiatives which are relevant to African women's development.
- To initiate investment projects in any part of Africa that will support the work of the Network.
- To adopt such means of making known the activities and services of the Network as may seem expedient, and in particular by the publication of directories, brochures, books and periodicals, by the granting of prizes, rewards, scholarships and exhibitions, advertising in the press, on radio, television or cinema.

The principle changes FEMNET is aiming to achieve in the long run include:

- A strong African women's rights movement that is actively engaged in the development processes in Africa and globally at all levels.
- An enlightened citizenry in Africa that equally respects, observes and protects the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and men in their public and private lives.
- A well recognized and respected Network of African women organizations and leaders that acts as a reliable first class information centre for African governments, United Nations agencies, the African Union (AU), other sub-regional, national, regional, and international bodies and civil society actors on matters affecting or of interest to women and girls in Africa.

- Increased visibility and recognition of the contributions of African women leaders in transforming the development trends in Africa.
- Increased capacity of FEMNET to sustain the work of the Network through philanthropy and implementing viable investment projects.

Strategic Goal:

The broad strategic goal of FEMNET for the next three years (2011-2013) is to ensure that African women's organizations, lobby groups, decision-makers, like-minded organizations as well as men have taken actions to create an environment that supports gender equality and social justice.





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



facebook

I invite FEMNET members to interact with me on facebook: Sylvie Ndongmo and also on Twitter @SylvieNDONGMO.

It is with great pleasure that I write this foreword for the 2011 annual report. This is my first year as Chairperson of FEMNET and I want to use this opportunity to thank the membership of FEMNET for entrusting me with the mammoth task of leading the Network. Since FEMNET was established in 1988, five successful General Assemblies have been held, and I am glad to be the fifth Chairperson of FEMNET taking over from the vibrant Mama Koite Doumbia who did amazing work for the Network, including increasing FEMNET membership from francophone countries.

The year 2011 was significant for us at FEMNET because it is the year that we began implementing the Strategic Plan (2011-2013) that was adopted at the 5th Programming Conference and General Assembly that was held in October 2010.

As I pick up the mantle from Mama Koite, I pledge to work with all members of FEMNET across Africa. I invite FEMNET members to interact with me on facebook: Sylvie Ndongmo and also on Twitter @SylvieNDONGMO.

The new Strategic Plan reflects some of the changes that have taken place since the last Programming Conference in 2007, and will therefore enable us to keep abreast with what is happening around us so that we can remain relevant to our constituency - the women's movement in Africa.

As we move on in implementing the 2011-2013 Strategic Plan I urge all members of FEMNET to remain in constant contact with the Secretariat and also contribute articles to FEMNET publications by sharing some best practices that have worked for you as you work to promote women's rights and empowerment in your countries.

Remember FEMNET is a chain connecting women from all parts of Africa, and this chain will only remain strong if women from all regions of the continent are in touch and share experiences, idea and best practices. Ultimately, our work at FEMNET is about improving the lives of women, and I invite every member of FEMNET to share their experiences with others in the region, through the Secretariat.

Best wishes in your work!

Ms. Jacqueline Sylvie Ndongmo

Chairperson, FEMNET



MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2011, we also continued to engage with the African Union through the Heads of the State Summits. The summits provide space for us to lobby African governments on various issues affecting women in Africa.

I am pleased to present this annual report for 2011 which gives a picture of the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) activities in 2011 and their results. 2011 was another busy year for FEMNET. We began the year with finalizing preparation for the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) whose theme was: "Access to and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work". We mobilized resources for the participation of 20 African women including 4 young women. As with previous years, FEMNET coordinated the process of drafting the African women's common statement for the CSW. For us the CSW provides an opportunity to enable African women to have their voice heard at an international forum. We are grateful to the women's organizations we worked with pre, during and post CSW.

As part of FEMNET's commitments to popularizing the African Women's Decade (2010-2020), which was launched by the African Union in 2010, FEMNET has continued to popularize the Decade and also monitor its implementation. In January 2011, FEMNET held an evaluation meeting with various partners to assess progress made in implementing national action plans to popularize and operationalize the Decade in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and South Sudan. We feel that there is need for more commitment by African governments if the African Women's Decade is to realize its goals. There is need to publicize the Decade in all African Union member states.

In 2011, we also continued to engage with the African Union through the Heads of the State Summits. The summits provide space for us to lobby African governments on various issues affecting women in Africa including ratification and implementation of the AU Protocol on the rights of women.

The year 2011 was an important year for the Aid and Development Effectiveness agenda; The Fourth High Level Forum (HLFIV) on Aid Effectiveness was held in November in Busan, Korea. FEMNET is proud to have been part of the HLFIV. We began preparing for the HLFIV in 2010 and undertook several activities. Among them was a multi-country research to review and assess the implementation of the Paris Declaration (PD) and Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) from a gender perspective in 9 African countries.

We ended the year by engaging in advocacy on sexual and gender based violence at the Special Session of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region's (ICGLR) and the AU Conference of Health Ministers for the first time. These provided new avenues to reach policy makers and enabled us to decentralize our advocacy from the AU Summits to more thematic and regional based groupings where key decisions are made and norms are developed.

Throughout the year, FEMNET continued to sustain and even expand its advocacy efforts for women's rights and gender equality in Africa. FEMNET was able to sustain pressure on global and regional policy making institutions such as the United Nations and the African Union to address African women's rights within their relevant context, through listening to the voices and expertise of African women themselves.

Our work as a Network would not have been possible without the continued support from our partners and friends. I extend appreciation to all our partners among them Sida, Oxfam Novib, Oxfam GB, UN Women, African Women's Development Fund, Trust Africa, Global Fund for Women, Urgent Action Fund-Africa, Dv International, Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF), UNESCO, the African Union and the other sub-regional groupings like the East African Community (EAC), ECOWAS, COMESA, ICGLR and SADC who partnered with FEMNET in 2011 and enabled us to realize our goals.

Shortly after I joined FEMNET as Programme Manager in July 2011, I was assigned to act as Executive Director. Change among senior staff in quick succession can be quite challenging for any organization, but the work schedule was maintained as had worked previously at FEMNET. I therefore 'hit the ground running', taking minimal time to learn the processes and running of the organization. A smooth handing over was done when Dinah Musindarwezo came on board as Executive Director in December 2011, six months after the departure of the former Director.

I am grateful to all partners, the Board and staff of FEMNET for supporting me as I held fort in the office of Executive Director. I thank you all and wish you the best of luck in 2012.

Roselynn Musa

Acting Executive Director, FEMNET



PART 1: INTRODUCTION



In October 2010, the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) held its tri-annual General Assembly and Programming Conference. A key outcome from these gatherings was the election of a new board and approval of a new Strategic Plan (2011 – 2013). The new Strategic Plan is grounded on FEMNET's mandate as a pan-African membership based Network working to strengthen the quality of engagement and interface between civil society organizations (CSOs) working on the advancement of African women and key stakeholders such as government, international organizations like the UN, the African Union, the regional economic blocs, and other development agencies.

A number of developments in the last three years necessitated a review of FEMNET's Strategic Plan in order to assess fully the impact on the operations and plans of the Network. The developments include the declaration of the Africa Women's Decade (2010 – 2020) by the Africa Union and its launch at the continental level on the 15th of October 2010. FEMNET also had an institutional evaluation in 2009, which identified some areas of weaknesses in the way the Strategic Plan (2008 -2012) was designed. It was recommended that more work needed to be done to ensure that the Strategic Plan has Specific, Measurable, Realistic and Time bound (SMART) outcomes. It was also recommended that the Strategic Plan should clearly indicate the actions to undertake under each focus area and the expected results and indicators of success. One other area mentioned in the Institutional Evaluation Report of 2009, which required strengthening, was the monitoring and evaluation strategies and mechanisms.

Taking into account all the recommendations, the FEMNET General Assembly and Programming Conference approved changes to the FEMNET strategic Plan in 2010 and agreed that the Secretariat focuses on the following five areas:

1. *Women in leadership and governance;*
2. *Women's economic empowerment and rights;*
3. *Sexual and reproductive health including protection of women's bodily integrity and dignity;*
4. *Women and the media, freedom of information and use of ICTs;*
5. *Institutional strengthening of women's organizations & networks in Africa.*

The year 2011 was therefore the first year of implementing the 2011-2013 Strategic Plan and this report provides a summary of the activities undertaken. The report also shares successes, challenges, threats and lessons learned in the course of executing the strategic plan in 2011 using the five focus areas.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE CONTINENT

The beginning of the year 2011 was dominated by news of the uprising in North Africa that drove long term Tunisian President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt out of power. In **Tunisia** the uprising begun with protests against unemployment and corruption, however government tried to suppress the protests using excessive force. This led to Tunisians all over the country to react with further protests, culminating in a massive march in Tunis on Friday 14 January. In **Egypt** grievances of protesters were focused on legal and political issues including police brutality, state of emergency laws, lack of free elections and freedom of speech, uncontrollable corruption, and economic issues including high unemployment, food price inflation, and low minimum wages. The primary demands from protest organizers were the end of the Hosni Mubarak regime and the end of emergency law; freedom, justice, a responsive non-military government, and citizens' active involvement in the management of Egypt's resources. The uprising in North Africa affected FEMNET's implementation of the Economic Governance Project as we were unable to proceed with the second phase of project implementation in Egypt due to instability in the country.

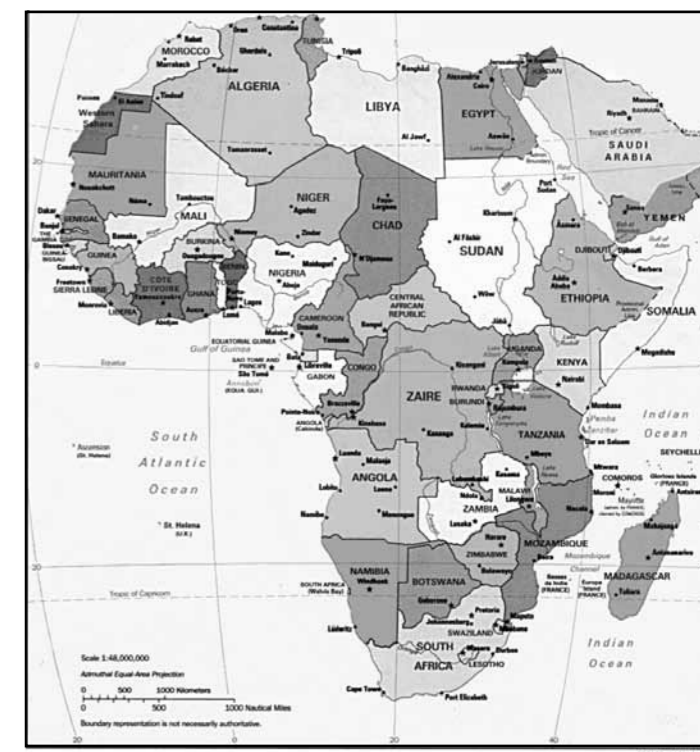
Algeria announced sweeping media reforms to allow private radio and television stations to exist for the first time since independence in 1962. The moves came at a time when the government was battling to contain popular protests against the lack of freedoms, high unemployment and corruption. However, Algerian lawmakers later passed a controversial new media law which opponents believe will restrict journalists' freedom. Specifically, the law imposes sanctions on journalists who attempt to compromise Algeria's national identity, sovereignty, economy, and security. The situation in Algeria reminded us of the need for civil society and other stakeholders to get involved in processes aimed at promoting Freedom of Information or Access to Information.

In **Kenya**, September 2011 marked a new phase in the International Criminal Court (ICC)'s legal proceedings against six Kenyans accused of masterminding the post-election violence in 2007-2008 which claimed over 1,200 lives and displaced over 600,000 people. The confirmation hearing kicked off before the ICC at the Hague.. In the same year, East Africa was hit by severe famine as result of drought. The post election violence in Kenya, which led to the eventual intervention of the ICC has affected more women and children just as the famine also had severe impact on women and children.

In July, fierce anti government protests erupted in **Malawi** as a result of increased cost of essential commodities. Eighteen (18) people died in the protests. The protests were aimed at winning political and economic reforms or dispensation from the government of Malawi. On 20 July, Malawian organizations protested against perceived poor economic management and poor governance by President Bingu wa Mutharika and his Democratic Progressive Party. After the first two days of protests, 18 deaths, 98 serious injuries and 275 arrests had been reported, the majority of these being women and youths. Further demonstrations were organized in August and September the same year.

In **Tanzania**, two hundred people drowned when an overcrowded ferry sank near Zanzibar, off the coast of Tanzania. The ferry, MV Spice Islander, was overloaded with roughly 800 people on board. The accident in Tanzania was a wake up for many African leaders to prioritize safety of their citizens by engaging adequate security that safeguard people in public spaces.

A **Nigerian** court charged eight suspects with allegedly taking part in a string of deadly bombings around the capital. Prosecutors said the accused were members of the radical Islamist sect Boko Haram, which claimed responsibility for several deadly attacks in Nigeria and had been blamed for dozens of others. The suspects allegedly were behind four separate attacks between March and July 2011 that killed about 25 people. The most serious incident was the bombing of an elections office in the town of Suleija in April that killed 16 people. Security continues to be a threat for many African countries. African countries through the African Union need to step up efforts of promoting peace and Security on the continent. Peace is the corner stone of all development, without it, development is stifled and women and children will be affected the most.



Uganda was again in the spot light in 2011 for its high handedness in suppressing citizens' right to freedom of expression. Forum for Democratic Change leader, Kizza Besigye and his supporters were arrested by police in the capital, Kampala four times in 2011 since the beginning of the "Walk to Work" protests aimed at protesting the rising cost of fuel and food in the East African nation. President Yoweri Museveni had however blamed drought in the country for the rising food prices and said international events had pushed up the price of oil.

Cameroon held presidential elections in October 2011. Incumbent President Paul Biya stood for another term following a constitutional amendment which was passed in 2008, that eliminated term limits for a President. President Biya won the election with over 75% of the vote. A female candidate Edith Kahbang Walla of the Cameroon People's Party contested the elections and came out 5th in the list of 23 Presidential candidates that contested the top office in Cameroon.

Liberia held the first round of the presidential elections in October 2011. Incumbent President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of the Unity Party led the presidential field with 43.9% of the vote, followed by Congress for Democratic Change candidate Winston Tubman with 32.7%. As no candidate received an absolute majority, Sirleaf and Tubman stood in a run-off election held on 8 November 2011. Tubman alleged that the first round had been rigged in Sirleaf's favour and called on his supporters to boycott the run-off, resulting in a turnout of 38% as compared to the 71.8% turnout in the first round. The National Electoral Commission (NEC) declared Sirleaf the winner of the run-off on 15 November 2011 with 90.7% of the vote. The Liberian election was of particular interest to FEMNET because in the entire continent, Liberia is the only country with a female President. We hope that more women can rise up to the challenge and contest for the highest office in their countries. We salute all the women in Africa that are taking up this challenge.

The Year 2011 was a litmus test for **Zambia's** democracy, the respect for free and a fair election was significantly tested during the Presidential election held in September, 2011. Zambia yet again proved as one of Africa's icons for democracy when it had a democratic transition of power following the September 2011 elections that saw opposition Leader Micheal Sata defeat incumbent President Rupiah Banda. The peaceful elections in Zambia were a contrast to the elections held in Ivory Coast where incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo refused to accept election results indicating that Alassane Ouattara had won the elections. Ouattara tried to negotiate with Gbagbo but after an aborted negotiation attempt the country was plunged into fierce fighting between Ouattara and Gbagbo loyalists. Gbagbo was arrested at the presidential palace and handed over to Ouattara forces in Abidjan on 11 April, 2011. Unconstitutional change of power and continued clinging to power by some African Presidents is one of the biggest threats to democracy in Africa. In many instances women bear the brunt of the political instability in Africa. It is therefore imperative that the African Union and other regional groupings prioritize the promotion of democracy and good governance as a means to achieving peace and development in Africa.

The Inflation rate in **Rwanda** continued to be at single digits (about 8%), a sign of economic rebounding. In fact, Rwanda was termed by many as having fared better than her east African neighbours, including Kenya, Uganda and Burundi where surging food and fuel prices had driven inflation into double digits.

President Paul Kagame in 2011 became the first African President to go on Twitter. Twitter has become a key tool in political communication and heads of states and government need to learn how to use it. Indeed, many have viewed twitterspace and other social media networks such as Facebook as an 'open parliament' where anyone can contribute to debates and generate information on diverse issues thereby enhancing interaction, accountability and honest leadership. Other African presidents who are also using twitter and/

or facebook now include South Africa, Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, The Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Mozambique, and Zambia.

All these positive and negative trends in Africa impacted on our work across Africa. We are however happy to note that by the end of 2011 the situation has relatively normalized in Ivory Coast and North Africa. But in both cases, just as in other parts of Africa, there are challenges to achieving true democracy and inclusion of women in governance structures and processes.

As a leading women's rights organization, FEMNET has always mobilized African women around the myriad of challenges facing them. As a result, African women have been challenging patriarchal power, speaking out, resisting, protesting and organizing around social injustices and further marginalization. FEMNET has been working on the premise that it is not enough to transform women for the world, but that it is also imperative to transform the world for women. This requires all the skills, knowledge, and energies of a range of feminist actors in a range of locations using all the experiences, technology and innovation to achieve this herculean task. It requires a strategic political approach that looks at capacity, strategies, critical mass, knowledge generation and ultimately resources to achieve this outcome.



PART 2: KEY HIGHLIGHTS - 5 FOCUS AREAS

This report is a summary of the key activities that the FEMNET Secretariat implemented in line with the 2011-2013 Strategic Plan. The report highlights activities carried out under the five focus areas giving some of the general outcomes and impact.

The Five Focus areas are:-

1. Women in leadership and governance;
2. Women's economic empowerment and rights;
3. Sexual and reproductive health including protection of women's bodily integrity and dignity;
4. Women, the media, freedom of information and use of ICTs;
5. Institutional strengthening of women's organizations & networks in Africa.

Just as in previous years, 2011 was busy with major events that the Secretariat was involved in such as:

- World Social Forum (WSF) held in February 2011 in Dakar, Senegal.
- 16th and 17th African Union Heads of State Summits held in January 2011 and July 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Malabo, Equatorial Guinea respectively.
- 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in March 2011 in New York.
- Regional Consultative Meeting on Aid Effectiveness in Africa held in May 2011, in Yaoundé, Cameroun.
- Third Annual Conference for African Women in Political Leadership held in August 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya
- Pan African Conference on Access to Information the African in Cape Town, held in September 2011 in Cape Town, South Africa.
- The Fourth High Level Forum (HLF-IV) on Aid Effectiveness held in November 2011 in Busan, South Korea.
- The UNFCCC global climate change conference dubbed COP-17 held in December 2011 in Durban, South Africa.
- 4th Ordinary Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region's (ICGLR) Heads of State and Government held in December 2011 in Kampala, Uganda.

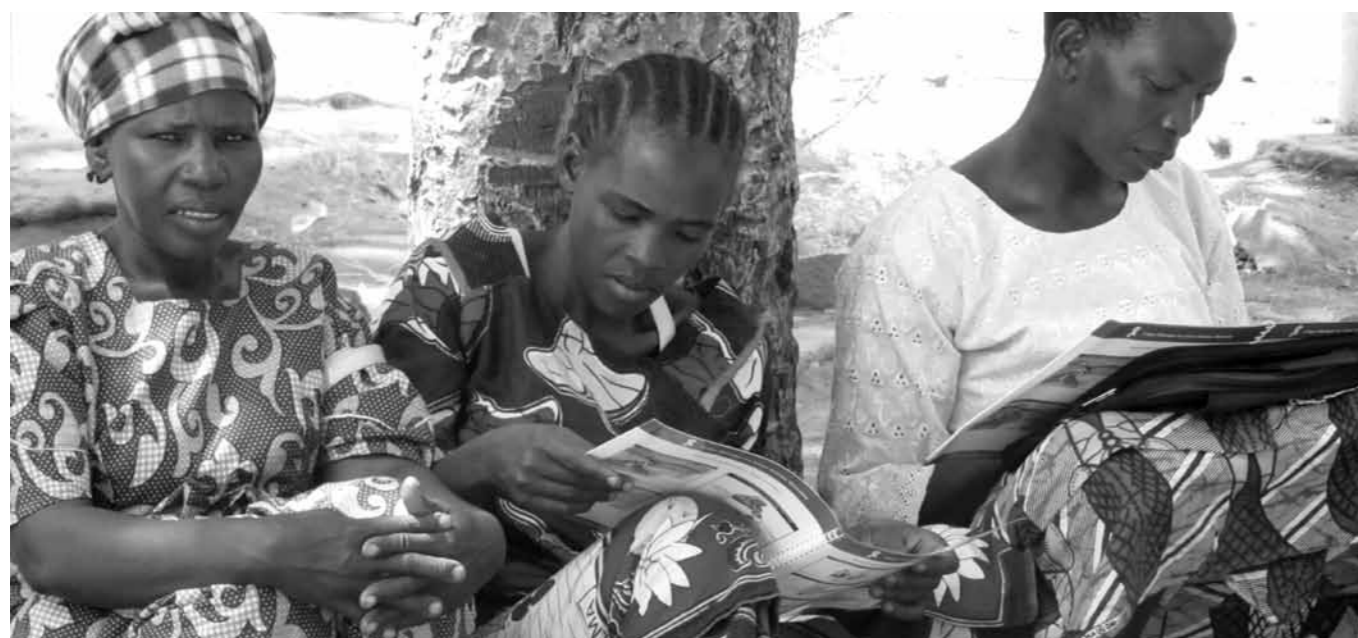
Summary of Activities & Outcomes by Focus Areas

1: Women in Leadership & Governance

The main objective of this focus area is to facilitate processes towards enabling collective action by the African women's movement/ and women's rights organizations to influence the level of representation and quality of participation of women in leadership and governance. The desired changes envisioned here are:

- Increased representation of women in decision-making at different levels and in various sectors.
- African women having strong organizations and providing leadership in organizing around issues that affect them.
- African women taking non-traditional leadership roles, with a view to achieving increased participation in democratic processes at all levels.
- Increased women's participation in peace and conflict resolution processes in Africa
- A critical mass of conscientized African citizens understanding and promoting the importance of women rights.

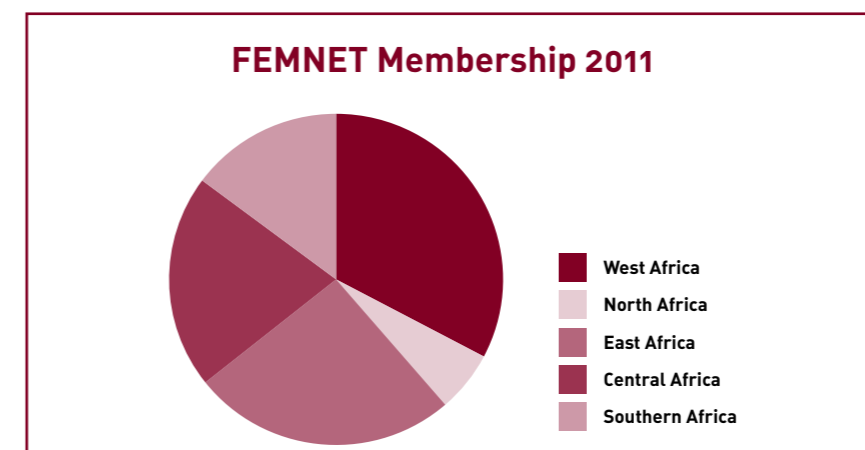
1.1 Increasing the Regional and Generational Diversity and Collective Strength of FEMNET's Membership



- **FEMNET Membership**

One of the milestones in 2011 was the recruitment of members from countries which hitherto FEMNET had never had members due to language barriers, for example Lusophone countries. FEMNET now has two member organizations in Angola and one in Mozambique,. The total number of paid up members in 2011 was 240, thereby falling short of the 311 figure for 2010 by 71. This however is not an indication of waning interest in the activities of FEMNET. Members have often expressed difficulties with wiring fees to

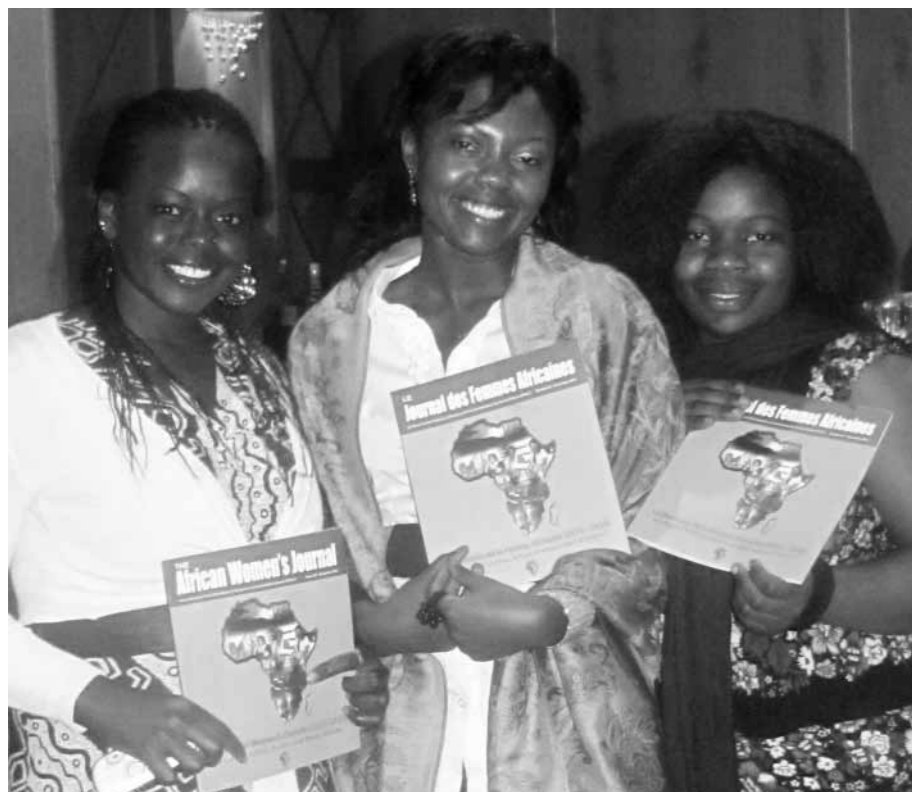
FEMNET because of the exorbitant and disproportionate bank charges and other commissions. In 2010, members were able to use the opportunity presented by the fifth Programming Conference and General Assembly, which brought together most FEMNET members to pay their fees for the year. The continued global financial difficulty has also not helped the situation. In spite of these many organizations remain actively connected to the Network.



Sub- region and the countries covered	Number of members	
	organizational	individual
Central Africa <i>(Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo - Brazzaville, Gabon, and Rwanda)</i>	21	22
Eastern and Horn of Africa <i>(Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan)</i>	26	41
North Africa <i>(Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia)</i>	6	1
Southern Africa <i>(Malawi, Angola, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe)</i>	15	24
West Africa <i>(Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Togo, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, and Sierra Leone)</i>	33	46
Sub-regional/Regional organizations <i>(Eastern, Southern, and Western)</i>	3	-
International	2	-
Total	106	134

- **Production of Herstory Book - The Story of FEMNET**

In 2011, FEMNET embarked on a project to document our herstory and experiences as a way of sharing 24 years of networking and advocacy on women's rights at regional level. FEMNET is one of the pioneer and leading women's rights organizations of its kind therefore the publication will bring to light key moments in the building and fortifying of the African women's movement. The pictorial book, which will be finalized in 2012, will be titled: "Our Journey in Advocating for the Rights of African Women". The book will contribute to the body of knowledge on gender and development. It will also serve as practice worthy of emulation for women's organizations in Africa.



• **The African Women's Journal**

The journal is a bi-annual analytical publication published in June and December as part of contributing to the African Women's Decade (2010-2020). Each issue of the Journal focuses on one theme of the African Women's Decade. The two volumes published in 2011 were: 'Unpacking Women's Specific Needs & Health Challenges in Africa during the African Women's Decade (2010-2020)' and Promoting Equal Opportunities for Women's Access to Education and Training in Africa.

Throughout the year, the Journal was also used as an awareness raising tool for instance at the Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region's (ICGLR) Heads of State and Government held in December 2011 in Kampala.

The Communication team also coordinated the production (editing, design, layout and printing) as well as dissemination of the following publications:-

#	PUBLICATION	QUANTITIES
1.	The Africa Women's Journal	2,000 English/ French
2.	2010 Annual Report	500 English/ French
3.	5th Programming Conference Report	500 English/ French
4.	Act Now ! End Maternal Deaths in East Africa	500 English 500 Swahili
5.	Operationalizing the African Women's Decade (2010-2020): Report on the Follow up and Evaluation Meeting on Operationalizing the African Women's Decade in East and Horn of Africa	800 English 400 French
6.	Second Annual Conference on African Women in Politics Report: Our Politics is Now: Moving Beyond the Rhetoric of Women's Political Participation	500 English / French

• **Social Networks**

It has become the tradition in FEMNET to disseminate timely information using diverse technology. In 2011, we scaled up the use of social networks. New members were recruited through enquiries made via Facebook. FEMNET was also approached for partnership with other



WORDPRESS

organizations through Facebook, and during the Third Women in Political Leadership Conference timely information was circulated through twitter and Facebook. Twitter also increased the number of visitors to the FEMNET Facebook page.

• **Blog**

The FEMNET blog www.femnet.wordpress.com has provided a unique channel for disseminating information. The blog is used to post information which cannot wait to be published in the E-bulletin or the biannual journal. Topics covered in 2011 were mainly in line with the five focus areas of FEMNET. As of December 2011 the blog has 2018 hits.

• **Monthly Bilingual E- Bulletin**

The E-bulletin is a monthly compilation of current news relevant to women's rights organizing in Africa, and also an avenue through which FEMNET shares its position on some of the current affairs in Africa, provides information on training/ job opportunities, and sources of information and resources that support women's organizing in Africa. The opinion piece in the E-bulletin is informed by the prevailing current affairs issue. For example some of the issues covered included:

- Walk to Work Protest in Uganda a Freedom of Expression
- Commemorating Right to Information Day 28th September
- Promoting Female Literacy in Angola and Mozambique
- Sexual and Reproductive Health rights
- AU Protocol on women's Rights

Copies of the bulletin circulated in 2011 are accessible through FEMNET website www.femnet.or.ke.



• **Bilingual Website**

In 2011 FEMNET updated its bilingual website <http://www.femnet.or.ke> continuously with upcoming events as well as analyses and summaries of key issues happening regionally and internationally that are of relevance to the work of the Network and other stakeholders. Notably, a webpage on Women, Gender and Climate Justice was incorporated on the website so as to facilitate communication and information sharing at regional level. The webpage is an initiative of FEMNET-Mali (an institutional member of FEMNET) who has been partnering with Danish-based KULU-Women and Development to provide information and regular updates on what is happening in the African region and globally on issues of women, gender and



climate change so as to support the continued engagement in the international and regional climate negotiations, debates and processes.

From 28th November to 3rd December 2011, FEMNET participated and engaged with the process of the Seventieth Conference of the Parties (COP-17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Durban, South Africa. Parties to the UNFCCC have met annually from 1995 to assess progress in dealing with climate change and its impacts on humanity and ecosystems. During the COP-17, the UNFCCC Secretariat approximated over 25,000 people from over 190 countries were in Durban. As with other COPs, the 17th COP was not only a place for heightened negotiations on the climate change agenda for all these stakeholders on one hand but also equally important it presented the unique opportunity of facilitating information and knowledge sharing through the numerous side events and caucuses. FEMNET's representation at the COP-17 was important to participate and learn from the discussions on emerging issues around gender and climate justice and also to generate content for the Women, Gender and Climate Justice webpage.

In 2012 the website will undergo a major revamping to enable it have critical features such as the social media (Facebook, blog and twitter) as well as a section for multimedia and press materials.

- **UN Commission on the Status of women (CSW)**

Leading up to the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), FEMNET coordinated the process of drafting the African women's common statement on the theme, "Access to and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's



equal access to full employment and decent work". FEMNET mobilized resources for the participation of 20 African women (including 4 young women) in the CSW, and disseminated information updates in English and French to facilitate African women's effective participation in the CSW processes at national and global levels. During the CSW, FEMNET jointly convened 5 sessions of the African Women's Caucus (AWC), the sole

space for African women's organizations and individual activists to debate and further develop the regional position on the theme of the session, as well as agree on advocacy strategies to impact the outcome of the CSW. (See Annex 1 –Agreed Conclusions 55th CSW and Annex 2- AWC Statement to the CSW).

The discourse on the theme of the CSW was enriched through the organizing of side events where African women, including young women had a platform to make their voices heard. Furthermore, at least five recommendations in the official CSW Agreed Conclusions – q, r, x, y, and gg, contain specific language from the African women's written and oral statement. The recommendations concern violence against girls in and on the way to school, sex and human rights education, and strategies for promoting work-life balance for women.

- **UN Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign**

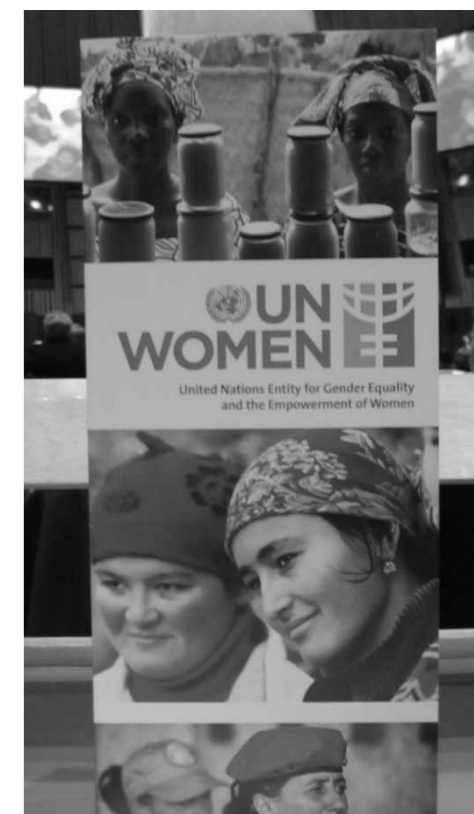
FEMNET is a focal point organization for Africa in the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign. In November 2010, FEMNET in partnership with the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), the convener of the African Feminist Forum and with the support of Urgent Action Fund – Africa, facilitated a high level delegation of African women leaders to travel to New York to meet with the newly appointed head of UN Women. The women leaders impressed upon Dr. Bachelet that it was critical for her to visit Africa during the first 100 days of UN Women's operations in order to meet with a larger selection of women's CSOs and incorporate their input into the organization's short and long term plans. Dr. Bachelet took up this invitation and met with CSO representatives during her attendance of the AU Summit in January 2011.

In June 2011, FEMNET undertook an assessment of the extent of African women's involvement in the strategic planning process for UN Women, and the level to which their recommendations were integrated into UN Women's final Strategic Plan. Additionally, FEMNET collected and presented recommendations on how best civil society organizations can be involved in the development and implementation of the Africa regional and national plans going forward. A total of 54 key regional, sub-regional and national African women's CSOs were surveyed and the recommendations were shared with the GEAR Campaign, UN Women regional offices and the Executive Board meeting at the end of June. This has set the stage for increased strategic engagement of African women with the new entity, ensuring our voices and perspectives are considered.

1.2 Promoting the Universal Ratification and Implementation of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women

- **16th and 17th Summits of the African Union**

In the margins of the 16th AU Summit in Addis Ababa in January 2011, FEMNET on behalf of SOAWR participated in an inter-agency press conference calling on the AU to translate shared values on gender equality and women's empowerment enshrined in the Protocol into concrete actions. Following the inter agency press conference, FEMNET gave a 20-minute radio interview to Afro FM, the only English language



radio station in Ethiopia discussing various elements of the Protocol and the status of African women's rights in general, and urging the Government of Ethiopia to ratify the Protocol.

In early June 2011, FEMNET coordinated an introductory mission to Cameroon on behalf of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition to mobilize various stakeholders towards completing the ratification process of the Protocol and embark on its implementation. In the same month, FEMNET on behalf of SOAWR successfully lobbied the Minister for Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women in Equatorial Guinea, Hon. Eulalia Envo Bela, to deposit Equatorial Guinea's instrument of ratification with the AU Commission. This led to Equatorial Guinea becoming the 31st country to ratify the Protocol. (See Annex 3 -Statement on Equatorial Guinea's Ratification)

1.3 Sustain the Momentum of the African Women's Decade (AWD) among Women's Organizations in Africa

- **Operationalizing the African Women's Decade**

In January 2011 FEMNET convened an evaluation meeting to gauge progress made in implementing national action plans on the African Women's Decade in five countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and South Sudan). CSOs in Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia had previously received grants from FEMNET to facilitate this work. It was noted that the AWD had been operationalized in four provinces in Kenya; South Sudan held two launches of the AWD in Nile State and Jonglei State, reaching 1700 women and men; and a multi-sectoral AWD Launching Workshop for Ethiopia took place in Addis Ababa.

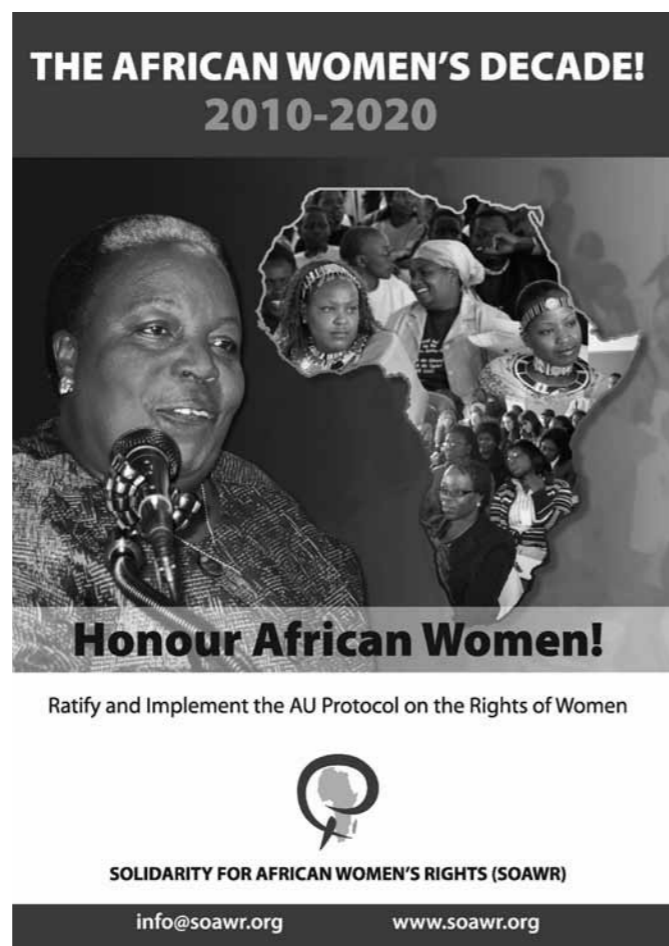
An evaluation report on "Operationalizing the African Women's Decade in the East & Horn of Africa" was published and disseminated widely in both English and French. It was imported to share the experiences and recommendations on operationalizing the AWD widely in order to inform the way the Decade is implemented in various countries going forward.

FEMNET was later invited to be part of an Intersectoral Committee for the Formation of the Secretariat of the African Women's Decade.. A concrete action plan for the remaining years of the Decade needs to be developed and implemented in conjunction with the Ministry to ensure that the opportunities of the Decade are not missed.

1.4 Increase the Proportion and Capacity of African Women in Leadership and Decision Making to Deliver on the GEWE Agenda

- **Third Leadership Conference for African Women**

The Conference was held in Nairobi at the end of August 2011, convening 65 participants from across 15 countries (Kenya, Zambia, Liberia, Nigeria,



Senegal, South Sudan, Egypt, Cameroon, Uganda, Zimbabwe, DRC, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Sierra Leone, and Tunisia) due to hold or which have held general elections in the course of 2010 - 2012. Participants included sitting members of parliament, aspiring MPs and presidential candidates, leaders of women's civil society groups working on political participation, the African Union Commission and development partners.

Amongst other objectives, participants at the Conference successfully deliberated on and input into a proposed funding framework for African women in politics, given that resources are a major barrier to women's effective participation in political life. The conference agreed on a road map to finalize and launch the Fund by 2013. The final Framework will be adopted at the Fourth Leadership Conference in 2012. (See Annex 5- Conference Report)



As a result of the 'We Can' Campaign (a campaign that strives to bring an end to gender-based violence), there is now an increased acceptance of the role of women in governance and leadership in communities. Female change makers (individuals pledging to take a stand against gender-based violence recruited by the various partners that are coordinated by FEMNET) are gaining confidence in taking leadership roles in the communities where the campaign is running.

1.5 Increase Participation of Women in Regional Peace and Political Processes

FEMNET contributed to the development of a compendium on Gender, Peace and Security in Africa by disseminating a UN Women questionnaire widely. As a result, at least 7 organizations submitted their details

to the UN Women consultant building the database. FEMNET also submitted a list of 15 organizations (members/partners) who work on gender, peace and security for the Consultant to approach individually. This facilitated the participation of African women's organizations in the development of the database on gender, peace and security.

Additionally, the AU Training Manual on Gender in Peace Support Operations was completed with the technical input and consultation of women's CSOs working on gender, peace and/or security issues including FEMNET. Going forward, FEMNET is now positioned to participate in the operationalization of the manual, including by nominating women experts who can be part of the AU training database.

The involvement of Changemakers in providing civic education during the implementation of the new constitution gave women more rights and roles in peace building activities preceding the 2012 elections in Kenya.

2: Women's Economic Empowerment & Rights

The main objective of this focus area is to facilitate activities towards the promotion of African women's economic empowerment including increasing access to information and productive resources, and ensuring African women's effective participation in changing macroeconomic policy frameworks to be more gender responsive, engendering trade arrangements between African countries and other regions and contributing to the discourse on development cooperation and new aid modalities (the Aid Effectiveness agenda) from a gender perspective. The desired changes envisioned here include:

- Equal opportunities for women to access education, training and decent work
- Increased ability of African women to create wealth and improve their economic status
- Macro-economic policies and trade arrangements between countries and across regions are gender responsive
- Increased participation of women in in-country and regional economic processes including but not limited to economic planning
- African women have increased ownership and control of property including land and other productive resources
- Platforms for addressing religious and cultural barriers towards women's economic empowerment established
- Women's organizations as drivers for African women's economic empowerment

2.1 Advancing the Engendering of the Aid and Development Effectiveness Agenda

- **Aid Effectiveness Agenda**

In May 2011, FEMNET co-hosted a Regional Consultative Meeting on Aid Effectiveness in Africa. The meeting was held in Yaoundé, Cameroun. The meeting was able to assess the progress made so far towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the implementation of Aid Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination principles as articulated in the Paris Declaration in countries based on the FEMNET study evidence from five countries.

FEMNET contributed to strengthening women's rights organizations and networks' participation within official delegations attending Busan HLF-4,



including CSOs delegation; provide updated information to women's organizations and networks on the state of discussions on the road to Busan; comments on the Busan Outcome Document (BOD) and continue promoting the integration of relevant gender equality and women's rights analyses and proposals within the BACG (as key civil society coordinating instance in the road to Busan) and influence the negotiation process before and in Busan and to promote synergies among the women's groups and CSOs, during the Pan African Conference on Aid Effectiveness. A research report and video documentary on Aid Effectiveness in Kenya were produced and distributed for use as advocacy tools.

2.2 Promoting Gender-sensitive Implementation of Regional, Sub- regional and National Trade Agreements

In 2010, FEMNET entered into partnership with Trust Africa to implement a one year project titled: Promoting African Women's Economic Empowerment through Gender - Responsive Trade Agreements. The main objective of this project is to mainstream gender in trade arrangements in Africa. As part of the project, country studies were undertaken from July–September 2010 in five countries namely: Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia to assess trade arrangements at the regional level between the European Union and Africa and their impact on women's economic rights. Findings of this study indicate that African women are still not fully benefiting from the regional and international trade agreements their government have signed.

Key outcomes from this project in 2011 include the establishment of the national gender lobby groups (NGLs) in each of the five countries (Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda and Egypt). The NGLs have undertaken advocacy and lobby activities targeting government and key stakeholders (such as trade negotiators, planners, economists) in their respective countries to ensure that they are all fully aware of the gender differentiated impacts and take them into consideration when formulating policy, making decisions or implementing trade related programmes. A television documentary has also been produced. The project has received media coverage, 4 newspaper articles have been published, and 2 television interviews have also been done on the project.

As result of working on this project we learnt that careful selection of partners when executing a project is key for it to succeed. We also learnt that working with non traditional members and organizations that are not FEMNET members is a good opportunity for recruiting new members of the network. Through this project, one organization from Zambia joined the network.

- **African Women's Expert Database**

As part of implementing the Economic Governance Project, FEMNET has created a data base for women economists and entrepreneurs, which adds to the existing experts' database on a range of thematic areas.

The information is accessible through the FEMNET website. Maintaining the African Women's database is a major resource for FEMNET as we are asked by many organizations to recommend African women for research, for profiling, for high level appointments, as key contacts in their respective countries and for funding opportunities particularly those based in women's rights organizations. It is also resourceful for the Secretariat when seeking for female experts in specific fields to support the work of the Network.

2.3 Mainstreaming Gender in Adult and Continuing Education for the Advancement of Women's Economic Empowerment

As part of contributing to efforts aimed at promoting female literacy in Africa, FEMNET has been working with Dv International of Mozambique to implement the Female Literacy in Angola and Mozambique (FELITAMO) project. FELITAMO is funded by the European Union and managed by DVV International of Mozambique, and is aimed at improving women's literacy and empowerment by enhancing non state actors' capacities to promote adult literacy models at national, regional and international levels. Additionally a documentary was produced by Dv International showcasing how the FELITAMO project through its literacy programmes in Angola and Mozambique has empowered women through acquiring reading and writing skills.

The FELITAMO project has provided a great visibility opportunity for FEMNET in Angola and Mozambique. The biggest challenge under this project is the language barrier. An in-house Portuguese translator would assist to strengthen and increase FEMNET presence in lusophone countries in Africa.

3: Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health including the Protection of their Rights, Bodily Integrity and Dignity

The main objective of this focus area is to facilitate processes towards enabling African women's organizations to influence national legal and policy frameworks towards the protection and promotion of women's right to sexual and reproductive health. FEMNET facilitates processes aiming to promote and protect the bodily integrity and dignity of African women including prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls and the spread of HIV/AIDS. The purpose is to ensure that society fully values and appreciates women and the role they play in the development of our continent. Women are able to defend themselves against bodily abuse and attacks on their dignity. The changes envisaged in this area include:

- Women able to control and make informed decisions about their bodies and sexuality
- Increased number of male advocates for gender equality in the area of sexual and reproductive health
- Women have increased access to quality sexual and reproductive health care services
- A growing constituency recognizing the centrality of sexual and reproductive health to the achievement of other human rights and development goals in Africa.
- Improved legal and policy frameworks that support the Right to health and sexual and reproductive health and women's bodily integrity and dignity.
- Increased focus on and protection of adolescent and young women's right to sexual and reproductive health.
- Increased societal acknowledgement, awareness and understanding of women rights as human rights
- Women free from all forms of violence in their private and public life

3.1 Promoting the Prevention of VAW/ Gs and HIV/AIDS through the Men to Men Regional Programme

- **The Men to Men Campaign to Promote the Prevention of VAW/ Gs and HIV/AIDS**

The Men to Men Campaign worked with African Life Foundation (ALF) in mainstreaming the We Can Campaign in the Men to Men School outreach programme in Dar es Salaam. A number of committee meetings that attracted 100 male students and teachers from 6 secondary schools in



Dar es Salaam Tanzania were also held. The number of schools participating in the Men to Men programmes in Tanzania increased.

A total of 364, 174 Change makers (151200 men and 212940 women) were recruited in the We Can Campaign in Kenya.

Under the Men to Men program, a team of 25 young men from Gulu University were trained on preventing GBV in partnership with ICON Women and Young People's Leadership Academy; the focal point for Men to Men in Uganda. Follow up meetings with 30 male gender advocates were held on the implementation of action plans developed in 2010 by trained gender advocates from Gulu, Kampala and Lyantonde in the three areas.. Due to resource mobilization efforts, FEMNET was able to provide increased financial support for Men to Men focal points in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia to undertake local level activities. The Men to Men program also expanded to cover sexual and reproductive health issues and respond to armed violence.

A toolkit on the role of men in preventing GBV is being developed. It will be validated and disseminated in 2012.

Funding was secured for Women Won't Wait (WWW) activities in Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC that was channelled to Caucus des Femmes Congolaises. Unfortunately, due to the unrest that surrounded the elections, the campaign was unable to get in touch with the organization and consequently the project activities were not carried out. Going forward, it is important to have contingencies in any situation and be aware of the local context in order to be better prepared for any outcomes.



As part of increasing public awareness on violence against women and girls and HIV/AIDS, FEMNET has continued to share information through its various channels of communication like the E-bulletin, Journal and website. For example the African Women's Journal was used as an awareness raising tool at the ICGLR Special Session which was convened to deliberate on the problem of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in the Great Lakes Region.

Annually during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence, FEMNET shares information with members and also issues statements on the theme of the 16 Days.

3.2 Increasing Women's Organizations' Capacity to Organize around Issues of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Strengthening policy advocacy on the right to SRH

- **ICGLR Special Summit on SGBV**

FEMNET was one of the members of the CSO Coordinating Committee responsible for spearheading a regional process to mobilize civil society organizations in the Great Lakes Region to participate in deliberations leading up to the Summit.

As part of the Committee, FEMNET organized a CSO Experts meeting on SGBV in Arusha, Tanzania from October 30-31, 2011, preceding the ICGLR Experts and Ministers meeting on the same (also held in Arusha from November 1-4, 2011). The main output of the Arusha CSO meeting, attended by 30 experts from the Great Lakes region, was a communiqué that listed specific, time-bound recommendations to the Heads of State and Government, if the theme of the Special Summit "United to Prevent, End Impunity and provide Assistance to Victims of Sexual Gender Based Violence" was to be realized.

FEMNET thereafter joined other members of the Coordinating Committee and CSOs from the 11 Great Lakes member states in Kampala, Uganda, for the pre-Summit and Summit events on SGBV in December 2011. The immediate result of the advocacy efforts was that several of the CSO issues were taken up by the Ministers, First Ladies, and finally the Heads of State in the final Declaration from the Summit. The Declaration from Heads of State made clear commitments that CSOs can use as a platform to advance prevention and eradication of SGBV at the national level. Media engagement (press release, interviews) also broadened the scope of stakeholders that we were able to reach.

Partnerships and synergies between CSOs (national, regional, international) were also strengthened, and a follow-up plan for national and regional engagement on this issue was mapped out.

In January 2011, SOAWR coalition represented by FEMNET and other organizations participated in one of the nine Face the Citizens debates organized in Uganda as part of the electoral process. The purpose of participation was to follow up on the maternal health lobbying with members of parliament and political leaders in Uganda initiated during the East Africa Caravan on Maternal Health and the July 2010 AU Summit. As a follow-up to the Face the Citizens debate, a televised debate on maternal health in Uganda was organized by FOWODE and FEMNET, aimed at discussing and analysing the positioning of maternal health in Ugandan politics. FEMNET in partnership with the White Ribbon Alliance organized a debate for parliamentarians in Tanzania in March 2011 to discuss ways of enhancing their oversight role as law makers, so as to improve the health outcomes for women and girls.

As a result of the debate in Tanzania, which was initiated by civil society organizations but chaired and owned by MPs, a parliamentary sub-committee on maternal and child health was formed and the ground is set for continued collaboration between civil society and government to address the maternal and child health situation in the country.

Due to FEMNET's lobbying at the meeting of African Ministers of Health in Namibia in April 2011, several recommendations on gender equality issues including VAW/G, adolescent SRH and comprehensive SRH education were integrated into the Africa Common Position to UNGASS. A key recommendation on linking the African Women's Decade and the Ministries of Gender to the CARMMA campaign was also adopted by the Experts and Ministers.

4: Women, the Media, Freedom of Information and Use of ICTs

The main objective of this focus area is to facilitate processes to strengthen the role of African women in the media, promote their participation in the lobbies for freedom of information and the use of ICTs for the advancement of women's rights and empowerment in Africa. Communication is essential for collective organizing, transfer of skills and knowledge, movement building and mobilizing a large constituency to speak out on issues affecting women in Africa. The envisaged changes include:

- Increased African women's participation in the formulation and implementation of FOI laws and policies.
- Women increased access to and control of ICTs and other media as tools for transformation.
- Enhanced media understanding of gender and women's empowerment issues.
- Women's organizations with capacity to manage knowledge and (collect, analyze, document, store, disseminate, monitor and evaluate) a wide range of information.

4.1 Increasing Women's Organizations Participation in National Level FOI Lobbies

In 2010, FEMNET successfully completed the first phase of the Freedom of Information (FOI) project which began in June 2009 and ended with publishing a Resource book titled Freedom of Information and Women's Rights in Africa. The second phase of this project involves lobbying women organizations to



participate in advocacy around FOI. In recognition of FEMNET work on FOI and women's rights UNESCO granted FEMNET full scholarship to participate in the Pan African Conference on Access to Information (PACAI) which was held in September 2011 in Cape Town South Africa. During the Right to Know Day (28th

September, 2011) FEMNET participated in activities organized by the FOI network in Kenya. Our key role was to mainstream gender by ensuring that women issues are captured in the main statement that was read during celebrations to mark the day.

In 2011 FEMNET advanced plans to develop and disseminate a tool-kit based on the findings of the FOI conducted in 2009. However due to funding delays completion of the toolkit was postponed to 2012.

4.2 Strengthening Relationships with Media in Order to Advance the Work of the African Women's Movement

FEMNET continued to enhance the capacity of journalists to report on gender equality, women's rights and development issues. This was done through organizing press conferences and also media interviews prior to and during regional events. A media database for key media institutions has also been developed. In 2012, FEMNET will embark on updating the database to include a section of international, regional and national media personnel in decision making positions.

5: Institutional Strengthening of Women's Organizations & Networks in Africa

The main objective of this focus area is to enhance the institutional and organizational capacities of women organizations and networks in Africa to effectively engage in the development processes in the region. FEMNET focuses on movement building as a strategy for increasing the number of women organizations working towards achieving the desired change in the short, medium and longer term period. Thus, FEMNET works to:

- Enable women organizations to work together around issues identified under the five focus areas.
- Provide relevant information and data to women's organizations and other stakeholders to facilitate their informed participation at all levels.
- Mobilize and strengthen the capacities of FEMNET's focal point organizations to contribute to the achievements of the strategic objectives identified for the period 2011 - 2013.
- Increase the regional diversity of the membership and the involvement of young women activists and feminists in the work of the Network.
- Create linkages across like minded organizations and other social movements.
- Expand autonomous spaces for African feminists and activists to organize around issues of common interest.
- Facilitate African women to amplify their voices to impact on decision-making at different levels.

5.1 Strengthening Institutional Capacity of FEMNET Secretariat



In 2011, several staff members at the Secretariat participated in training programmes:- the Head of Communication continued to undertake a public speaking course, the Head of Advocacy took an advanced course in International Human Rights Law and Advocacy, the Advocacy Programme Associate attended a three month Swahili course and the Executive Office Manager also completed her studies in Business Administration.

- **Networking and Collaborative Activities**

Staff members also participated in the following strategic external activities in the course of 2011, contributing to movement building, the discourse on human rights and development, and in many cases also building the capacity of the team.

Date	Activity	Venue	Represented by
February, 2011	World Social Forum	Dakar, Senegal	Head of Communication
March 10 - 15	We Can Campaign Global Steering Committee meeting	Kathmandu, Nepal	Men to Men Programme Associate
April 5-7	SOAWR Stakeholders Meeting on Implementation of the Protocol	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
April 16-20	5th Session of the Conference of African Union Ministers of Health	Windhoek, Namibia	Head of Advocacy
April 28	HBF Gender Forum: Male perspectives on gender equality	Nairobi, Kenya	Men to Men Associate Head of Advocacy Advocacy Associate
May 4	Reproductive Health Rights Alliance documentary and book launch on unsafe abortion in Kenya	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
May 5	Launch of Girl Child Network "Simama" Campaign	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy Men to Men Associate
June 16-17	Open Society International Women's Programme consultation	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
June 26-28	18th Gender is My Agenda Consultation	Malabo, Equatorial Guinea	Head of Advocacy
July 11	Fahamu/SID Kenya Constitutional Transition conference	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
August 19	Women's Empowerment Link meeting on Kenya's National Women's Leadership Platform for Action	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
September 1-2	International Planned Parenthood Federation - Africa Regional Office, regional policy dialogue on SRH	Nairobi, Kenya	Advocacy Associate
September 13	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights meeting on CEDAW concluding observations for Kenya	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
17-22	Pan African Conference on Access to Information	Cape Town, South Africa	Head of Communication
September 22	Interviewed by FIDA-Kenya on maternal health study	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
October 1-4	AU validation workshop for training of trainer on Gender in Peace Support Operations	Nazareth, Ethiopia	Head of Advocacy
October 5-7	Fahamu/ASSN meeting on Gender and Security Sector Reforms	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	Head of Advocacy
October 12	High Level dialogue on Kenyan women in leadership	Nairobi, Kenya	Advocacy Associate
October 10	Interviewed by AWID on the AU Protocol on women's rights	Skype	Head of Advocacy

October 31 – November 2	2nd Ministerial Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development	Geneva Switzerland	Men to Men Programme Associate
November 8	Interviewed by Oxfam AU Liaison Office on women, peace and security	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
November 10	Interviewed by Nina Skagerlind of UN New York on NGOs and UN security council resolutions	Skype	Head of Advocacy
14-14	FELITAMO Mid Term Review	Maputo, Mozambique	Finance Manager & Head of Communication
November 17	State of the Union Coalition consultation	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy
November 21-23	CCP-AU/OSISA/Trust Africa conference on Protecting Democracy	Johannesburg, South Africa	Head of Advocacy
November 28 – Dec 1	AGF VIII Youth Forum	Accra, Ghana	Advocacy Associate
November 28 – Dec 4	COP-17 UNFCCC	Durban, South Africa	Information Manager
November 30	Launch of African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) National Advisory Panel for Kenya Launch of the We Can Global Campaign in East and Central Africa	Nairobi, Kenya	Head of Advocacy/Men to Men Programme Associate



PART 3: INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

- **Diversity of funding and sustainability**

It is our goal and dream to ensure that we are financially sustainable so as to continue to support women in Africa, because the fight against poverty, illiteracy, violence against women and violation of human rights is not over. To achieve good fiscal health for the organization FEMNET is continually thinking of and devising creative ideas to diversify and strengthen its funding base. In 2011 FEMNET explored funding options from new donors and also took the Building project plan a step ahead by purchasing a 2 acre piece of land on which to potentially build on the African Women's Power House.

- **New organizational policies**

As an organization continues to grow it becomes obligatory to elaborate more policies and procedures that link the organizations mission and its day-to-day operations. In 2011 FEMNET produced or reviewed several policy documents including:- Finance Accounts Procedure Manual; Fund Raising Strategy; Travel policy ; Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; Procurement Policy and Conflict of Interest form.

These have supported staff in their roles and responsibilities so as to be consistent within predefined limits. The policies remain in draft form awaiting Board approval in April 2012.

- **Transition in Leadership in 2011**

Change among senior staff in quick succession can be quite challenging for any organization, but the work schedule was maintained after the departure of the Executive Director in June 2011. The Programme Manager, who had previously worked with FEMNET, was able to 'hit the ground' running, taking minimal time to learn the processes and running of the organization as Acting Executive Director. A smooth handing over was done when Dinah Musindarwezo took over as Executive Director in December.

- **Administration & Human Resource**

In April 2011 an Advocacy Programme Associate Ms. Nebila Abdulmelik from Ethiopia was recruited to support the busy Advocacy programme. In June the position of Programme Manager was also filled by Ms. Roselynn Musa from Nigeria. The Programme Manager was then appointed to Acting Executive Director after the departure of the Executive Director shortly thereafter, until December 2011 when a new Executive Director Ms. Dinah Musindarwezo from Rwanda joined the organization.

Ms. Ntswaki Mhlanga, a fellow under the FK exchange programme from IDASA in South Africa completed her exchange programme with FEMNET in May 2011 after ten months stay at FEMNET. Ntswaki helped FEMNET in improving the membership database. She was also instrumental in managing the social media networks (Twitter, blog and Facebook) and jump starting the proposal for improving the FEMNET website so as to make it user friendly and easy to navigate.

Mentoring and building capacities of young African feminists has been core to enriching FEMNET's programme work. In 2011, FEMNET continued to engage young women to work as interns under different programmes. The following interns worked with us for between 3 to 6 months, maximally:-

- Mercyline Omondi and Ruth Owino (Communications)
- Jacob Otachi (Resource Centre)
- Maureen Omondi (Advocacy)

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011 AND 2010

	2011 KShs	2011 USD	2010 KShs
SUPPORT AND REVENUES			
Grant received	138,988,714	1,715,910	157,963,239
Finance income	3,365,881	41,554	2,133,144
Other income	3,745,167	46,237	1,254,574
Restricted/deferred income	-39,915,725	-492,787	-46,075,328
Total support and Revenue	106,184,037	1,310,914	115,275,629
EXPENSES			
Programme expenses	87,467,285	1,079,843	100,133,307
Establishment expenses	3,367,630	41,576	3,540,330
Administration expenses	10,208,336	126,029	6,575,023
Total expenses	101,043,251	1,247,448	110,248,660
Surplus for the year	5,140,786	63,466	5,026,969
General reserves at beginning of the year	24,433,498	301,648	19,406,529
General reserves at end of the year	29,574,284	365,114	24,433,498

FEMNET financial position continue to improve with a net assets balance of US\$ 365,114 at fiscal year end.

FEMNET recorded US\$ 1,803,701 in support and revenue in fiscal year 2011, US\$ 492,787 of which is restricted for use in the following periods. The expenses reduced marginally by 8.3% while continuing to have very strong expense ratios with programme expenses representing 86.6% of the total expenses.

The net long term assets increased substantially as a result of the purchase of a 2 acre freehold land for USD 128,738 during the year.

* The figures have been translated at rate of USD 1 = KSh 81; Euro 1 = 108.

* FEMNET's financial statements have been independently audited by accounting firm of Otieno Oboge & Co (Certified Public Accountants) and received an unqualified audit opinion as to their fair presentation in conformity with International Financial reporting Standards and the Kenyan Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Act. A complete set of audited financial statements is available upon request.

ASSETS

	2011 Kshs	2011 USD	2010 KShs
Current Assets:			
Receivables	979,570	12,094	1,291,541
Investments at Market Value	9,053,235	111,768	8,849,664
Cash and Cash Equivalents	63,819,584	787,896	62,546,899
	73,852,389	911,758	72,688,104
Long Term Assets:			
Property and equipment-net of accumulated depreciation	13,811,236	170,509	4,166,127
Total Assets	87,663,625	1,082,267	76,854,231
LIABILITIES AND RESERVES			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	14,098,360	174,054	2,270,149
Restricted / Deferred income	43,415,725	535,996	49,575,328
	<u>57,514,085</u>	<u>710,050</u>	<u>51,845,477</u>
Reserves			
General reserve	29,574,284	365,115	24,433,498
Capital reserve	575,256	7,102	575,256
	<u>30,149,540</u>	<u>372,217</u>	<u>25,008,754</u>
Total Liabilities and Reserves	<u>87,663,625</u>	<u>1,082,267</u>	<u>76,854,231</u>



PART 4: KEY LESSONS LEARNT & CONCLUSION

It's often quoted that "Success is a journey, not a destination" and every step in this journey is marked by achievements, challenges, threats and lessons learned for future improvement.

For the past 23 years, FEMNET has continued to expand, build upon and advance the communication, advocacy and training approaches towards gender equality and women's empowerment while remaining true to our vision, African women's collective leadership for equality, peace and sustainable development.

Achievements in 2011 have already been discussed in depth in Part 3 of this report. However, in summary we can capture key achievements as:-

- Thirty one (31) countries have now ratified the AU Protocol on the rights of women in Africa (2 countries having ratified in 2011 – Gabon and Equatorial Guinea)
- Mobilized CSO experts from the Great Lakes countries to participate in the processes leading up to the ICGLR Special Summit on SGBV. Five of the seven recommendations from civil society experts were successfully adopted by the ICGLR Ministers, First Ladies and Heads of State during the Special Summit on SGBV
- FEMNET is a member of the Intersectoral Committee for the formation of the African Women's Decade Secretariat
- Over 50 African women (both young and seasoned) involved in political leadership were facilitated to share experiences, plan for a regional funding framework and intergenerational network.
- Successful meeting between FEMNET Leadership Conference participants and Speaker of Kenya's national assembly and 13 members of parliament, including two Chief Whips
- In 2011 FEMNET celebrated the appointment of Hon. Francoise Labelle as 2nd vice-president of the Pan-African Parliament. Hon Labelle was one of the participants at the Women in Political Leadership conference held in Lusaka Zambia in 2010. In her note to FEMNET dated 13th September, 2011, Hon Labelle said ' You may be interested to know that in May was elected 2nd vice-president of the Pan-African Parliament'.
- Facilitated the participation of 20 African women, including four women under age 30, in the 55th Session of the CSW
- Facilitated African women leader's engagement with inaugural Under Secretary General of UN Women, Michele Bachelet, at AU Summit and during 55th CSW
- Coordinated the development of a common statement from African women's regional organizations to the 55th Session of the CSW
- Four recommendations from FEMNET adopted by AU Health Ministers conference, covering VAW/G, comprehensive sexuality education and linkage between CARMMA and AWD
- Successful mobilization of stakeholders in Cameroon around the Protocol (CSO's, UN Women)
- Engaged with local, regional and international media successfully. Media engagement on the Protocol (Ethiopia, Jan 2011), Aid Effectiveness (Cameroon, May 2011), women in political leadership (August 2011) and SGBV (Kampala, December 2011)
- Successfully completed implementation of Economic Governance project which led to Trade Marks East Africa to approach us to submit a proposal of Women and Trade and use of ICTs.
- FEMNET findings of the Accra Action Agenda (AAA) and Paris Declaration (PD) research submitted to OECD as evidence for Development effectiveness
- FOI book has continued to inform mainstreaming of gender in Freedom of Information advocacy. An organization in Pakistan is using the FOI book to develop a resource on how they can engage women in lobbying for FOI.
- FEMNET visibility in Angola and Mozambique increased through the FELITAMO project. Two individual members from Angola joined FEMNET.

Challenges faced along the way include:-

- High expectations that FEMNET will fund members participation in various Advocacy activities
- Increased exposure and profile of the Advocacy programme also led to increased demand for our time which we could not always meet
- Slow progress in developing the Men to Men programme in Francophone countries (DRC, Mali)
- Partnerships with some funding partners served to limit the level and boldness of activism that the Advocacy programme wanted to undertake
- Fundraising continues to be a significant challenge to implementing program activities such as Men to Men programme in DRC and Mali, CSW 55 follow up activities and follow up activities to the Women in Political Leadership conference.
- A lot of FEMNET members are still not able to contribute content to FEMNET publications.
- The continued fluctuation of the local currency in Kenya continues to affect production of information products because all prices increased.
- Limited staff in translation department continues to slow down the work in communication

Some threats :-

- Progress in developing the African Women's Decade Secretariat, which is necessary to revive and maintain the momentum of the Decade has been slow.
- The AU Summit in June 2011 was held in Equatorial Guinea, a country that is very restrictive to civil society engagement. This meant that mobilizing of women's organizations in that country, media work and other activities could not be carried out as planned.
- Instability in some countries as a result of disputed elections for example the Ivory Coast crisis and also the North Africa revolution. FEMNET was directly affected by the revolution in North Africa because we were unable to complete implementing the Economic Governance Project in Egypt after the protests began.
- Continued shrinking space for civil society has threatened work on women's rights in many African countries.
- Lack of Freedom of Information laws in many African countries, which continues to negate citizens free speech and access to vital information that can help in holding governments accountable to human rights commitments.

Key Lessons Learnt:-

Working in strategic partnerships is the most efficient means of reaching our various objectives. However we must not allow a partnership to prevent us from reaching our objective. Limitations of partnerships must be managed, and innovative ways of circumventing these limitations have to be identified, without compromising the partnership where possible.





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