

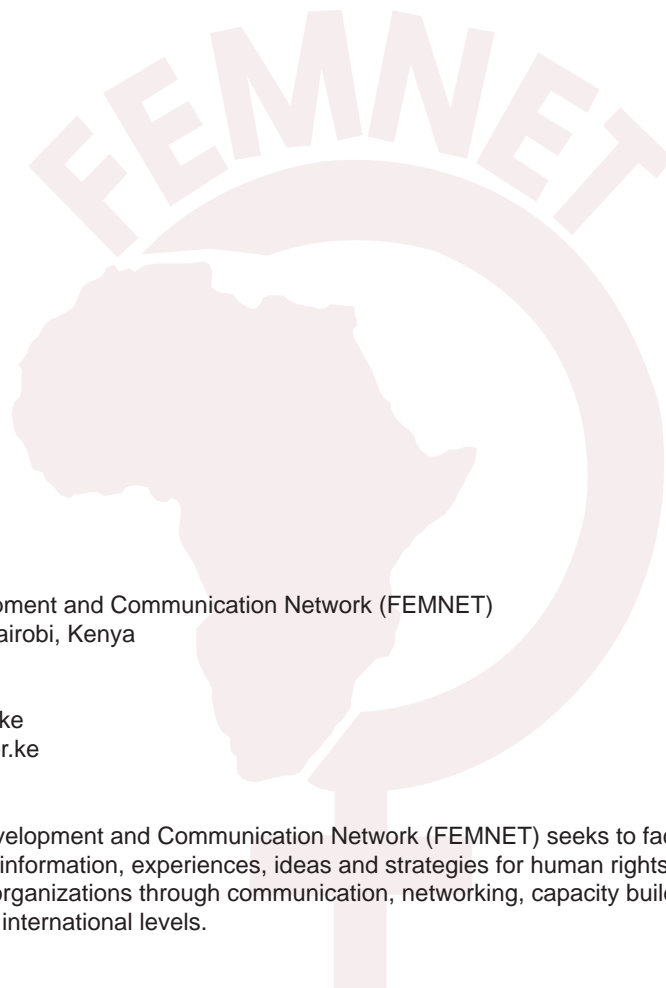
2009 Annual Report

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



African Women's Development
and Communication
Network (FEMNET)





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The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) seeks to facilitate and coordinate the sharing of information, experiences, ideas and strategies for human rights promotion among African women's organizations through communication, networking, capacity building and advocacy at regional and international levels.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AAI	Action Aid International
ADF	Africa Development Forum
AfCSO	African Civil Society
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMwA	Akina Mama wa Afrika
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AWC	African Women's Caucus
AWDF	African Women's Development Fund
AWID	Association of Women in Development
AWLI	African Women's Leadership Institute
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CGWL	Centre for Global Women's Leadership
CIDA-GESP	Canadian International Development Agency - Gender Equality Support Project
CONFINTEA	Conference of the African Region for the Global Sixth International Conference on Adult Education
CREA	Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (based in India)
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSW	UN Commission on the Status of Women
EAC	East African Community
ECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOCC	AU Economic, Social and Cultural Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
EU	European Union
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communication Network
FOI	Freedom of Information
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	UN Gender Equality Architecture Reform Campaign
GFW	Global Fund for Women
HBF	Heinrich Boll Foundation
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HLF3	Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
KGF	Kenya Gender Festival
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEGEN-Kenya	Men for Gender Equality Now
MEWOR	Media for African Women's Rights
MTC	Men's Travelling Conference
NFLS	Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies
NFPs	National Focal Points
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RC	Resource Centre
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SOAWR	Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition
UAF	Urgent Action Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls
WEDO	Women Environmental and Development Organisation
WSF	World Social Forum
WSIS	World Summit on Information Society
WWW	Women Won't Wait Campaign

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



I joined the FEMNET Executive Board as the Chairperson in 2003 and I was re-elected for a second term in 2007. At that time, my vision was to increase FEMNET's membership and visibility in French speaking Africa and other sub-regions where it required a strong presence and linkage with a substantive number of women's organisations. It is a humbling moment looking down memory lane, to realize how far we have journeyed and the milestones we have achieved in the last seven years. The membership has increased by slightly over 30% and the visibility of the organisation has greatly improved within Africa and at the international level. The collaborative linkages with different stakeholders at the regional level has strengthened its outreach and made it possible to expand its programs. Since inception, FEMNET has played a key role in advocating for change in policies, laws and practices at different levels that hinder the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. It has facilitated communication among women's organisations and key stakeholders that make decisions that impact on the lives of African women.

The year 2009 provided a unique platform for the Network to play a central role in the process of mobilizing African women and men to be actively involved in monitoring the progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA). I would like to thank the active members of the Network for keeping the fire burning and ensuring that women's rights organising is sustained at different levels. The findings of the Beijing +15 Review in Africa indicated clearly the need for committed front bearers/ runners who work against all odds to ensure that the voices of African women are amplified, recognised and actions taken to address the concerns or issues raised. There is a lot of work to be done in order to realise the goals of the BPfA – equality, development and peace. Therefore, it is imperative to have a strong Network and the network can only be as strong as its individual members and organisations working together towards a common cause.

I extend appreciation to our allies in the various bodies of the United Nations most especially UNIFEM, UNDP, UNESCO; the African Union and the other sub-regional groupings like the East African Community (EAC), ECOWAS and SADC who worked with FEMNET and its collaborators as partners to achieve our common goal of improving the lives of African women and girls. Without your support it would have been next to impossible to accomplish so much during the year. I appreciate the members of the Executive Board and Board of Trustees for the hard work, cooperation and support throughout the year. Last and not in any way the least I acknowledge the continued support of FEMNET's partners who provided moral, technical and financial support to the organisation as well as its member organisations. It is the support we receive from so many partners and collaborating organisations which gives us the courage and strength to continue moving forward with hope and determination that our work must make a difference in the lives of women and girls in Africa.

Mama Koite Doumbia
FEMNET Chairperson

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On the 15th-17th of December 2009 staff members of FEMNET met at a quiet place in Nairobi to take stock of the work accomplished during the year and also to plan collectively and individually for the year 2010. In the mornings of the two days retreat from 7:00 - 7:45 a.m. we went out together for a health walk, promenading through the trails created by the managers of the place for their visitors. It was a very special treat for the staff members and we enjoyed the experience immensely after a year of very hard work.

On the first day of the retreat we mapped out what was accomplished successfully under each of the Program area and using indicators developed after the institutional external evaluation held in June 2009 we attempted to assess the impact of our work in 2009. A lot more than we had anticipated was accomplished during the year. It was humbling in many ways to note what a team of only 12 staff members at the FEMNET Regional Secretariat and the 12 Board members

drawn from all the five sub- regions in Africa can do when they work together to contribute to achieving common goals. We were all curious to identify some of the factors that contributed to the success of our work in 2009. The key factor highlighted was the huge number of people and organisations that stood with us and supported our work; those who provided constructive criticism and others financial support; and those who shared information resources and exposed us to new opportunities and ways of working that made it possible for FEMNET to expand its outreach and increase its impact. That old adage remained so true: *“together we can make so much difference and cover a lot more ground than when we act singularly.”*

As we celebrated the successes of FEMNET in 2009 focus was also drawn to the findings of the Beijing +15 Review process in Africa. FEMNET as part of the Africa NGO Task Force for the Review, played a central role in mobilizing African women to participate in the official national level review as well as the parallel review processes of the implementation of the Beijing commitments since the last review done in 2004/2005 (Beijing +10 Review). The reports indicated that efforts to promote gender equality, equity and women’s empowerment contributed to the consolidation of some of the gains noted in the 2004/2005 Review. For example, working towards achieving gender parity in education and training at different levels; and increasing the numbers of women in leadership and governance structures. Countries have passed laws providing for equality of men and women under the law and those that outlaw discrimination on the ground of sex among other grounds. Laws that outlaw practices that violate women’s rights for example female genital cutting, widow inheritance and child marriage are also in place in a number of African countries. National Plans of Action have been adopted to implement the BPfA and gender machineries established and/ or strengthened in some countries in terms of personnel and budget allocations. Access to credit for women has increased with the proliferation of microfinance schemes and traditional financial institutions developing new products that take into consideration the special needs of women entrepreneurs.

However, big gaps still remain between the goals and the realities on the ground. Some of the factors identified in the review reports that have hindered significant progress in the last five years include concerns like the food and fuel crises, the governance crisis in many countries in Africa including very high levels of corruption that jeopardize the realization of social and economic rights; the proliferation of small arms contributing to widespread insecurity in various parts of the continent; the financial and economic meltdown and its impact on the economies of African countries; the war on terrorism which has resulted in some instances in increased levels of human rights violations; and changes in climatic patterns. All these factors have combined to threaten the sustenance of the gains so far made. Worse still, if these factors remain unattended to there will be further slow down of the process of implementation of the commitments to women's rights and empowerment.

Despite this gloomy picture what energized and encouraged us to journey on throughout the year 2009 was the collection of numerous success stories of women organisations and individual activists (both men and women) who marched on with great determination, working against all odds to make a difference. We were strengthened in our resolve to continue doing the work we are engaged in by the stories of leadership of women in remote villages or slum areas that have used minimal resources at their disposal to make their living conditions better. The stories of young girls and women who are survivors of horrible incidents of sexual violence in Kenya's post – 2007 election period and in DRC on how they have continued to live positively despite failure to see justice being done for the violations. All these stories provided a clear message that we cannot give up. We have to remain focused on achieving the vision of the Network and the goals and targets agreed upon.

In a modest way, FEMNET in 2009 contributed to making change possible by linking women's organisations through provision of information, sharing ideas and effective strategies for organizing and advocating for women's rights at different levels. We facilitated women's access to capacity building support and networking opportunities among women in political leadership. FEMNET in collaboration with other actors amplified the voices of African women in different spaces at the international, regional, sub- regional and national levels where decisions are made that impact their lives. The 2009 Annual Report provides in summary an account of the work of the Network, highlighting the activities undertaken, their impact, and the lessons learnt.

The programme activities implemented in 2009 were possible due to the support, partnerships, and friendship of the members of the Network, partner organizations, friends, and associates of the Network across Africa and in other parts of the world. We hope to see many more feminists and activists organizations joining the Network in 2010. The more the better as the work we have to do in Africa to achieve equality, development and peace for all, is colossal. The year 2010 will be a defining one for the Network as we re-launch the resource mobilization drive for the **Africa Women's Power Centre**. FEMNET plans to establish the Centre in Nairobi, Kenya by end of 2010 to contribute to personal and collective empowerment of African women and girls. It is our sincere hope and prayer that we shall work together to realize this vision.

As you read through this Report, we believe you will find it informative, educative and inspiring and your feedback will go a long way to move us in the right direction.

Norah Matovu Winyi
Executive Director



First Architectural drawings of the proposed African Women's Power Centre

INTRODUCTION

The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) is a regional African organisation that works to promote women's rights and development in Africa. Established in 1988, FEMNET has over the years operated as a pan-African network working as an interface between civil society organizations (CSOs) working on women's advancement and key stakeholders such as government, international organizations like the UN, and other development agencies. This Report provides a summary of the many successes, as well as the unavoidable challenges we experienced in the year 2009. The report also outlines specific areas for further improvement in the following year, 2010. The year 2009 was very busy with major activities such as preparations for the Beijing +15 review in full gear, an External Institutional evaluation by FEMNET's core institutional funders, Sida and Oxfam Novib and also a new project under the Communication Programme called Freedom of Information and Women's Rights in Africa.

In line with our vision: *African women's collective leadership for equality, peace and sustainable development*, we continued 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 regional and international levels. FEMNET's regional outlook continues to give it a unique edge throughout Africa and also at international levels. This has earned FEMNET international clout on women's issues in Africa. In the year 2009, strategic partnerships with other organisations contributed a great deal to most of the significant milestones that we achieved. Through our Advocacy and Communication Programmes we continued to provide timely and relevant information to our members who are mostly women's organisations and individual women's rights activists across Africa, and key stakeholders in government, regional and international organizations like the African Union, United Nations and donor agencies.

One of FEMNET's major challenges in 2009 was some of the changes in the staff team. In January to February 2009 there were only four Program staff members. In March 2009, Ms. Aicha Tamboura from Burkina Faso joined FEMNET as the Programme Manager. Unfortunately Ms. Tamboura had to leave after only four months into her three years contract period. The Programme Manager position

remained vacant for the rest of the year. Ms Naisola Likimani from Kenya joined the organisation as Advocacy Officer in May 2009 taking over from Ms. Roselyn Musa from Nigeria who had completed her contract with FEMNET in December 2008. Ms. Likimani worked hard to strengthen the Advocacy Programme in 2009 and sustain most of its various projects. Mr. Kennedy Otina was appointed in May 2009 as a Program Associate under the Advocacy Programme to spearhead the scaling up of the Men to Men initiative to cover six other African countries in addition to Kenya.

The 2009 Annual Report is divided into three parts. **Part One** provides an overview of the context within which the Network designed and implemented its activities, identifying some of the global and regional trends that in one way or the other impacted the activities of the Network. **Part two** provides the highlights of the activities undertaken under each Program area and **Part three** provides information on the administrative aspects and the financial status of the organisation during the year. There are a number of annexes which include press statements, solidarity messages and communiqués that were issued during the year seeking for accountability and lobbying for strengthening different mechanisms in Africa that would support gender mainstreaming and women's advancement.





The National Consultative Meeting for Kenyan Women Leaders held on the 14th December 2009 to discuss the different contentious issues in the draft Harmonised Constitution of Kenya (2009).

PART ONE: AFRICA REGIONAL CONTEXT

In the year 2009 FEMNET's operating context was influenced by a number of factors, the main one being the global economic and financial crises. This made the year very challenging for many civil society organizations (CSOs) as donor countries re-directed resources to bail out their own financial institutions and major manufacturing companies. This situation affected the amount of development aid flowing into Africa despite the spirited appeals of world leaders like the Secretary-General of the United Nations calling on the G8 countries to meet their commitment of increasing development aid to at least 7% of their GDP by the year 2010.¹ The global economic turmoil, had implications of considerable scope for the work of many CSOs and it also affected the promotion of human rights in general and women's rights in particular. FEMNET like many CSOs felt the impact of the global financial and economic crises through the protracted negotiations for financial and technical support for its programs which resulted in fewer resources for more work. However, the silver lining in this situation was the increased capacity of the staff and Board members to stretch every shilling and dollar to produce more results thus increasing our efficiency in managing and allocating our reduced resources. However, the economic and financial crises remained a huge concern for CSOs generally due to its potential negative impact on the gains already made to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment under the Beijing Platform for Action commitments, other international and regional human rights instruments and under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Political Environment: Governance, Leadership and Democracy

The political situation in Africa remained somewhat volatile and this affected the efforts aiming to address gender equality concerns and women's empowerment. The President of Guinea Bissau, Joao Bernardo Vieira was murdered on March 2, 2009 by armed men. Since then the country has been unstable affecting the lives of thousands of people. On 7th June, Gabon President Omar Bongo, the world's longest-serving leader died of cardiac arrest at the age of 73, after ruling for 42 years.

¹ The UN Secretary General made this appeal when he addressed journalists in Japan, 7th July, 2008.

The Speaker of the Gabonese Senate Rose Francine Rogombe was sworn in as the interim President, becoming the second African woman President. Rogombe was charged with organizing elections within 30 to 45 days. The elections were held in September 2009 and Ali-Ben Bongo, son of the late Omar Bongo became President of Gabon after winning a controversial poll. Two female candidates contested in the presidential elections. In September 2009 soldiers in Conakry, Guinea used excessive force to disperse a peaceful demonstration with about 50,000 people protesting against the junta government. Over 157 demonstrators were reported killed, 1,253 injured including reports of over 100 women being raped.

South Africa and Malawi held peaceful elections and Jacob Zuma and Bingu wa Mutharika were elected and re-elected respectively. Sudan embarked on the process of preparing for the Referendum due in April 2011 which will give a chance to the people of Sudan to decide whether to remain as one country or to allow the people of Southern Sudan to form an autonomous government and state. The International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant of arrest for Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity remained a contentious matter for the people of Sudan and Africa as a whole throughout 2009. African leaders have a divided position on whether this should be the way to go to address the issue of impunity and human rights violations in Africa. President Bashir expelled all humanitarian organizations from Sudan that were supplying essential materials and food aid to the people in Darfur. It is the women and children who have been most affected by this situation.

Internal political wrangles continued in Madagascar causing insecurity in the country and displacement of many people. The country experienced untold losses due to the instability as income from its tourist industry made a nosedive in the first half of the year. President Marc Ravalomanana resigned in March 2009 and his main opponent Andy Rajoelina declared himself the new leader and assumed the role as Acting President. Madagascar, Mauritania and Guinea remained suspended from the African Union due to the undemocratic change of leadership in their respective countries. Madagascar lost the opportunity of hosting the June/ July 2009 Africa Union Heads of states and government Summit. It was hosted by Libya (in Sirte) instead. Libya as a country has progressed significantly in improving women and girls' access to education, health care and better housing. However, it has a very low score on achieving equality between men and women and eliminating discrimination against women in all spheres of life. This situation is similar in most of the North African countries.

Congolese rebel leader Laurent Nkunda, the man who had been leading the war against the government in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Goma region was arrested in Rwanda. The protracted war in Goma exposed many women and girls to the worst forms of sexual and gender based violence. Unfortunately, in 2009 there were also men speaking out from the DRC about being subjected to systematic forms of sexual abuse. In August 2009 U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Africa. Her trip took her to Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and South Africa, and she also met Somali leaders in Kenya. Key issues alluded to by Mrs. Clinton included: gender-based violence especially in conflict and post- conflict situations, food insecurity caused by conflicts and in some countries like Kenya drought; and poor health indicators for many African people, women and girls being in the worst situation. In the DRC, Mrs. Clinton issued a strong message to government officials and U.N. peacekeepers in the eastern city of Goma, demanding an end to rampant sexual violence that has engulfed war-ravaged areas. Heads of states and governments in the Great Lakes region met in Lusaka, Zambia at an International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to search for ways of ensuring that peace is restored and prevails in the sub-region through strengthening economic and trade relations. Unfortunately, by year's end the security situation in Africa remained generally tense and unpredictable in many areas.

The situation in Kenya the host country of FEMNET Secretariat, continued to be of great concern as leaders in the Coalition government continued to disagree on a number of critical issues relating to the implementation of the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation (KNDR) Framework signed by President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga, specifically on Agenda item No. 4. This agenda seeks to address long standing issues, including constitutional, legal and institutional reforms relating to the executive and its relationship to the other arms of government; the electoral system and demarcation of constituencies; the reforms in the police and other security bodies; and land and wealth distribution mechanisms. As the leaders put up a disjointed front in running government affairs, thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) remained in camps (majority being women and children) since the political upheaval following the disputed 2007 presidential elections. By end of the year some of the IDPs were resettled by giving them land just before the long rains set in (September / October 2009). However, the issue of corruption in the allocation of land for the resettlement of IDPs was a sad story that left a very sour taste in the mouth. Kenya is no exception to shameless stories of corruption that deny many women and girls enjoyment of their rights and realization of their full potential. Many African countries are grappling with the deep rooted problem of corruption that is affecting all sectors. The 2009 Transparency International Report indicates that the most affected sectors are health, the judiciary, the police and local government as the decentralization efforts have spread the corruption 'cancer' to the local government levels as well.

Kenya is still struggling with the process of justice for the perpetrators of the violence post-2007 elections. Throughout the year there was a debate whether to set up a local tribunal to bring to trial the main perpetrators of the post -2007 election violence whose names were handed over in a sealed envelope by the Waki Commission to the Chief Mediator Dr. Kofi Annan, who chairs the African Union Panel of Eminent African Personalities. When the deadline for setting up the local trial elapsed and no progress was made Dr. Kofi Annan handed over the envelope to the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC). As the drama unfolded the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs Hon. Martha Karua resigned in April 2009 and she later declared her candidature for the 2012 Presidential Elections. Several other government officials were forced to resign or relinquish their positions due to the uncoordinated processes of appointing heads of key institutions like the Director and Deputy Director of the Kenya Anti- Corruption Commission. The year ended with numerous corruption scandals in government that led to the loss of huge sums of money intended for addressing the food (maize) shortage caused by the prolonged drought and poor planning. Other corruption were funds intended for supporting infrastructural developments and increasing text books availability in primary schools in Kenya. In short the Coalition Government in Kenya was a system in crisis throughout 2009 and was likened to a critically sick patient on life support.

One positive development worth mentioning is that Kenya once again embarked on the Constitutional reform process which has so far taken 20 years. A Committee of Experts (CoE) was set up in April 2009 and they produced a draft harmonized Constitution released in November 2009. It was debated and millions of submissions were made by Kenyans in November/December 2009. The country hopes to have a new Constitution in place by August 2010.

Human Security: Conflicts, Freedom of Expression and the Right to Dignity & Bodily Integrity

Other countries in the Eastern and Horn of Africa sub- region continued to face challenges that affected work on women's rights promotion and advancement. The wars and insecurity in Somalia and the activities of Somali pirates continue to affect trade, business and security in the whole sub- region. Many Somalis have fled their country to Kenya and Uganda to a certain extent this exodus continues to be a security risk as bad elements also take advantage of the porous borders to infiltrate into the systems of the countries receiving huge numbers of refugees on a daily basis. The draconian law in place in Ethiopia which limits people's rights to organize and participate in

their governance and development processes remains totally unacceptable especially so because Ethiopia hosts the seat of the main governance body in the Africa Union Project (the African Union Commission). Sudan continued to apply its discriminatory laws on indecent dressing and behaviour against women and Lubna's case² was the highlight which attracted the attention of the international community and women's rights organizations in Africa calling upon the Sudanese government to repeal all discriminatory laws against women.

West Africa was early in the year hit by severe floods with over 600,000 people affected. The worst hit countries were Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana and Niger where crop coverage on tens of thousands of acres of land was destroyed. The issue of hunger, and drought in several parts of Africa remained a major cause of concern and conflicts. Several people died, with women and children being the most affected. There were food riots in Senegal for example. Countries like Gambia remained in the spotlight due to its poor human rights record despite the fact that it hosts the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. The problem of the widespread practice of FGC/M in Gambia, and other West African countries remained a big concern. In countries like Mali the religious groupings called upon the President to review a bill whose intention was to outlaw the practice. The President of Mali, Amadou Toumani Toure was in the same year forced to return to parliament the country's new family law for further review. This was after mass protests against the Family law, which gave greater rights to women. Muslim leaders had alleged that the law was an attack on Islam and traditional values.

The problem of human trafficking in West African countries is also a huge problem. Many young people (both men and women) risk their lives to find passage to European countries. Women and girls who are trafficked are sold into modern day slavery as overworked house maids or sex workers with no rights whatsoever.

The issue of brain drain continued in 2009 as many citizens of Africa left their own countries as political or economic refugees to go to Europe, America and other parts of the world. The impact of this problem is immeasurable to the development of Africa more so as majority leave after benefiting from the huge investment made by their countries in their education and professional training. Countries like Zimbabwe continued to suffer most from this problem. With the most severe part of the economic crisis unfolding in 2009 in western countries the level of remittances to Africa also reduced considerably as people lost their jobs and shifted their attention to overcoming their debt burdens. The huge number of women and children in Africa dependant on these remittances for their basic survival were affected.

In May 2009, Africa lost a comrade, a colleague, and an irrepressible Pan Africanist Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem in a car accident in Nairobi. This was a very trying moment for all of us as Taju, as he was popularly known, contributed significantly to the process of conceptualizing FEMNET's Africa Union project which has been implemented since 2004, intended to contribute to the efforts of mainstreaming gender in the AU and all its mechanisms. We mourn Taju and many other brothers and sisters who died in the struggle of making Africa better for all of us today and for future generations.

The World Athletics Championships held in Berlin Germany in August 2009 were marred with controversy after South African runner Caster Semanya won gold medal in the 800metre race. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) ordered Semanya to take a gender verification test after doubts were raised about her sex. This decision by IAAF sparked a backlash from sections of civil society who argued that the Semanya's right to dignity, privacy, bodily integrity and liberty were violated.

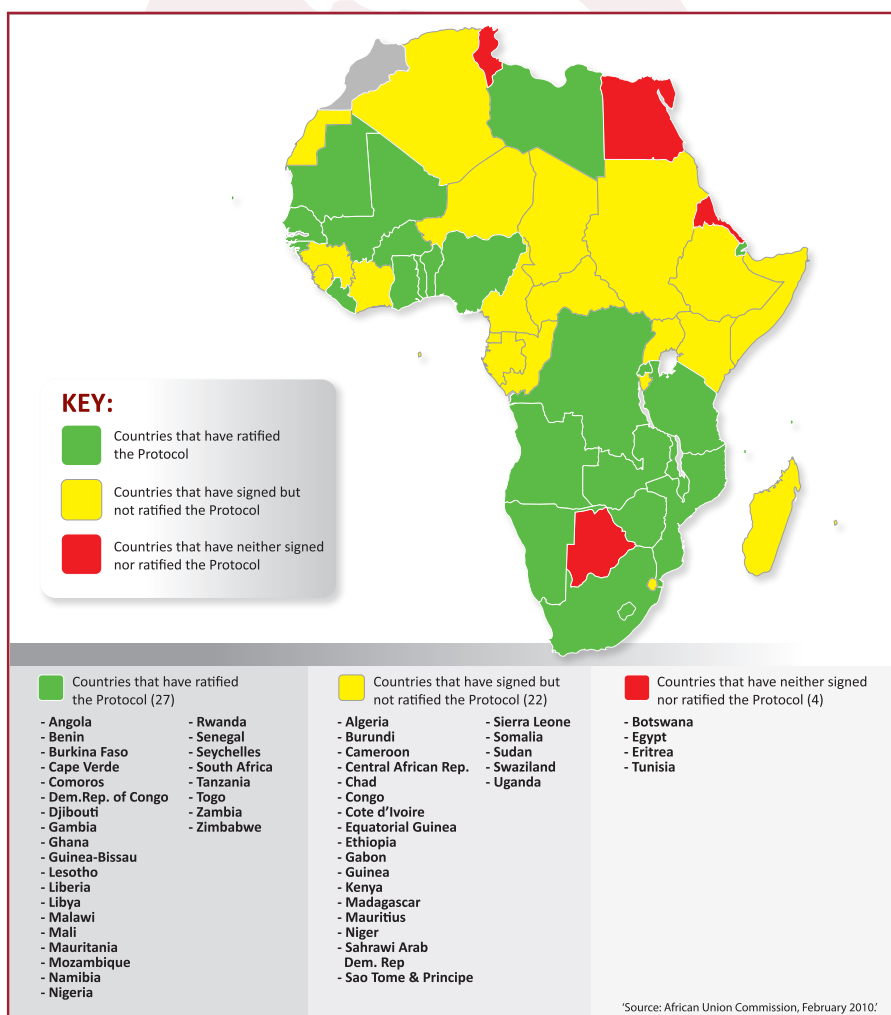
Zambian President Rupiah Banda signed into law a legislation regulating the operations of civil society, sending shock waves through the sector, which fears its independence will be severely

² Refer to the SOAWR Press Release on this case, dated 4th August 2009 and accessible on the website <http://www.pambazuka.org/aumonitor/comments/2504/>

compromised. This follows the adoption of a draconian law in Ethiopia that limits the extent to which human rights organizations and media groups can function effectively. No Ethiopian human rights organization or media group that reports on human rights issues is allowed to obtain more than 10% support from any partner organization outside the country or even from nationals from the Diaspora. The implementation of this law that is affecting CSOs capacity to operate started in 2009. Other countries that have restrictive laws intended to regulate the operations of CSOs and NGOs in particular include Uganda, The Gambia, Zimbabwe and Libya. This is a concern that also affects the safety of human rights defenders in different parts of the region.

Much still needs to be accomplished!

In a nutshell the context for 2009 was gloomy and challenging. However, there were some very positive developments at the regional level which FEMNET believes will go a long way to change the situation of women and girls in Africa. First was the adoption of a Resolution by the African Heads of states and governments at the January 2009 AU Summit declaring the period 2010 – 2020 as the Africa Women’s Decade. Secondly, the Africa Gender Policy was adopted and its plan of action was developed to ensure its full implementation. Thirdly, the Ministers of Gender and Women’s Affairs meetings in the margins of the Eighth African Women’s Conference in November, 2009 in Banjul, The Gambia adopted the proposal for the setting up of an Africa Women’s Fund at the AUC through which additional resources for gender equality and women’s empowerment programming will be channeled to governments, other intergovernmental bodies and CSOs. All these policies and mechanisms together with the rolling out of the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for Agricultural Development in Africa have a big potential to contribute to the transformation we so desperately desire to witness in the lives of women and girls in Africa.





Participants discuss and exchange information/ideas during the gallery walk at the SOAWR Coalition Annual Review and Agenda-Setting Workshop held in October 5-7, 2009.

PART TWO: PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES & OUTCOMES

In line with the 2009 work plan, the Secretariat undertook the following activities in the three main Programme areas:-

2.1 Communication Programme

The purpose of the Communications Programme is to ensure that African women have access to critical information and data that supports their work at different levels and facilitates their effective participation and capacity to influence outcomes from global, regional, sub- regional and national decision-making processes that impact their lives. Through this Programme FEMNET produces information tools, organizes dialogues among women and other stakeholders at different levels, facilitates communication and networking between and among women from different backgrounds with common interests, promotes sharing and exchanges of resources, experiences and effective strategies.

In the year 2009, the Communication Programme team continued to play a critical role in FEMNET's work by facilitating the exchange and sharing of information on women's human rights issues at international and regional levels to its various constituencies across Africa and other parts of the world. This is done through the tri-annual membership newsletter *FEMNET News*, and a bi-annual thematic newsletter *Our Rights*; a monthly electronic bulletin; an updated bilingual website and a resourceful Gender and Development Resource Centre. The Communication team introduced new and commonly used social networking tools: FEMNET Blog www.femnet.wordpress.com and Facebook so as to enrich communication and information sharing especially with younger women and girls. The Communication Programme also published a book titled ***Freedom of information and Women's Rights in Africa***. The book documents case studies from five countries on whether or not women's rights activists and organisations have participated in the national level processes for formulating and enacting laws that sanction and protect freedom of information (FOI) as a fundamental human right FOI supports the protection and realization of other rights especially in the area of sexual and reproductive health rights and is also imperative in the campaigns against all forms of violence against women and girls and combating the spread of HIV/AIDS.

2.1.1 Information Products

During the period under review the *FEMNET News* and *Our Rights* newsletters focussed on the following themes:

<p>FEMNET News January-April</p>	<p>Recognising the Role of Men and Women in Care giving: <i>Equal sharing of Responsibilities between Men and Women</i></p>	<p>COMMENTS The themes for the <i>FEMNET News</i> were carefully selected to ensure information is useful for African women in their advocacy works. For example the January issue provided relevant information for women who participated in the UN-CSW and also the post-CSW meeting because it had case studies focussing on the main theme of the UN-CSW and also the International Women's Day theme for 2009. The May issue helped in making women understand the economic and financial crisis.</p>
<p>May-August</p>	<p>The Global Economic and Financial Crisis: Implications on Women in Africa</p>	
<p>September-December</p>	<p>Building Feminist Movements and Organisations in Africa: Learning from Each Other</p>	
<p>Our Rights January-June</p>	<p>HIV/AIDS and the Law in relation to Women in Africa</p>	<p>The two themes for <i>Our Rights</i> were equally carefully selected. The January issue provided in-depth information on HIV/AIDS and the law which remains a thorny issue in Africa as many countries are making attempts to criminalize deliberate HIV/AIDS transmission. The July-December issue provided background information for African women as they were preparing for the review of the Beijing +15 due in March 2010.</p>
<p>July-December</p>	<p>The Beijing +15: Looking at some progress, challenges and further actions critically needed</p>	



In addition, the monthly *E-bulletin* was sent out electronically in both English and French during the second week of each month. Copies of the bulletin are available through the following link on the FEMNET website www.femnet.or.ke and can also be made available by email request to communication@femnet.or.ke The E-bulletin is the mouthpiece for FEMNET, its members and partners on current affairs. For those who are looking for quick information on topical issues in Africa, this is the quickest resource. It also provides information on different resources that organisations and activists can use to enrich their work. Opportunities for training, exchange programs, jobs and consultancies on women rights issues in Africa are also highlighted on a monthly basis. It is a quick read tool that is loaded with information.

2.1.2 Website

The FEMNET website www.femnet.or.ke is a very useful tool for the network as it provides basic information about the structure of the organisation, its leadership and membership, program areas and the changes in its staff team. The website is continuously updated with information on key upcoming events that are of interest to women's rights advocates and its various partners. We also upload press statements, communiqués, and outcome documents of major activities that we organize at the regional or sub- regional levels. Where we develop Policy briefs we also make them accessible through the website. When we find or collect stories on best practices or unique initiatives we also upload such information onto the website or use the story in one of our publications. Messages for key international human rights days are also accessible through the website or the *E-bulletin*.

Indeed, the FEMNET website is a very active space which we encourage our members and partners to visit as often as possible – at least once a week, as there is always new information. An overhaul of the content in 2009 immediately after the institutional evaluation in June 2009 ensured that the website was more up-to date. In fact, the evaluation indicated that many people use the FEMNET website when looking for information about the status of women in Africa. In 2010, one of the priorities will be to upgrade the website so that it has a feature which automatically counts the number of hits.

Plans are underway to incorporate more information from our diverse membership from the five sub-regions of North, South, East, West and Central Africa. Efforts are also being made to increase the content in French on the Website.

2.1.3 Gender and Development Resource Centre

The Resource Centre (RC) is a depository of useful printed materials that support the research work of members and various organisations. Many of the publications have been obtained from actors in and outside Africa that are involved in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. (*A list of newly acquired publications in 2009 is attached as Annex A*).

During the period under review, the Resource Centre Manager working closely with a number of interns continued to sort and organize information materials (both printed and electronic) in the RC, including cataloguing and inputting information on the Online Catalogue.

Users of the RC were continuously supported with relevant and required information. The RC received forty four (44) visitors who came physically to the RC interested in information around gender-based violence; organisational theories, feminist and gender theories; men's engagement in gender equality; HIV/Aids; African children; biodiversity; ICTs; peace and security, Beijing platform for action; resource mobilization; women's rights and empowerment; leadership; poverty reduction strategies (PRSPs); Freedom of information; the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa; gender and governance. Currently, a strategy is being developed so as to publicize the RC in universities, colleges and other civil society organizations working in areas related to gender and women's rights.

The Resource Centre Manager with the assistance of an intern organized a two-day Public Consultation and Open Days from 26th -27th November 2009, a period which also marked the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. Community and information centres from within Nairobi were invited to attend the open days and learn more about FEMNET's work. They also benefited from a donation of a selection of diverse gender-related information materials, including FEMNET's publications (reports, newsletters, DVDs etc).

The 2009 Public Consultation and Open Days were attended by twelve organizations drawn from the government ministries, NGOs, women and youth groups, and universities. From the comments from the attendees, they registered their appreciation to FEMNET for the continued service of coordinating the sharing of information around the advancement of women's rights in Africa. They also appreciated the donation of books which would build their resourceful collection of information materials on gender and other critical areas of focus relating to women and development.



Nancy Auma, FEMNET Intern presenting publications to Ms. Asenath Nyamu from Rural Community Development Agency (RCDA) in Meru, Kenya.

2.1.4 Production of other FEMNET Publications

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

- *Advocating for Women's Rights: Experiences from Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition*
- *A Handbook for Effective Lobbying during the 53rd CSW*
- *Defying the Odds: Lessons Learnt from Men for Gender Equality Now*
- *2008 Annual Report*
- *Freedom of Information and Women's Rights in Africa*

The team also continued to explore new contacts with whom to share our information products especially some of the manuals and toolkits developed in 2008 under the projects on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights; and on Gender mainstreaming in the PRSPs and the aid effectiveness agenda.

2.1.5 African Women's Expert database

A questionnaire was developed and circulated to various women's organizations in Africa and a data was compiled and used to develop the African Women's Expert database (accessible through the FEMNET website). The database enables us to have access to information that is critical for advocating for women representation in key governance bodies at the regional, sub- regional and international levels. The database also assists us to easily identify consultants with appropriate skills to whom we can outsource some of our work or recommend to other organizations that are looking for female consultants for specific tasks. Maintaining the database is one way of showcasing African women's expertise whether in economics, media and communication, politics, environment, law and human rights, trade and economic justice, peace and security for example, so that they can be proposed for leadership positions within and by national, regional and international organizations.

2.1.6 The Freedom of Information (FOI) and Women's Rights Project

This project began in June 2009 as a follow up to the work that FEMNET had engaged in with other actors advocating for the enactment of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill in Kenya. The project was implemented with support from UNESCO head office in Paris-France. In line with FEMNET strategic goal to continuously investigate and regularly disseminate information on issues of women's and human rights in the region, and also to enhance advocacy for women's rights at the national and regional level, this project seeks to strengthen women's participation in the national lobbies for Freedom of information policies and laws in Africa that are gender responsive. The first phase of the Project (June – November 2009) involved collecting case studies from five African countries namely, Cameroon, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa and Zambia. The case studies were compiled into a Resource book that identified the current gaps and opportunities for women rights activists and organisations to be more engaged with the policy and law reform processes on FOI. The book was produced in English and by the end of the year negotiations were underway with UNESCO to have it translated into French. African Women organisations can use the Resource book to inform their advocacy and lobby work so as to promote an enabling environment for freedom of expression and information in their countries.

2.1.7 Other key activities

■ *Adult Education*

The Communication Programme coordinated the participation of five FEMNET members working in the area of adult education to attend the 6th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) meeting in Belem, Brazil. This initiative was aimed at ensuring that women's and gender issues are mainstreamed in the discussion held during the CONFINTEA VI. The meeting which had been planned for May 2009 was postponed at the last minute due to the swine flu outbreak that hit the world at the beginning of the year. The meeting was later held from 28th November - 4th December, 2009. The key outcome of the Conference was the adoption of the Belem Framework for Action. The Belem Framework for Action calls for "redoubling of efforts to reduce illiteracy by 50 percent from the year 2000 levels by 2015," It underlines the need to place adult learning and education in a broader context of sustainable development. A brief report from FEMNET representative in this meeting is attached as Annex: C-VI.

■ *Media Engagements*

In our continued effort to forge strategic partnership with Media in Africa various FEMNET staff members were featured in different media outlets including: IPS; SABC Radio; UN Radio in Sierra Leone; Pambazuka online News; Nostalgie-Burkina Faso; Television National du Burkina Faso; Radio Ramogi; Capital Radio; Citizen Hatua; Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation – KBC; Kiss F.M all in Kenya; Inter News; Radio Africa; MNET Broadcasting; Population Action International Web Site. FEMNET will continue to engage media in its work so as to increase its visibility especially at sub-regional and national level.

The six-episodes of the Crossroads drama highlighting key issues arising from the provisions of the Africa Union Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, produced in 2008 by FEMNET, FAHAMU and Community Media for Development (CMFD) received the 2009 Radio for Peace building Africa Awards. The Awards celebrate radio programmes which help to reduce group and community tensions, which enhance and give value to shared interests, which break down listener stereotypes, and/or which provide positive role models.

■ *FEMNET Membership*

In 2009 the annual membership fees were revised as follows: Individual members – US \$ 20; national member organization – US \$ 100; Sub- regional members – US \$ 200; and Regional and

International members – US \$ 300. In our quest to revitalize and forge close working relations with our growing membership, FEMNET engaged Ms. Nice Nshimiyimana on a short-term contract (three months). The Contract holder, working closely with the Office Administrator identified and recruited ten (10) women's rights organizations/networks from Northern and Southern Africa. She also followed up with existing members to renew their annual subscriptions. By the end of 2009, FEMNET paid-up members increased to 169 Individual members and 142 organisational members. In addition all members of the Executive Board worked with the Secretariat to mobilize both new and old members to be active in the Network activities.

FEMNET listserves were also reviewed so as to facilitate effective sharing of relevant information resources with specific target groups. Currently they are seven active listserves:

- Membership – includes all FEMNET members (both organizations and individuals)
- Partners – includes national, sub-regional and international organizations that FEMNET works closely with, either directly or indirectly.
- PRSP Project–includes all participants who participated in the four sub- regional PRSPs training of trainers workshops organized by FEMNET in Cameroon, Uganda, Mali and Egypt.
- CSW – includes members interested and following up with the agenda of the annual UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Beijing +15 Review processes.
- GEAR – includes sub-regional focal points engaged in the advocacy and communication activities in Africa for the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign.
- Kenya CSOs – includes civil society organizations in Kenya, where the Secretariat office is based.
- The Men to Men Regional Project - includes contact persons and key collaborators that we are working with to build a strong network of Men in seven African countries committed to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment as critical goals for sustainable development.

■ **Kenya Gender Festival**

In line with the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan which emphasises on focussing on bridging the existing gap between FEMNET regional and international level activities with the national and grassroots programmes of its national focal points and other partners, FEMNET actively participated in the 2009 first ever Kenya Gender Festival (KGF). Throughout the first part of the year FEMNET participated in the intensive preparations of the KGF that was held in June 2009. The KGF is an open forum that brought together feminist and gender-focused groups, other civil society organizations, activists and development partners working at various levels to reflect, share experiences, build capacity, strategize and plan collectively in building a better Kenya for women. The KGF will be an annual event which is aiming at building a stronger women's movement in Kenya. It is a platform where different feminist and women organizations including coalitions pull their efforts together to consolidate the gains made in the past in the Kenya's women's movement building. The overarching theme for the 2009 Kenya Gender Festival was **"Celebrating Diversity and Promoting Gender Equality."**



Visitors at FEMNET's Exhibition booth during the Kenya Gender Festival, 2009

Networking and communication continued to be key priorities throughout the year as outlined in the Strategic Plan (2008- 2012). And as such, FEMNET used the Kenya Gender Festival to network

with women's organisations in Kenya and also publicise its information products at an exhibition stand. FEMNET in collaboration with Solidarity for Women's Rights in Africa (SOAWR) Coalition members held a public discussion on the African Union Protocol on Women's Rights in Africa. The public discussion focussed on how women and other social movements can join hands to lobby leaders in Kenya to ratify the AU Protocol on women's rights. It also enabled participants to discuss ways through which the provisions of the Protocol could be incorporated in the draft Constitution of Kenya. The Constitutional making process was a key focus area for advocacy throughout 2009.

2.2 Advocacy Programme

Through the Advocacy Programme FEMNET continued to play its pivotal role of mobilizing African women to organize, advocate and lobby for changes in the legal and human rights regimes at international, regional and national levels and positive changes in political, social and economic policies and programmes in order to ensure that they are gender responsive. In 2009 FEMNET undertook the following activities:

2.2.1 The 53rd Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The 2009 UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 53rd Session, was held in New York from March 2-13, 2009. The CSW is the pre-eminent global policy forum within the United Nations (UN) that is addressing issues affecting women's empowerment and their rights, and the monitoring of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. UN member states meet at the annual CSW session to deliberate on a priority theme, resulting in Agreed Conclusions that are submitted to the UN General Assembly through the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Civil society organizations have an opportunity to participate in the open sessions of the CSW, and to organize parallel events focused on the priority theme or any relevant aspect of their work. They can also present oral statements to the Commission, and lobby governments and UN representatives to adopt Agreed Conclusions of the Commission that reflect their concerns and recommendations for action. The theme for the 2009 CSW was *"The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS."*



African women representatives at the 53rd Session of the UN CSW

As in the last eight years, FEMNET facilitated African women's participation in the preparatory processes leading to the 53rd Session of CSW. As part of the preparations for the CSW, FEMNET:

- (i) Finalized a Resource handbook on the processes and theme of the 53rd session of the CSW, which provided an African perspective to the theme of the session.
- (ii) Coordinated cross-regional input into a draft position paper,
- (iii) Sent weekly updates on preparations for the CSW to a regional list serve for 5 months (November 2008 – March 2009).

- (iv) Facilitated participation of Woman Kind- Kenya, a grassroots organisation, to attend the 53rd Session of the CSW, including preparation of a case study which was presented in several parallel events.
- (v) Supported five other persons from the five sub- regions in Africa to be at the CSW Session where they participated as panellists in various parallel events.

At the CSW in New York, and in conjunction with several regional organizations, FEMNET convened activities of the African Women's Caucus. The Caucus provided space for African women's organizations and individual activists to debate and further develop their common position on the theme. Five sessions of the African Women's Caucus were held over the two weeks period, and over 230 participants from all over Africa and other parts of the world attended the Caucus meetings. They contributed to the final position paper and oral statement of African women which were presented to the Commission delegates. Participants also lobbied various governments and UN delegations to take action on the issue of unequal sharing of responsibilities between women and men and this resulted to the inclusion of language and recommendations critical to the African context in the final Agreed Conclusions of the 2009 CSW.



Group photo of the participants at the Post-CSW Debriefing meeting for West Africa held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

At the CSW, FEMNET also participated in:

- (i) A brainstorming session on the Africa Women's Decade (2010-2020) convened by the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate and UNIFEM
- (ii) Global strategy meetings for the UN Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign
- (iii) Launch of the Gender Equality Fund and the Africa-Spain Network of Women for a Better World by UNIFEM/ Mission of Spain to the UN
- (iv) Beijing +15 Caucus meetings
- (v) Several side-events spearheaded by other African women's organizations and international NGOs like International Women's Tribune Centre on the theme of the CSW.

As part of the post-CSW activities, FEMNET in collaboration with the Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development organised a debriefing and strategizing meeting on the 29th - 30th of April 2009 in Kampala, Uganda which brought together over 50 participants. The purpose of the meeting was to debrief and share with different stakeholders the proceedings and outcomes of the 2009 53rd CSW Session. The participants were drawn from women organisations from nine countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, gender ministries or national women's machineries, religious and cultural leaders and representatives from media houses. A number of grassroots organisations that have community – based care giving initiatives in Uganda were also in attendance. By the end of the meeting participants from each country had drawn up plans to follow up on the implementation of the CSW outcomes. They also agreed on monitoring mechanisms and engaging in their national level Beijing +15 Review process. The meeting ended with a press conference where participants presented a press statement calling upon leaders in Africa to put in place policies and programmes that promote equal sharing of care giving responsibilities between women and men. This message was also delivered as part of the International Labour Day commemoration on 1st May.

FEMNET also convened a similar debriefing meeting in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in June, 4th -5th 2009, in conjunction with the Ministry for the Advancement of Women. Thirty participants drawn from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Niger and Togo attended the meeting where they were informed about the processes of the 53rd CSW Session, the opportunities women organisations have to influence decision making at the UN level and plans for follow up to the meeting were drawn up. In particular participants drew up plans for popularizing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) and the Beijing + 15 Review process. Holding the meeting in Burkina Faso provided FEMNET with an opportunity to identify new members to join the network and to strengthen linkages with more women organisations in French speaking West Africa.

In August 2009 the third post- CSW debriefing meeting was held for Northern African countries. The meeting took place in Egypt and it was co-hosted with the Egyptian Business Women's Association. The one day meeting was attended by 30 representatives from Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and Egypt. Those invited from Libya were not able to attend. Despite limitations of resources FEMNET was determined to reach as many women as possible in the Africa region with information about the Beijing + 15 Review process and the outcomes of CSW 53rd Session on equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women as one of the strategies for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Therefore, the North Africa meeting was held back to back to that of the training of trainers for the gender mainstreaming in national macroeconomic policies and poverty eradication plans (PRSP Project). It was the first experience for FEMNET to organize such a meeting in North Africa where we had to communicate in three languages – French, English and Arabic. The meeting opened many new opportunities for FEMNET to work with a wider range of organisations in North African countries. Since then we have been able to follow up and by the end of the year four new organisations had joined the Network. Effective communication with groups in North Africa is the main challenge as the preferred language is Arabic.



Group photo of the participants at the Post-CSW Debriefing meeting for North held in Cairo, Egypt

2.2.2 African Union Project/Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR)

The SOAWR Coalition formed in 2004 had a very busy schedule in 2009. First there was a deliberate recruitment drive to attract new members in different countries. Three organisations joined the Coalition in 2009 and by the end of the year the Coalition had 36 members. The Planning of the Coalition Programs and activities is coordinated by a Steering Committee composed of six organisations. In 2009 the Steering Committee held about six meetings for the preparations of the 12th and 13th AU Pre-Summit activities, which include among others, lobbying Heads of states and government to ratify and /or implement the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. FEMNET participates in these meetings and has the responsibility of coordinating various activities on behalf of the SOAWR Coalition members.

The 12th African Union Summit was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 1st – 3rd February 2009 under the theme of “**Infrastructure Development in Africa**”. Prior to the Summit there were a number of Pre- Summit events which took place in which SOAWR participated. On behalf of SOAWR, FEMNET in partnership with FAHAMU coordinated the production of 1,000 English and 500 French copies of the book ‘*Advocating for Women's Rights: Experience from Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition*’ as well as facilitate the launch of the book during the 12th Summit. The book

was officially launched by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, HE Jean Ping. The launch function was also graced by the presence of other dignitaries based in Addis Ababa like several Ambassadors (Permanent Representatives) United Nations officials and representatives from civil society organisations in Ethiopia, including those from the media.

As a follow up to the 12th Summit activities FEMNET convened a meeting of the SOAWR members in Kenya to strategize on how to put pressure on the Kenya government to ratify the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. A letter was written and submitted to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice. The SOAWR members held a meeting with her and she promised to follow up. Similar follow up actions were undertaken for the Ministry of Gender and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To facilitate a similar process in Uganda FEMNET shared the letter written and submitted to the Kenya officials with Akina Mama wa Afrika in Uganda. A meeting with the President of Uganda to discuss a number of issues including the Protocol was planned by the Uganda women's organisations at the end of July 2009. However, this meeting was never to be and the year ended without Kenya and Uganda becoming parties to the Protocol.

The 2nd African Union Pre-Summit on Gender was held in Addis Ababa from 18th - 19th of June 2009 under the theme *"Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security"*. FEMNET coordinated the participation of eight rural women from Burkina Faso, Burundi, Mali and Malawi, prepared a statement on the theme and released as a press release. In addition, SOAWR members participated in the 14th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union, convened by FAS on behalf of the Gender is My Agenda Campaign. The meeting was held in Tripoli from June 27-28, 2009. In this meeting the Executive Director of FEMNET made a presentation on behalf of the SOAWR on the theme of the Summit. At the 13th AU Summit in Sirte, Libya FEMNET on behalf of SOAWR continued to lobby targeted members of the Executive Council to follow up on the promises earlier made to ratify the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. FEMNET distributed the SOAWR position paper on "investing in agriculture" to Ministers of Foreign Affairs from Benin, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Nigeria, Mali, and Togo as well as to representatives from SADC, Namibia, South Africa and Kenya. FEMNET/ SOAWR team distributed the press release from the rural women who attended the Gender Pre-Summit meeting to members of the press from PANA, Mozambique News Agency and Pambazuka.



SOAWR members and rural women farmers at the pre-Summit on Gender in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

In the sidelines of the Summit, FEMNET participated in a panel discussion/press conference as part of a launch of the Oxfam paper "Investing in Poor Farmers Pays". Members of the panel included the Executive Director of FEMNET, the head of CAADP, and Oxfam. Delegates from Uganda, Nigeria, Lesotho and South Africa, among others, were in attendance.

African Women's Decade (2010-2020)

In anticipation of the African Women's Decade FEMNET consulted over 45 African women's rights activists on what the framework and strategic focus for the Decade should be. The objectives of the consultation were to: Popularise the AU Heads of States Decision of an African Women's Decade amongst women's rights activists in Africa; To get their views on strategic areas of focus for the decade and strategies that will be effective in accelerating the realisation and enjoyment of women's human rights in Africa; and to catalyse debate on national and regional level priorities, actions and strategies for the decade by both government and civil society organizations.

The Consultation revealed that the African Women's Decade is viewed by women's rights organizations/activists as an opportunity to integrate and strengthen linkages in the work on women's human rights, integrating women's social, political, economic and cultural rights into a single agenda. The decade is also an opportunity to show the multiplier effect that achieving all these rights has for women and society at large. Respondents also felt that to the greatest extent possible, the goals of the Decade should be linked to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are the primary yardstick for progress in Africa.

As the continent experiences a wave of increased fundamentalism, a common view held was that the Decade can also be used as a critical space to spark dialogue on progressive views on culture, tradition and religion, as a catalyst for accelerated realisation of women's rights. The Decade additionally can provide an excellent platform for the women's movement to work together and reach out to other constituencies, to tell our stories, celebrate victories and achievements, and project our own images of African women and girls to Africa and the world.

Recognizing that women's rights are indivisible, the primary areas of focus proposed for the Decade were selected for their potentially broad, ripple-effect impact on other women's rights in Africa. These priority areas were:

1. Women's Economic Empowerment,
2. Women's Bodily Integrity, Autonomy and Dignity.
3. Women's Participation in Decision Making.

Overall, the Decade can provide a platform for persistent, focused advocacy for implementation of existing State commitments to women's human rights, and increased sensitisation and training on women's rights in general, and the key areas of focus in particular.

At the regional level, the Decade allows for new linkages, strategies and dialogue within the women's movement and between the movement and other constituencies. It provides a space to strengthen mass movements of women, such as farmers, urban women, etc, so that women can forge stronger political blocks and more easily mobilise women across race, class and ethnicity to make demands from government. At this level of cohesion, African women's voices will also be amplified at the regional and global fora.

FEMNET Advocacy Officer presented a summary of the findings of the consultation during the meeting of Experts, prior to the Meeting of AU Ministers Responsible for Women Affairs and Gender, in Banjul, The Gambia in November 2009. Of all the recommendations made in the briefing, the following were integrated as milestones for the Decade in the Road Map for the Decade:

"...reviews will, for example, consider the following as successful outcomes of the Decade:

- The number of AU member states that ratified and domesticate the Protocol;
- Marked increases in women's ownership of properties and productive resources;
- The number of discriminatory laws abolished
- Integration of women's rights into national development processes;
- Promotion of gender parity at the national and sub-national levels;
- Growth in mass movement of women;
- Increase of awareness on women's reproductive rights and reduction in maternal mortality and morbidity rates as well as HIV prevalence rates among women."

- quoted from *The Road Map for the African Women's Decade: 2010-2020, Prepared by the Women, Gender and Development Directorate, African Union Commission, November 2009*

Stakeholders Meeting on Domestication and Implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa Kigali, Rwanda, 16 – 18 July 2009

SOAWR Coalition in collaboration with UNIFEM and the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate, organized a meeting in Kigali, Rwanda in July 2009 which brought together representatives from 14 countries in East, Central and West Africa that have ratified the AU Protocol on women's rights (namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Comoros, Djibouti, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo), to analyze the challenges that countries face, which have led to the slow process of domestication and implementation. At this meeting, the first of its kind since the adoption of the African Women's Rights Protocol, participants agreed that the best way to deliver on their obligations under the Protocol, which would go a long way in meeting the Beijing commitments as well, would be to harmonize actions and approaches, ensure that all sectors are involved and increase coordination among the different actors.

FEMNET Executive Director participated in the meeting and made a presentation on the status of ratification and domestication of the Protocol. The outcome of the meeting was a communiqué which laid out recommendations to the African Union Commission, States parties to the Protocol, civil society and development partners, to work collaboratively in accelerating implementation of the Protocol through a multi-sectoral approach.

SOAWR Annual Review and Agenda-Setting Workshop October 5-7, 2009

FEMNET organized the SOAWR Coalition annual Review and Strategy meeting, held in Nairobi, Kenya from 5th-7th October. The meeting was attended by over 40 participants from 15 countries (Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe). This year's theme was, "Spreading Our Wings: A Multi-Sectoral Approach to Women's Rights". The main objectives of the meeting included progress review of the 2008/2009 year, sharing of the best practices in the year, strategizing on the African Women's Decade from 2010-2020 and setting the strategic framework for the next strategic plan .



A group photo of the participants at the SOAWR Annual Review & Agenda-Setting workshop

The 2008/2009 year witnessed an increase in efforts for domesticating the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (hereinafter the Protocol) and an increase in membership of the Coalition. By October 2009, 27 member states had ratified the Protocol.³ However 26 countries were yet to ratify with the exception of Cameroon which has ratified but is yet to deposit its instrument at the African Union Commission (AUC). The Coalition also reported increased participation by various marginalized women's groups such as rural women in advocating for ratification and domestication of the Protocol by their governments.

In addition to reviewing progress of the Coalition's activities based on the Strategic Plan (2008 – 2010), members were introduced to new ways of working such as UNIFEM's multi-sectoral approach to accelerate the domestication and implementation of the Protocol. The Coalition also heard findings from an Oxfam study in Nigeria, Liberia and Tanzania on capacity gaps that impede implementation

³ Four (4) ratifications were deposited with the African Union Commission since the last SOAWR Agenda-Setting Workshop in January 2008: Liberia, Zimbabwe, Guinea-Bissau, and Democratic Republic of Congo.

of the Protocol. Capitalizing on the presence of SOAWR members in Nairobi, FEMNET organized lobbying visits to the embassies of Sudan, Burundi and Ethiopia in Nairobi, urging the Ambassadors to put pressure on their governments to ratify the Protocol. After the meeting, FEMNET organized similar lobbying visits to the embassies of Uganda and Egypt.

The main output from the SOAWR annual meeting was a Communiqué issued by the members that called for universal ratification of the Protocol by the time the Africa Women's Decade is launched in 2010, and commitment to fully implement the Protocol using a multi-sectoral approach where all key stakeholders take responsibility and actions to deliver on the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment. Participants at the meeting also envisioned the African Women's Decade to be a critical period to actualize commitments made by member states of the AU both in the form of the rights provided for in the Protocol and the commitments expressed in the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

SOAWR Advocacy at Beijing +15 Conference

The SOAWR Coalition members (FEMNET, Equality Now, Oxfam GB, IAC, ACDHRS and EASSI) attending the 8th Regional Conference on Women (Beijing+15) in Banjul, The Gambia in November, 2009 distributed information packs to the Gender Ministers⁴, containing the communiqués from the AU Protocol Domestication meeting in Kigali held in July 2009 and the SOAWR Agenda-setting meeting held in Nairobi in October 2009. In addition the packs had a copy of the Policy brief developed by Ms. Mary Wandia of Oxfam titled "*How States can deliver on the AU Declaration for the African Women's Decade 2010-2020.*" The purpose was to offer information and strategies for the domestication and accelerated implementation of the AU Protocol on Women's Rights, particularly in the context of the African Women's Decade.

Africa Wide Campaign on VAW/Gs

In Banjul, UNIFEM also convened the inaugural meeting for the Regional Steering Committee for the Africa Wide Campaign on Violence against Women and Girls. SOAWR Coalition is a member of the Regional Steering Committee and is represented by FEMNET. In the meeting held on the 15th of November 2009 members shared information on the activities undertaken by their organisations in relation to the Secretary General's Africa Regional campaign. They discussed the terms of reference for the Regional Steering Committee and the coordination mechanism of the campaign in Africa. The meeting ended with discussions on the preparations for the launch of the Regional Campaign in January 2010 in Addis Ababa prior to the 14th Ordinary Session of the Africa Union Heads of States and Government. The proposed date for the launch Africa Unite Campaign to End Violence Against Women and Girls was 30th of January 2010.

AU Women Electoral Observers

As a result of informal discussions with Political Affairs personnel at the AU Commission, FEMNET learned about the need to increase the number of AU women electoral observers and to aim for gender parity in this area. FEMNET issued a call for profiles of women experts and was able to submit 12 names of competent, eligible women to the Commission for consideration.

2.2.3 Beijing +15 Review Process

In order to contribute to women's movement building in Africa FEMNET played a significant role in the Beijing + 15 Review process. Executive Director and Programme Manager were members of the Africa Regional Task Force for the Beijing +15 Review Process (constituted during the 53rd CSW in New York). Each Task Force member was assigned a number of countries which she was

⁴ Ministers from Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

responsible for to mobilize women's organizations and individuals in each country to carry out activities at the national level that would raise awareness on the 12 critical areas of concern and demand that governments take further and appropriate measures and actions to implement the Beijing Platform for Action.

In this capacity, FEMNET was responsible for: Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi in the Eastern Africa sub-region and Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and Niger in West Africa. Two of its Board members were also members of the Task Force; Ms. Homa Mungapen from Mauritius and Ms. Iman Mandoor from Egypt. Another member on the Task Force Ms. Imane Belgrithi from Tunisia is also a focal point member for FEMNET under the Gear Campaign. So in addition to the nine countries mentioned above FEMNET worked closely with all these members to mobilize women in North Africa (Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Morocco, and Western Sahara, Mauritania) and the Islands (Madagascar, Comoro, Seychelles, Mauritius, Reunion and Mayotte).

The two Post-CSW meetings in Kampala and Ouagadougou provided an opportune space to share information about the preparations for the Beijing +15 review process and solicit commitment to participate in and popularize it. Participants were asked to identify women's organisations that would be part of a National NGO Coordinating Team for the Beijing +15 review process in their respective countries. FEMNET issued a handout and guidelines on the Beijing +15 review process with suggestions of activities and critical steps each country team had to undertake to effectively mobilize organizations to engage in the review process. Due to limited resources and in some countries limited capacity of the women's network organisations mobilisation was challenging. In countries like Uganda and Tanzania where strong women's organisations took the lead the mobilisation was effective and they were able to produce National NGOs Shadow Reports.

FEMNET worked closely with a team of seven national women's organisations to participate in the national review process coordinated by the Ministry of Gender and the Gender Commission in Kenya. FEMNET convened meetings of the Kenya NGO Beijing +15 Coordinating team to discuss the Beijing +15 review process and develop a plan of action. FEMNET summarized the Beijing +10 review for Kenya to facilitate benchmarking for the Kenya parallel Women's NGO review and reporting. The Kenya Women's NGOs Shadow Report was launched during the 16 days of activism against gender based violence. It remains a key reference document for various institutions as the official report for Kenya was very brief. "I have found the report useful and informative" said Ms. Meryem Aslan Regional Director, UNIFEM East and Horn of Africa Office.

FEMNET was able to forge very useful partnerships during the year to facilitate the Beijing + 15 Review process. We convened a meeting with UNECA in Addis Ababa on June 20th, to discuss the regional process of the Beijing +15 Review as facilitated by UNECA and the efforts by civil society to contribute to and participate in the Beijing +15 Review Process at regional, sub-regional and national levels. In this meeting FEMNET was able to make strategic and mutually beneficial linkages with UNECA to facilitate the participation of African women in the review process at different levels. UNECA agreed to:-

- a) provide teleconferencing facilities for the Africa Taskforce/UNECA discussions
- b) Facilitate the process of obtaining observer status for the Africa Taskforce at the Ministerial meeting on Beijing +15 Review that was held in Banjul, Gambia in November 2009.
- c) Organize space for civil society to have parallel activities/present their findings during the Banjul meetings.

In order to mobilize women at the national level, FEMNET utilized various strategies which proved to be very effective considering the limited budgets and human resources:

1. Mainstreaming the Beijing +15 review into other FEMNET projects such as the PRSP training of trainers' workshop for in North Africa held in Egypt in June 2009.

2. Development and dissemination of information, utilizing list-serves and one-to-one messaging - FEMNET disseminated information about the review process for a period of one year, and developed guidelines for national working groups outlining the process and timeline for the review. As a result over 300 representatives of NGOs and CSOs from about 40 countries participated in the various meetings organised at the 8th African Women's Conference in Banjul, The Gambia in November 2009.
3. Liaising with other regional and sub-regional women's networks and organisations such as EASSI, WILDAF, WLSA, AAWORD, AMwA and SOAWR to disseminate information and mobilize women at various levels and participate in the Shadow Reporting process.

FEMNET's engagement with the African Centre for Gender and Social Development at the ECA, which was responsible for compiling the official Regional Beijing +15 Review Report and convening of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15) in Banjul, The Gambia facilitated more coordinated preparations for the Regional Beijing + 15 Review process.

Mobilizing resources for the Beijing +15 processes was particularly challenging in the current economic climate, a sentiment that was echoed by other Taskforce members. Resources were needed to support national working groups to hold consultation meetings in order to produce comprehensive National Women NGOs shadow reports. Women organisations needed resources to support organizing of national activities around the 16 Days of Activism – which was considered as an opportunity to highlight the findings of Beijing +15 implementation findings. It was challenging to secure the resources needed to support the process of compiling, translating and publishing the Africa NGO Shadow Report, to support sub-regional (including the Taskforce members), national and community women leaders to be in Banjul, and to convene the Africa Women's NGOs Consultative meeting held in Banjul in the margins of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women. FEMNET developed several proposals and was ultimately able to secure resources from the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) for the compilation and production of the Report. Ipas Africa Alliance, UNDP and the Government of The Gambia supported several Africa Task Force members and grassroots women to be at the meetings held in Banjul in November 2009. In-kind support was provided by the ECA as detailed earlier, as well as by the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS) and the Association of NGOs (TANGO), both providing tremendous support in the preparations for the Africa Women's NGOs Consultative Meeting held in Banjul prior to the Experts and Ministerial meetings. UNIFEM supported the representative of SOAWR on the Regional Steering Committee on VAW/Gs and UNDP supported two members of the Regional task force to be in Banjul. FEMNET was able to support 8 representatives to attend the Conference in Banjul, The Gambia mostly through the Ipas Africa Alliance grant.

In November 2009, the ECA convened the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15) in Banjul, The Gambia. Space was provided for civil society to participate in the Conference, including an opportunity to present to the Experts Meeting their summarised conclusions drawn from the synthesized draft Africa Regional NGO Shadow Report. FEMNET, as part of the Africa NGO Taskforce on Beijing +15, convened a two day Consultative meeting for women's organizations in the margins of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women, to discuss the findings of the draft African NGO Shadow Report on Beijing +15, to dialogue on the key emerging issues and make recommendations for further action by African Governments to fully implement the BPfA.



From left: Mrs. Hannah Forster, Executive Director, ACDHRS; H.E. Mrs Isatou Njie-Saidy, the Vice President of the Gambia and Minister for Women's Affairs and Ms. Norah Matovu, Executive Director, FEMNET

The Africa NGOs Consultative meeting was opened by H.E. Mrs Isatou Njie-Saidy, the Vice President of Gambia and Minister for Women's Affairs. A total of 100 participants from 15 countries attended the Consultative meeting. Civil society subsequently presented the conclusions and recommendations emerging from the Consultative meeting to the Experts and Gender Ministers meetings, around national and regional issues that should be addressed in order to accelerate the full implementation of the BPfA. Several CSO recommendations were integrated into the final report of the Experts meeting, and were later adopted by the Ministers of Gender and women's affairs.

FEMNET took the lead in collecting the national shadow reports and then compiling the Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing+15. Thirteen countries submitted shadow reports for this purpose⁵ and three sub-regional NGO Shadow Reports were also compiled by Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF – West Africa) which covered 15 countries under ECOWAS, Eastern Africa Sub-Regional Strategic Initiative (EASSI) which covers 8 countries, and Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) covering the 14 SADC countries. The report also incorporated the concerns and recommendations made by the women who participated in the Africa Women's NGOs Consultative meeting held in Banjul, The Gambia in November 2009, in the margins of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15). During this period FEMNET Advocacy Officer, Executive Director and a Consultant worked diligently to complete a comprehensive draft of the Regional Shadow Report and thereafter circulated it to women's NGOs for comments by the close of the year.

Kenya Beijing +15 Shadow Report

During this period FEMNET Advocacy Officer in collaboration with the Executive Director, convened several meetings of the Kenya NGO working group (AMWIK, CREAM, FIDA-Kenya, FEMNET, Girl Child Network, GROOTS-Kenya and Maendeleo ya Wanawake) to agree on the process and content of the Kenya Beijing +15 NGO Shadow Report. Each organization then submitted their designated section of the report, and FEMNET compiled and edited the Kenya National Women's NGOs Shadow Report. It was launched at the end of year during a Gender Forum held on the 26th November 2009 as part of the activities organized during the 16 days of activism against gender based. FEMNET organized the launch in partnership with Heinrich Boll Foundation, Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa (HBF) which convenes the monthly Gender Forums to discuss and reflect on topical issues that impact positively or negatively on efforts aiming to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Kenya.

Through the Beijing + 15 Review process there were several lessons that continue to inform our work beyond 2009:

- Limited resources should not be a hindrance to the achievement of set goals. Creativity, strategic partnerships and collaboration facilitated this process and enable us to minimize the gap in our resources;
- Identifying key stakeholders in the process was instrumental in ensuring that we work together on a mutually agreed process.

2.2.4 Women Won't Wait Campaign

In April 2009 FEMNET researched and created a database of national, sub-regional, regional and global organizations addressing the issues at the intersection of HIV AIDS and Violence Against Women in Africa. A second database containing key research on this issue was also launched. The databases are accessible through the FEMNET website and have been linked with the database for the UN Division on the Advancement of Women (DAW) on VAW/G.

⁵ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda.

2.2.5 UN Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign

FEMNET developed an advocacy strategy for the GEAR Africa campaign, in preparation for the UN General Assembly in September 2009. The strategy included reviving communication within and between the ten sub-regional focal points spearheading the popularization of the Campaign in Africa as well as mapping out target countries and key allies to work closely with to popularise and influence the achievement of the Campaign goals. A pamphlet highlighting pertinent issues of the campaign and linking them to the African context was produced in June and widely disseminated throughout August to September 2009. It was used as a guide for organizing advocacy and lobbying activities.

As the regional focal point for Anglophone Africa in the Gender Equality Architecture Reform campaign, FEMNET was very active during this period in promoting the proposal for the establishment of a new, consolidated and better resourced and strategically positioned gender entity in the UN. FEMNET designed and produced a campaign pamphlet in French and English, detailing why the new gender entity was important for African women, and called on African women to lobby their leaders to support the adoption of a resolution during the 2009 session of the UN General Assembly. FEMNET sent over 80 lobby letters and pamphlets to targeted member states (Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Ministers for Gender), their Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, as well as to supporters of the GEAR Campaign in Africa. Later when it appeared the resolution may be postponed to the next Session, FEMNET sent over 25 urgent action letters to the UN Permanent Representatives and lobbied the Kenya Ministry of Foreign Affairs along with the GEAR focal point in Kenya.

The Resolution was ultimately adopted right at the last minute (on September 14 2009), to much jubilation from women's rights activists who have been engaged in this process for the last three years. FEMNET gave several interviews to media outlets such as SABC Radio 2000, AWID and IPS on the implications of the Resolution for African women.

Between September and December 2009 FEMNET was involved in informal consultations in the region regarding potential candidates for the position of Under Secretary General – the person who will head the new agency, as well as on where the agency headquarters should be located.

2.2.6 Kenyan Constitution and reform process in 2009

With support from the Urgent Action Fund, FEMNET worked in partnership with several women's rights organizations in Kenya to hold a National Consultative Meeting for Kenyan Women Leaders on the 14th December 2009. The one-day meeting aimed to provide a space for Kenyan women to discuss the gains for women and different contentious issues in the draft Harmonised Constitution of Kenya (2009) and come up with a memorandum for submission to the Committee of Experts before 16th December 2009, (which was the set deadline for submitting comments to the Committee). Participants were drawn from a wide range of stakeholders (community-based organizations, NGOs, media, faith-based organizations, business entrepreneurs, youths, community and national leaders) representing the eight provinces in Kenya.



Participants at the National Consultative Meeting for Kenyan Women Leaders held on the 14th December 2009.

The meeting was useful for sharing information on the progress made in the constitution reform process and mapping out a plan for consistent engagement with the process right to the time of

the referendum scheduled to take place in June 2010. This was one of the major achievements for FEMNET in Kenya because at the end of the conference the women of Kenya came up with a memorandum containing key recommendations to the Committee of Experts which is charged with the responsibility of drafting the Constitution. The memorandum was submitted to the Committee of Experts (CoE) as a document containing the unanimous voice of Kenya women across the country.

2.2.7 Men to Men Regional Programme

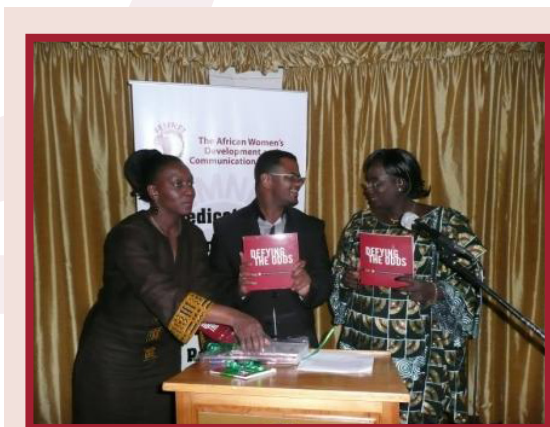
FEMNET will continue to promote male involvement in campaigns and activities to stop GBV and the spread of HIV/AIDS. In 2009 FEMNET officially launched the Men to Men Regional Program. A two days Regional Strategy meeting was convened in Nairobi, Kenya from 13th – 14th of May 2009. The meeting brought together 20 participants from seven countries. The meeting was aimed at identifying and documenting organizations and programs in each country that are using the men to men approach to support efforts to combat gender based violence and promote gender equality at all levels. In the meeting the participants also identified key allies, potential partners and programmes with whom to collaborate and build or expand initiatives for men involvement in combating gender based violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS. The men to men programme is currently targeting seven countries are Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Uganda.

The outcomes of the meeting included: the official launch of the Regional Men to Men Program; creating an internet platform for experience sharing and networking; identifying a core team of ten organisations to spearhead the campaign in the seven countries and develop work plan for the Men to Men Regional Programme.

The meeting also identified some best practices in working with men in the regional. These included Men for Gender Equality Now - Malawi which works with the police through the community policing project to support survivors of sexual and gender based violence; the Rapid Response Team in Kenya that works with men to provide comprehensive support to survivors of SGBV; and the Zambia Men's Network that works with male legislators to support enactment of law that protect women against all forms of violence.

On the last day of the Strategy meeting, the book **'Defying the Odds: Lessons learnt from Men for Gender Equality Now'** was launched. The book documents inspiring experiences and strategies of men working to promote gender equality, social and gender justice. The book was launched by Ms. Meryem Aslan, the Regional Director, UNIFEM for the East and Horn of Africa office based here in Kenya. UNIFEM partnered with FEMNET to produce the book and other media tools like the website and personal stories on the journey of transformation recorded on DVD.

A press release was issued at the end of the Strategy meeting which was in line with the theme of the International Day of the Family "Mothers and Families: Challenges in a Changing World" commemorated on the 15th of May 2009. It was also circulated through the FEMNET listserves.



From right: Ms. Norah Matovu, FEMNET's Executive Director, Mr. Hassan Omar, Vice Chairperson, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) and Mama Koite, FEMNET's Chairperson during the launch of the publication Defying the Odds

2.2.8 PRSP/Aid Effectiveness Project

In 2001, FEMNET worked on a pilot project in partnership with GTZ, to reinforce the gender orientation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper development process in Kenya. FEMNET was part of the Gender Thematic Group which gave technical support throughout the process. Two reports: one on the process of integrating gender into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) development process in Kenya and the other on the gender dimensions of the macroeconomic framework of the PRSP process and the national budget were drafted and disseminated.

Building on the positive experience and outcomes, FEMNET decided to expand the project to other African countries. Therefore the current Project on Gender, Macroeconomics and PRSPs in Africa includes research into the principal gender dimensions of the PRSP development process and the relationship to the national budgeting processes.

The first phase of the project documented the experiences of gender lobbies in the PRSP development process and provided an analysis of women's poverty in direct relationship to national macroeconomic policies. The report on the 5 case studies (*Mali, Uganda, Rwanda, Egypt and Zambia*) was published in 2008 and disseminated. A draft Advocacy Toolkit and Training Manual on Gender mainstreaming in Macroeconomics and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper development processes in Africa was also produced and tested in the first three workshops held in Kampala, Uganda, Yaoundé, Cameroon and Bamako, Mali in 2008.

In November – December 2008 a mid term evaluation was conducted to assess the extent to which the objectives of the project had been achieved. It was noted that a lot had been achieved and participants had acquired information and enhanced skills on how best to mainstream gender in macroeconomic policies and the budgeting processes. It was noted that in the three workshops it had not been possible to attract participants from the North African countries. It was therefore agreed that a training of trainers' workshop targeting North Africa be organized in 2009. The training of trainers for North Africa Sub- regional which covered Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Mauritania, and Libya took place on August 11th – 13th 2009 in Cairo, Egypt. The objectives of the ToTs included the following:

- *Provide a forum* where key actors from the ministries of planning and finance, the national women's affairs machinery, civil society organizations and the media came together to enhance their knowledge and skills on gender mainstreaming in macroeconomic policies and budgeting processes, and the PRSP processes.
- *Build capacities of women's organizations and media personnel* to undertake gender - focused monitoring and have a better understanding of the relationship between macroeconomic policy and poverty reduction strategies. Selected examples were used to demonstrate how civil society organizations including the media and academic institutions have facilitated gender integration in these processes. Participants also explored opportunities for further actions.
- *Catalyze advocacy and lobbying for gender responsive planning process and action at the national level:* Apart from strengthening capacities, the workshop was a forum for dialogue among the key stakeholders in the process, and building mechanisms for networking between civil society, grassroots groups and public officials, so as to improve women's participation in processes of formulating economic policy and gender responsive budgets.

Participants in this training included economists from ministries of finance and planning, representatives of the national gender machineries, women's organizations and networks from various countries in the North Africa, and representatives from the media who have been following up on the issues surrounding gender, macroeconomics and the PRSP development processes. The meeting was attended by over 25 participants from Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, and Morocco, and was conducted in French, Arabic and English.

For continued networking and sharing of information FEMNET has created an email listserve for all the participants that have been involved in the ToTs for the PRSPs Project from Eastern, Central, Western and Northern Africa training workshops.

2.2.9 We Can Campaign in Kenya

FEMNET is the National Secretariat for the We Can Campaign which was launched in November 2008. The purpose of the campaign is to ensure that by end of 2012 Kenya has 1.3 million Changemakers that are reaching out to more than 13 million Kenya to influence their attitudes, behaviour and actions in relation to the issue of violence against women and girls (VAW/Gs). The Campaign aims to reduce the social acceptance of VAW/Gs so that men and women realize their rights and full potential in life. It also aims at eliminating specifically domestic violence in homes and communities as this is where violent behaviour is normalized and later spills over into the public arena.

In 2009 the main activities for this campaign was for FEMNET to receive money and organize its disbursement to the five Regional Focal Point organizations namely Kenya Female Advisory Organisation – KEFEADO, Partners With Vision – PWV, Youth Arts Development and Entrepreneurship Network – YARDEN, Usanii Development Group and the alliance coordinators for Rift Valley including Resource Conflict Institute – RECONCILE, Social Welfare Development Organisation, Tears Group and Coalition on Violence Against Women – COVAW. The total amount of US Dollars 93,000 was disbursed to support the mobilization and recruitment and training of Changemakers in the five regions of Western, Nairobi, Nyanza, Rift valley and Central in Kenya. In addition the Project Coordinator for the We Can Campaign Kennedy Otina and Martin Odera the Finance Administrator of FEMNET conducted a monitoring visit in July that took them to all the five regions meeting with the leaders of the Focal point organizations and some of the changemakers. The purpose of the visits was to collect evidence of the work done on the ground to address the issue of VAW/Gs and also prepare the organizations for the end of year narrative and financial reporting using the agreed formats. The exercise was also used to lift some of the best practices for up scaling that was shared during the national stakeholders meeting that was held in July. By the end of the year a database of Changemakers had been developed and it had 80,000 Changemakers and over 7,000 in the database who are committed to live as role models in their communities to demonstrate non- violent behaviour as a way of life. They are also committed to talk to 10 other persons to join the team of Changemakers in their respective communities. This is contributing to our efforts of building a strong network of men for gender equality.

2.3 Capacity Building and Training Programme

The aim of the FEMNET capacity building program is to enhance knowledge and skills of women rights activists, feminists and male gender advocates that are essential for their work. FEMNET also plays a catalyst role in building leadership competencies by linking women organizations with the resources for leadership development. The activities under this Programme include:

- Organizing Gender Training for different constituencies
- Organizing collaborative training activities at regional and sub- regional levels
- Facilitating young African women from outside Kenya to undertake three month internships with the Communication and Advocacy Programmes.
- Providing consultancy services and strengthening the Gender and Development desk.
- Supporting staff training and development; and
- Organizing joint leadership training activities for Board and Staff members

2.3.1 Internship Programme

As part of building capacity for young women, FEMNET continued to engage young women to work as interns in the various programmes. During the reporting period the Advocacy and Communication Programmes hosted the following young women as interns:-

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| ■ Ms. Amina Issa Kinsi | January -March (<i>Communication</i>) |
| ■ Ms. Nice Fidelite Nishimanya | April - June (<i>Communication</i>) |
| ■ Christine Magara | February-July (<i>Resource Centre</i>) |
| ■ Leticia Wanyagi | July-October (<i>Communication</i>) |
| ■ Reginah Makasi Ngunu | November-February (<i>Advocacy & Communication</i>) |
| ■ Nancy Auma | October - January (<i>Resource Centre</i>) |

As result of exposure during the internship Programme Ms. Amina Kinsi managed to obtain a scholarship to study for a Master's Degree in the U.K. FEMNET was instrumental in recommending Ms. Kinsi for this programme.

2.3.2 Strengthening of National Focal Points (NFPs)

As part of its strategic actions for the period 2008 – 2012, FEMNET intends to engage with the National Focal Point organizations in a more systematic manner. As part of this process a concept note and Terms of Reference were developed to act as guidelines and also to help the Secretariat coordinate effectively with the NFPs. So far 6 countries namely: Burundi, Zambia, Uganda, Cameroon, Mali and Malawi have signed the FEMNET national focal point Terms of Reference. Five NFPs were to receive a small support fund from FEMNET's institutional building budgetline to support their coordination efforts and the mapping of the women organisations working in the following areas: communication and networking, women's leadership and participation in democratic processes, sexual and reproductive health and rights, access to land and other economic resources, and gender mainstreaming initiatives at different levels. The NFPs that completed the mapping are Cameroon, Zambia and Tunisia. Uganda and Cote d'Ivoire processes were still underway by year's end. Cameroon in addition received support of US\$ 2,000 towards their budget for organizing the Annual General Meeting and Strategic Planning meeting.

2.3.3 Women in Leadership

International Day of Democracy Activities

FEMNET took the lead in democratizing the International Day of Democracy in Africa (September 15, 2009), and used its celebration and commemoration to focus more attention on the urgent need to promote and popularize the 2007 Africa Union Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance which is yet to come into force.

The Democracy Charter recognizes the important role of women in strengthening democracy and achieving development, and calls for gender parity at all levels of government, and full and active participation of women in decision-making processes including the electoral processes.

FEMNET developed an e-pamphlet to popularise and raise awareness around the International Day of Democracy as well as the Charter. The three-paged pamphlet summarised the genesis of the Democracy Day and Charter and uniquely, highlighted some activities that civil society organizations would choose to engage with to commemorate the Day. The pamphlet was sent out by email to several FEMNET constituencies including:

- ♀ International partners (CSOs): such as members of the International Conference on New and Restored Democracies Movement (ICNRD); International Steering Committee for the International Civil Society Forum on Democracy (ICSFD); Global Democracy Day; I-KNOW Politics; Civicus; IPU; WURN etc
- ♀ Regional bodies: ECA, AUC, WGD, SADC
- ♀ Key women's rights organizations in Africa/ CSOs: AMwA, WiLDAF, AWORD, Alliances for Africa (AfA); Citizen Assembly, ROFAF among others
- ♀ Media: Pambazuka; IPS; PANOS, MISA, SABC and over 400 media houses in FEMNET's media database.
- ♀ FEMNET's meetings/ conferences, websites, E-Bulletin and email listserves (members, partners, SOAWR, GEAR, CSW etc)

FEMNET Advocacy Officer also participated in the Parliamentary Conference on Democracy in Africa, held in Gaborone, Botswana from September 14-16, 2009, and hosted jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliament of Botswana. The theme of the Conference was *"Democracy and Political Tolerance."* Parliamentarians from over 25 African States were in attendance, along with representatives from the African Union Commission, Pan African Parliament, ECOWAS, African Parliamentary Union and East Africa Legislative Assembly among other sub-regional bodies.

FEMNET participated in this conference as a member of the International Steering Committee for the International Civil Society Forum on Democracy. The key message shared at this meeting was the recognition that democracy is not just an end in itself but that building and sustaining democracy reinforces the achievement of peace, development, and respect for human rights, and supports the rule of law and achievement of gender equality in Africa.

During the conference Rwanda Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Hon. Rose Mukantabana, made a presentation on *"Managing diversity: Promoting gender partnership in political life."* In this presentation she explored inclusion of women in decision-making from a rights-based perspective, citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Rwandan Parliament has more women members than any other parliament in the world, with 56.3% in the Chamber of Deputies. It was agreed by those in attendance that we can learn from the experience of Rwanda by enshrining quotas or affirmative action provisions in the Constitution to address the gender imbalances in leadership and decision making positions. Such provisions actively address the barriers to gender equality including patriarchy, cultural stereotypes, women's access to education and property, and violence against women. Hon. Mukantabana emphasized that promoting democracy requires strong political will and commitment to make the governance systems accountable, transparent and inclusive. A good lesson learned tragically by Rwanda after the genocide in 1994 was "the deadly manifestations of what can result from bad policies fostering exclusion, discrimination and intolerance" according to Hon. Mukantabana.

Honourable Thokozani Khupe, Deputy Prime Minister of Zimbabwe sparked off a lively debate and interventions with her presentation on *"Post election power-sharing arrangements: panacea to political intolerance and exclusion?"* Drawing heavily on the Zimbabwe experience, she noted that inclusive or coalition governments are becoming 'fashionable' in Africa, and while she does not oppose them by definition, they are unacceptable when formed in order to keep incumbents in power despite the results from the voting of the people.

There was overwhelming agreement that power-sharing arrangements are emblematic of failed democratic processes. FEMNET's statement during this plenary noted that there are many signs on the continent that the emerging culture of democracy and peace is gradually being eroded, and the recent popularity of coalition governments as a means of solving problems with electoral rigging, violence and failure to concede, is one of them.

At the conclusion of the conference, delegates agreed on a Gaborone Declaration which included commitment to work within their national parliaments to ensure ratification and entry into force of the African Charter on Democracy and this is one of the issues we were advocating for during the year 2009.

The Leadership Conference for French Speaking West Africa Countries

FEMNET in collaboration with Réseau des Organisations Féminines d'Afrique Francophone (ROFAF), held the Africa Women's Leadership Conference attended by 30 participants from the 28th – 30th of September 2009, in Lomé, Republic of Togo. The Conference drew participants from Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Niger, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Sao Tome and Principe. The meeting was held in the context of celebrating and popularising women's leadership roles from the grassroots to the highest levels, all over Africa as outlined in our Strategic Plan of 2008-2010.



Group photo of the participants at the Leadership conference in Lome, Togo

FEMNET convened this Conference with a view to: Improve the level of awareness on and appreciation of the role that women play and can /should play in the process of building more stable and democratic societies; Discuss ways in which women can maintain strong networks to support those that are actively involved in political leadership in their respective countries and within the Africa region as a whole; and Map out the profile of women leaders in the region, who are pioneers as far as leadership at various levels is concerned.

The members of FEMNET in 2007 recognised that gender disparity in political leadership does not result from a single historical condition. It springs from a spectrum of causes. Therefore women and men need to be aware of the complexity of the social order that so unjustly deprives women of the opportunity to be equal participants in the democratic and development processes in their respective countries, sub- regions and the Africa region. They must be fully aware of the huge benefits realising this participation will generate for every one. Just as importantly women need to be aware of the huge responsibility we have to work together to re-imagine and help reconstruct the social order that has entrapped both women and men.

This Conference was intended to inspire and energize the participants to take action so that women's participation in the democratic processes in their countries particularly around the forthcoming elections is revolutionalized. By the end of the Conference the participants had agreed on the following actions: issue a Press statement to denounce in the strongest terms the violation and abuse of the rights of the people of Guinea on the 28th of September 2009 when the army disrupted a citizens peaceful demonstration demanding for the junta government and its leaders to promote and secure their democratic rights to choose the leaders of the country. They also agreed to mobilize and popularize the Africa Democracy Charter and Protocol.

In December 2009 the Executive Director attended a meeting convened by Genderlinks and AMWA in Johannesburg, South Africa for different organisations in Southern and Eastern Africa that provide leadership development training or support. It was noted in this meeting that there is need for increased networking, harmonisation of key feminist principles and ways of work that we need to promote among African women leaders. A database of women leaders in different sectors should be developed.

2.3.4 Resource Mobilisation

In April 2009, Aicha Tamboura joined FEMNET as Programme Manager. One of the main responsibilities of the Programme Manager was to ensure that FEMNET strengthens its resource mobilisation and as part of this process a number of project proposals were developed, including:

- Sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), expansion project.
- Development of Project on FEMNET Focal Points Capacity building
- Proposal for supporting women to participate in the ACECI meeting which was to take place in Niger in May 2009. Meeting was postponed. The proposals were sent to UNIFEM West Africa and UNDP – Head office.
- Working session with FEMNET Cameroon on the preparation for their General assembly and Strategic Plan

The Programme Manager and Finance Administrator also began the process of drafting a Resources Mobilization Strategy. This was discussed by the staff members and remained the resource mobilisation guide for the institution.

Other Proposals Sent Out During the Period Under Review

PROPOSAL TITLE	ORGANISATION SENT TO	RESPONSIBLE	OUTCOME
FOI and Women's Rights in Africa	UNESCO	Communication Officer	Successful
Participatory Communication	On going	Communication Officer	On going
Follow-up of the AAA implementation	Urgent Action Fund	Communication Officer	Not successful. Negotiations have continued
Travel grant to World social Forum	Action Aid, Mama Cash, Urgent Action Fund AWDF	Communication Officer	Not successful
Debriefing Meeting for Eastern and Southern Africa on the 2009 Commission on the Status of Women, 53 rd Session <i>April 29-30, 2009 Kampala, Uganda</i>	Action Aid Uganda, GTZ, PPFA, OSIEA, Oxfam GB, UNMC and UNIFEM Horn and East Africa	Advocacy Officer	Action Aid Uganda Successful
Debriefing Meeting for Western Africa on the 2009 Commission on the Status of Women, 53 rd Session <i>June 4-5, 2009 Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso</i>	AWDF, CIDA, Oxfam GB, UNIFEM West Africa	Advocacy Officer, Programme Manager	Not successful

Institutional Capacity Building Proposal	Targeting ACBF	Programme Manager	On-going
Next Steps for the UN GEAR Campaign in Africa	WEDO	Documentalist / Advocacy Officer	Successful
Support Of Participation of SOAWR Members and Grassroots Women at the 13 th Ordinary Summit Of The African Union	Equality Now	Advocacy Officer	Successful
Funding for the SOAWR Coalition Review and Agenda Setting Meeting October 5-7, 2009 Nairobi, Kenya	Fahamu	Advocacy Officer	Successful
Mobilizing African Women for Collective Advocacy during the Beijing +15 Review Processes	Oxfam GB, UNIFEM East Africa, UN Millennium Campaign, Ipas Africa Alliance; AWDF	Advocacy Officer	Partially successful – grants from AWDF and Ipas Africa Alliance. Negotiations continue with UN Millennium Campaign
African Women's Participation In The 54 th Session Of The CSW <i>Theme: Reviewing The Implementation Of The Beijing Declaration And Platform For Action</i>	AWDF, Global Fund for Women, UNIFEM East Africa, UNIFEM New York, Spain	Advocacy Officer	As of end of December 2009 , negotiations were still underway, to be finalized in January 2010
Women's participation in the Kenyan Constitutional reform processes	Urgent Action Fund	Executive Director	Successful
"Empowering men to end Gender-Based Violence. A men to men project in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and the CSW	Heinrich Boll Foundation HBF	Regional Programme Associate Men to Men	Successful

<p>“Empowering men to end Gender-Based Violence. A men to men project in Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Rockefeller Foundation · Carnegie Corporation · Oxfam Novib · UNDP New York · International Centre for Research on Women · Africa Department Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. · Commonwealth Foundation · Ministry of Gender and Children Norway · Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit · UNICEF ESARO · WHO Regional · WHO Headquarters · Canadian Women Foundation · White Ribbon Campaign 	<p>Regional Programme Associate Men to Men</p>	<p>Follow ups on going</p>
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2.3.5 Participation in Various Meetings

27 th Jan – 1 st Feb	<p>The World Social Forum held in Belem in February 2009. The Communications Officer participated in the Women’s rally, Inter-movement dialogue and the feminist dialogue. In April 2009 Mme Fatma Alloo, FEMNET Board Member attended a meeting in Morocco to discuss and plan for the next WSF which will be held in Senegal in 2011.</p>
16 th February	<p>The Executive Director met with Ms. Lena Schildt the new officer responsible for FEMNET at the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) in Sweden on the 16th of February 2009.</p>
26 th -27 th February	<p><i>International Steering Group (ISG) on Aid Effectiveness Meeting</i> - The Communication Officer represented FEMNET at the NGO Steering Committee on Aid Effectiveness that took place in south Africa from 26th – 27th February 2009. The name of the Committee was changed from International Steering Group (ISG) on Aid Effectiveness to BetterAid Steering Group (BACG). FEMNET is a member of the BACG representing African women organizations involved in the follow up actions on aid effectiveness. The High Level Forum 4 will take place in 2011.</p>
13 th March	<p>Men to Men participated in the ICRAF <i>International Women’s Day</i> activities where they enlisted the role of men as a critical component in ending gender based violence and the spread of HIV in the institution;</p>
16 th March	<p>The Men to Men Program Associate participated in the <i>International Women’s Day</i> activities United organised by the National Office in Nairobi. The function was attended by the Director General UNON, nominated Member of Parliament Hon. Millie Odhiambo and other senior staff from UNIFEM and UN offices in Nairobi;</p>
24 th -25 th April	<p>Women’s Consultation on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, New York - attended by Communications Officer</p>

27 th April	UN ECOSOC-BWIs-WTO meeting - attended by Communications Officer
28 th April	Sharing of experiences in Malawi on invitation by the FORUT a Norwegian NGO and the Minister for Gender-Norway - attended by the Men to Men Program Associate
28 th April to 10 th May	A road show trip in Canada to share the experiences in working with men as included in the film <i>"the Silent Partner, HIV in Marriage"</i> which included a visit to Africans in Diaspora, meeting with Canadian Parliamentarians and lobbying CIDA on the need to continue supporting GBV and HIV prevention programmes in Africa - attended by the Men to Men Program Associate
8 th May	Advocacy Officer participated in a civil society consultation on the upcoming "Gender Bills" (Marriage Bill, Family Protection Bill, Matrimonial Property Bill) hosted by FIDA-K/ CREAW
3 rd – 5 th June	<p><i>First Kenya Gender Festival</i> - FEMNET participated at the first ever Kenya Gender Festival. The Festival was aimed to provide a platform for different feminist and women organizations including coalitions, to pull their efforts together and consolidate the gains made in the past and present activities in Kenya's women's movement. The overarching theme of the gender festival is <i>"Celebrate Diversity and Promote Gender Equality"</i> with sub-themes which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healing, peace building and unity; Women movement-building in a diverse society; Men for cultural diversity and gender equality <p>FEMNET organised a public discussion on the AU protocol on women's rights. We also exhibited at the festival over 230 people visited the FEMNET stand and 13 organisations joined as FEMNET members.</p>
5 th June	The Resource Center Manager attended the Civil Society Dialogue Series organized by UN-Habitat and UNEP
8 th June	Advocacy Officer participated in the Strategic Plan Consultation for the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
24 - 28 June	UN High level Conference on Current Financial Crisis and its impact on Development, The Chairperson of FEMNET represented the Organisation in this meeting
29 th June	Validation workshop on the UN Joint Programme on Gender in Equality in Kenya. The Programme Manager represented the organisation at this meeting.
17 th July	Advocacy Officer participated in the Stakeholders Consultation on Advocacy Strategies for the Nairobi Women's Hospital, Gender Violence Recovery Center
1 st – 2 nd November	AWID meeting on the Impact of the Economic and Financial Crisis on Women's Rights attended by Executive Director
7 th – 9 th December	Genderlinks and AMwA meeting on Strategies for African Women's Leadership Development held in South Africa, attended by Executive Director

10th December Meeting on Gender Perspectives on the Harmonized Constitution in Kenya - attended by Advocacy Officer

Papers Presented

- Gender Based violence- Executive Director- Media Workshop-Nairobi, Kenya
- Threats to Civil Society- Communication Officer – Civicus/Amnesty International –Belem-Brazil
- Presentation on the Men to Men Initiative- Program Associate Men to Men - CIDA Canada.
- Interactive session with the Liberal Canadian members of Parliament in the House of Commons - Program Associate Men to Men- Ottawa, Canada
- Presentation on the Men to MEN Programme at the 53rd session on the Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March – Executive Director
- Promoting the Protocol to the Africa Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa: Summary of SOAWR Strategies – Executive Director – Launch of SOAWR Publication in Addis Ababa, January 2009
- What the CSW 53rd Session achieved for African Women: Care giving in the Context of HIV/AIDS – Executive Director, April 2010, Post-CSW meeting for East and Southern Africa.
- The African Women's Decade, moving Africa from commitments to actions - Advocacy Officer - AU meeting of Gender Ministers, Banjul, November 2009.





“Together we can make a difference” FEMNET remains committed to ensuring that we deliver our mandate and vision to all women in the 53 African countries.

PART THREE: INSTITUTIONAL & HUMAN RESOURCE MATTERS

3.1 Administration/ Human Resource

The staff continued to have monthly meetings as part of team building, monitoring and evaluation. Ms. Aicha Tamboura Diawara, the new Programme Manager reported to work officially on the 30th March 2009. The position of Advocacy Officer was re-advertised in January 2009 and the interviews took place on 6th April 2009. Ms. Naisola Likimani was appointed as the Advocacy Officer. She reported to work on May 2, 2009. Mr. Kennedy Otina was interviewed by the Executive Board on April 6, 2009 for the position of the Programme Associate for the Advocacy Programme. He was assigned the responsibility to roll out the Regional Men to Men Initiative which is covering 7 countries. He is also responsible for coordinating the We Can Campaign in Kenya and supporting the media activities under the Advocacy Program.

The Sida Bilateral Associate Expert (BBE), Åsa Eriksson’s contract with FEMNET was extended for two months to enable her complete work on UNIFEM/ FEMNET Project that supported the implementation of a one year Project of the Men for Gender Equality Now to reach out to a wider constituency with messages for the elimination of VAW. Through this Project FEMNET was able to document its experiences and strategies used in the five years’ project to promote men’s involvement in combating VAW and the spread of HIV/AIDS. The contract finally ended on 22nd May, 2009. It was a very worthwhile experience to have Asa with us for the one year period. It was a mutually beneficial experience.

3.1.1 Board Meetings

The FEMNET Annual Executive Board and Board of Trustees meetings take place once a year. In 2009 they took place on April 7 - 8 and on April 9, 2009 respectively in Nairobi, Kenya.

3.1.2 The Institutional Evaluation

The External Institutional evaluation for FEMNET was supported by Sida and Oxfam Novib. Consultants from Denmark, COWI were engaged by Sida to conduct the external evaluation, which begun in June 2009. A local consultant Ms. Atieno Ndomo was also engaged to work closely with the COWI team. The report was finalized in December 2009. FEMNET was found to be a viable organization with a relevant mandate. The key recommendation is the need to strengthen the National Focal Point organizations to ensure that the structure of the network supports it to deliver on its mandate of reaching out to all women in the 53 African countries.

As a follow up to the Institutional Evaluation the Secretariat initiated a process to make proposals for amendment of its Constitution, Personnel Policy, Finance Policy and Procedures Manual and developed a Resource Mobilization Policy and Reserve Policy. All these are to be discussed by the Executive Board during its annual meeting in April 2010.

3.2. The FEMNET Building Project

This project was launched in August 2008. By the end of the year a Project document was developed. The Centre will house the Regional Secretariat and other facilities that will generate income for the organization and also benefit African women. A task force has been identified to help oversee the project. In the first half of the year the Project task force has mainly been involved in the following tasks in order to make progress:

- Identifying suitable land for the project, and undertaking all the preliminary investigations to ascertain ownership, valuations and city planning regulations
- Making attempts to meet the powers that be in Kenya to lobby for allocation of land
- Developing a resource mobilisation strategy for the project to involve as many people as possible to contribute to the project
- Opening a special account for the Africa Women Power House
- Organising bi- monthly planning meetings for the task Force

Fundraising for building project will continue in 2010.



First Architectural drawings of the proposed African Women's Power Centre

3.3 The 2009 Staff Retreat

The Staff retreat in December 2009, provided an opportunity to strengthen team-building, to reflect and review individual and collective achievements, commitments and challenges in the ending year (2009) and at the same time develop and refine the 2010 work programmes, incorporating the much-needed strategies to remain focused and relevant to the emerging and diverse needs of women in Africa while capitalising on key moments in 2010.

To address some of the gaps noted in the work undertaken in 2009 members of staff agreed to prioritize the following:

What do we Take-on in 2010?

- Take on board Institutional evaluation recommendations
- Enhance writing and editing skills for members
- Strengthen contacts with key decision makers at different levels
- Take advantage of ICTs such as SMS during key days like IWD, CSW, Democracy day
- Increase amount of Data in the databases we have developed
- Connect with other networks like Sangonet, GEMSA, GenderLinks, Southern Africa Alliance
- Upscale the internship programme to benefit young feminists from other countries.
- Enhance membership recruitment and mobilisation strategies
- Upscale the fundraising efforts for Africa Women's Power Centre

Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats in 2009

Strengths

21 years of Experience working on Women's rights and Development issues
 Membership in all sub-regions of Africa
 Strong partnership with Regional & International organizations
 Strong organizational profile
 Supportive Board and professional staff team

Challenges

Inadequate staffing compared to the work of the Network
 One year funding from Sida – without multi- year funding for institutional support there is uncertainty
 Very high expectations from the different stakeholders

Threats

Continued political instability in many African countries
 Lack of consistent implementation of policy and legislative frameworks that support women in many countries and limited political commitment on the part of many governments in Africa to do so.

Opportunities

African Women's Decade (2010-2020)
 Beijing +15 Review
 MDGs review
 African Union summits
 UN CSW
 All international Days

KEY LESSONS LEARNT, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONCLUSION

A number of lessons are highlighted here under drawn from the work done during the reporting period. For example after the AU pre-summit engagements it was observed by the SOAWR Coalition that sustained national level advocacy is critical and complementary to the success of the lobbying and advocacy that SOAWR Coalition members do at the AU Summits.

SOAWR should do more preparation and planning at national level (through its members) well in advance of the AU Summits in order to influence the Summit agenda and outcomes, particularly around the theme of the Summit.

Another lesson learnt was that resource mobilization needs to be a continuous process for the Organisation to be able to sustain its program of work. However, it was also noted that all efforts must be made to relate program activities so that different issues are covered and addressed using the different events and activities planned. For example FEMNET's participation in the Kenya Gender Festival enabled the organization to renew its contacts with many women organizations in Kenya, mobilize new members and also share its publications with a wider constituency in the country. This greatly facilitated the mobilization around the Beijing + 15 Review Process.

The first half of year 2009 was a very busy period for the organization. Despite the limitations in staffing at the beginning of the year the organization was able to meet its targets for the period in terms of programs activity implementation. Having more staff in the second quarter of the year increased the momentum of the work and this made it possible for the secretariat to meet most of its targets for the year.

We also noticed during the External evaluation that we need to strengthen our monitoring and evaluation mechanisms so that we are able to relate the work we do with the changes in the situation of women and girls in Africa. More efforts were committed in the second half of the year to improving the internal monitoring processes by tracking those who visit our FEMNET website and the kind of information they are looking for, the news on FEMNET information products and publications, and how our advocacy and training programs influence women's organizing at different levels.

Many organisations including FEMNET were affected by the global economic and financial crises. As a membership based network we faced challenges in facilitating our members to participate in various relevant international fora due to financial constraints. For instance, during the 2009 World Social Forum, there were few African feminists participating due to lack of funds. Lack of adequate funds continues to be a challenge for the FEMNET secretariat. However, this has not hampered our commitment and passion to ensure that the situation and status of women in Africa changes for the better.

We acknowledge with thanks and appreciation all our partners, local, sub- regional, regional and international, who support FEMNET to accomplish its mission with personnel, financial, technical and material resources. It is certain that without your support it would be next to impossible for FEMNET to accomplish so much.

Some of the Key Achievements & Results in 2009

- ♀ FEMNET took the lead in collecting the national and sub-regional shadow reports and thereafter compiling the Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing+15.
- ♀ During the African Women's Leadership Conference organized in Togo in September 2009, one of the participants declared she would contest the Togo Presidential elections. This was one of the best outcomes for FEMNET in the 2009.

- ♀ FEMNET working with the SOAWR coalition members continued to impact positively on the African Union decision making processes. From the time the African Union Protocol on Rights of Women in Africa came into force, FEMNET with partners in SOAWR coalition have managed to lobby 27 member states to ratify the Protocol.
- ♀ During the course of the year FEMNET published five new publications, out of which three received a lot of demand:
 - A Handbook for Effective Lobbying during the 53rd CSW
 - Defying the Odds: Lessons Learnt from Men for Gender Equality Now
 - Freedom of Information and Women's Rights in Africa
 - The Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing +15
 - The Kenya Shadow Report on Beijing +15 Review
- ♀ FEMNET interacted widely and got coverage in different national, regional, sub-regional and international media outlets.
- ♀ Mobilized and facilitated African Women to participate and influence the agenda for the African Women's Decade (2010 - 2020).



FEMNET Staff at the 2009 Staff Retreat in Limuru, Kenya

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009 AND 2008

	2009	2009	2008
	KShs	USD	KShs
SUPPORT AND REVENUES			
Grants received	126,210,517	1,682,807	122,254,273
Finance income	2,391,284	31,884	3,241,944
Other income	592,080	7,894	1,417,655
Restricted/deferred income	(40,710,448)	(542,806)	(39,613,777)
Total support and Revenue	88,483,433	1,179,779	87,300,095
EXPENSES			
Programme expenses	73,989,511	986,527	69,597,048
Establishment expenses	3,678,025	49,040	4,350,254
Administration expenses	6,792,097	90,561	5,670,771
Total expenses	84,459,633	1,126,128	79,618,073
Surplus for the year	4,023,800	53,651	7,682,022
General reserves at beginning of the year	15,382,729	205,103	7,700,707
General reserves at end of the year	19,406,529	258,754	15,382,729

FEMNET financial position continue to improve with a net assets balance of US\$ 258,754 at fiscal year end.

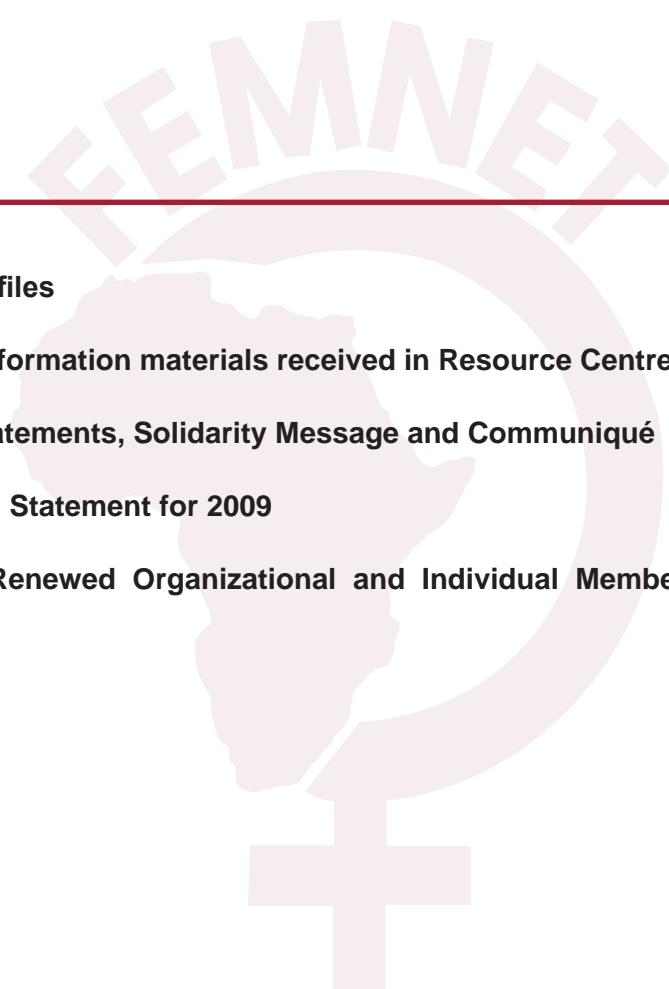
FEMNET recorded US\$ 1,179,779 in support and revenue in fiscal year 2009. The expenses grew by 6.1% while continuing to have very strong expense ratios with programme expenses representing 87.6% of the total expenses.

* FEMNET's financial statements have been independently audited by the accounting firm of Otieno Oboge & Co 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.

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2009 AND 2008

ASSETS	2009	2009	2008
	Kshs	USD	KShs
Current Assets:			
Receivables	1,511,043	20,147	5,723,359
Investments at Market Value	6,505,370	86,738	6,000,000
Cash and Cash Equivalents	52,289,030	697,187	42,713,356
	60,305,443	804,073	54,436,715
Long Term Assets:			
Property and equipment-net of accumulated depreciation	4,317,770	57,570	5,132,330
Total Assets	64,623,213	861,643	59,569,045
LIABILITIES AND RESERVES			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	430,980	5,746	1,497,283
Restricted / Deferred income	44,210,448	589,473	42,113,777
	44,641,428	595,219	43,611,060
Reserves			
General reserve	19,406,529	258,754	15,382,729
Capital reserve	575,256	7,670	575,256
	19,981,785	266,424	15,957,985
Total Liabilities and Reserves	64,623,213	861,643	59,569,045

ANNEXES

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- A. Staff Profiles**
 - B. List of information materials received in Resource Centre in 2009**
 - C. Press statements, Solidarity Message and Communiqué**
 - D. Financial Statement for 2009**
 - E. List of Renewed Organizational and Individual Membership as of December 2009.**

Annex A: Staff Profiles

The following are the Secretariat staff members' profiles and status in the year 2009:-



Norah Matovu Winyi (Uganda) is the Executive Director of FEMNET she will be clocking two years with the organisation in 2010. She has a passion for working for the advancement of women in Africa. With over 20 years working experience in legal practice and NGO management at a senior level and working as a human rights advocate in Uganda and within the region. *"It was a very busy, interesting, and positively challenging year for FEMNET. I am glad I was part of it."*



Naisola Likimani (Kenya) is the Advocacy Officer, she joined FEMNET in May 2009. Naisola has worked hard to strengthen the Advocacy Programme and sustain most of its various projects. *"I have been welcomed warmly into the FEMNET family and look forward to what we can do together as we launch the African Women's Decade in 2010"*



Kennedy Otina, (Kenya) is the Programme Associate for the Men to Men Regional Programme. He has been with FEMNET for the last five years implementing the award winning Men for Gender Equality Now in Kenya (MEGEN). He has a new task of scaling up Men to Men Programme to cover Uganda, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo. *"I do this work for the love of my daughters and also other girls that are vulnerable to abuse by men. I want to contribute to protecting the African girl child from all forms of abuse and make Africa a safe place for women and girls"*



Carlyn Hambuba (Zambia) is the Communications Officer and has been with FEMNET since June 2008. Her main role is to ensure that FEMNET members are kept informed with relevant information and also liaises with the media. *"Working with FEMNET provides me with a great challenge of thinking beyond the communication box which is my domain"*



Jean Simbayobewe, (Rwanda). He has been with FEMNET for four years and he is the in- house bilingual translator (French & English). *“I could not have found a better way of joining hands with women to promote gender equality, than helping them break language barriers so as to have a common voice.”*



Rachel Kagoiya, (Kenya) is the Resource Centre Manager, has been with FEMNET for the last three and half years. She ensures that the Gender and Development Resource Centre remains functional and relevant to the information needs of the various stakeholders. She also manages the website as well as the production and dissemination of all the publications of FEMNET. *“Information is power and our continuous sharing and targeted dissemination makes it empowering.”*



Martin Odera, (Kenya) is the Finance Administrator and has been working with FEMNET for the last six years. He coordinates the financial and budgeting processes for all the programmes, ensuring that financial standards and procedures are maintained. *“FEMNET provides me with a unique opportunity to work beyond my job of finance and accounting figures”*



Mary Thiang'au, (Kenya) Finance Assistant has held this position for the last ten years. Mary works closely with the Finance Administrator to coordinate financial management processes. *“I am proud to work for an organisation that promotes women's rights, everyday is a new day for me as I learn a new thing ”*



Rose Akinyi, (Kenya) is the Office Administrator and she is specially placed in FEMNET to play a central role in facilitating all the Program Staff to do their work. She has been with FEMNET for fourteen years. *“I am always impressed by the way the staff members are able to work as a team to achieve the organization's mission. Keep it up”*



Grace Wambui, (Kenya) is the Receptionist and has been with FEMNET for the last twelve years, working closely with the Office Administrator, specifically managing the front office affairs. *“I am happy to work for FEMNET because everyday I learn something new about women’s rights”*



Margaret Ndung'u, (Kenya) is the Office Assistant and has been with FEMNET for nine years, working closely with the Office Administrator to manage daily office affairs. *“Working with FEMNET has been a great experience for me. I like the unity and love among staff”*



Mary Mugane, (Kenya) is the Office Driver and has been with FEMNET for ten years. She coordinates all office errands and works with the Office Administrator to manage the transportation and movements of staff and visitors on official duty. *“FEMNET is a wonderful place to work, I’m inspired by the staff’s togetherness and team spirit as demonstrated during personal and professional moments in life”*



Aicha Tamboura (Burkina Faso) was the Program Manager between March and August 2009.

Annex B: List of information materials received in Resource Centre in 2009

African Child Policy Forum (2008) *The African Report on Child Wellbeing: How child-friendly are African governments?*

African Monitor (2009) *Development Support Monitor: Africa in our Hands*

African Network Campaign for Education For All (2009) *From closed books to open doors: West Africa's literacy challenge*

African Women's Development Fund (2008) *Where is the money for women's rights in Africa? An African feminist resource mobilization strategy meeting*

AWCFS and ACTS (2009) *Promises & realities: Taking Stock of the 3rd UN International Women's Conference*

BRIDGE/ Institute of Development Studies (2009) *BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack: Gender and Governance Overview report*

BRIDGE/Institute of Development Studies (2009) *Gender and Care: Supporting Resources Collection*

Centre for the Study of Adolescence (2009) *A Measure of Commitment: Women's sexual and reproductive risk-Index for sub Saharan Africa*

Dvv international (2009) *Adult Education and Development: International Conference; financing adult education for development Bonn, 23-24 June 2009*

Dvv international (2009) *Adult Education and Development: 40 years dvv international*

FAO (2009) *Virtual Change: Indicators for assessing the impact of ICTs in Development*

FIDA-Kenya (2008) *Documenting human rights violations of sex workers in Kenya*

FIDA-Kenya (2009) *Women Enterprise and Development Fund: An Appraisal*

IBON International (2008) *IBON Primer on Climate Change*

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2008) *Traditional justice and reconciliation after violent conflict: learning from African experiences*

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (2009) *Missing the target: Failing women, Failing children: HIV, Vertical Transmission and women's health*

International Women's Media Foundation (2009) *Sowing the Seeds: a Study of Media Coverage of Agriculture and Women in the Agricultural Sector in Three African Countries – Mali, Uganda and Zambia*

- Kenya Human Rights Commission (2009) Report of the abortion mock tribunal
- Media Monitoring Africa (2009) Empowering messages: what you should know – strategic communication and gender-based violence
- Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya (2009) Economic Review of Agriculture 2009
- Oxfam GB (2009) Development in Practice (Vol. 19; No. 3)
- Oxfam GB (2009) Gender and development (Vol. 18; No. 1)
- Plan (2008) Learn Without Fear: the Global Campaign to End Violence in Schools
- Social Watch (2008) Social Watch Report: Rights is the Answer
- Society for International Development (2007) State of East Africa: searching for the Soul of East Africa
- The World Bank (2009) Global Monitoring Report: a Development Emergency
- Transafrica Press Ltd. (2009) 'MAU MAU' DETAINEE
- Transparency International Kenya (2009) The East African Bribery Index
- UN Department of Public Information (2009) UNiTE to End Violence Against Women: Framework for Action (2008-2015)
- UNECA (2009) Africa Women's Report: Measuring Gender Inequalities in Africa-Experiences and Lessons from the African Gender and Development Index
- UNESCO (2008) Human Security: Approaches and Challenges
- UNIFEM (2008) Who Answers to Women? : Gender and Accountability
- Urgent Action Fund (2008) What's the Point of Revolution if We Can't Dance?
- Voluntary Service Overseas-Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (2008) Increasing male involvement in home-based care to reduce the burden of care on women and girls in Southern Africa
- Women in Action (2009) Harvest reaped but hard to reach: The food crisis and women in the global south

--NB: Format used {Publisher's name (Year of publication) Title of publication} --

Annex C: Press Statements, Solidarity Messages and Communiqués

I. PRESS RELEASE: 30th September 2009

African Women Condemn Use of Force on Unarmed Civilian in Guinea

Women leaders meeting in Lome, Togo at the Women's Leadership Conference convened by the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) in collaboration with ROFAF condemn in the strongest terms the use of excessive force on unarmed and peaceful demonstrators in Conakry, the capital of Guinea that has resulted in the death of at least 157 persons and injuring over 1,200 people since Monday 28th September 2009.

The women leaders at this Conference including Members of Parliament from Burkina Faso and Togo, a Presidential Candidate from Cote d'Ivoire, a judge of the Constitutional Court of Togo and leaders from Civil society organizations and trade unionists from Guinea, Togo, Niger, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Sao Tome & Principe are saddened by Guinea's security forces' barbaric conduct and irresponsible behaviour that has led to the death and injury of many people and the indiscriminate abuse and raping of women that were peacefully voicing their displeasure about the governance challenges in their country. The women say enough is enough. "We must rid Africa of bad leadership and all its effects which slow down development in our continent."

The women of Africa call upon the leaders in Guinea to stop the security forces from abusing the rights of the citizens of Guinea and the denial of their rights to freely express themselves. Immediate action is demanded to ensure that all those involved in perpetrating these heinous acts are made to account and are duly punished. It is the right of every person to participate in the governance of their country and that right cannot be derogated as it is clearly articulated in the Africa Charter on Human and People's Rights which Guinea has acceded to.

We further appeal to Captain Dadis Camara to ensure the release of the opposition leaders that were arrested during the demonstrations. In any democracy the opposition has a role to provide alternatives for leadership and this role must be respected. The women also urge the government of Guinea to ensure that the atmosphere is conducive in the country to enable the people of Guinea to freely and fairly prepare for their involvement and participation in the forthcoming elections. We further call upon Captain Dadis Camara to uphold his decision and pledge not to contest in the Presidential elections scheduled in January 2010.

We are aware that currently the government in Guinea is run by a military junta without a legislative body. We therefore appeal to authorities in Guinea to quickly restore a constitutional republic which the country previously enjoyed before the December 23, 2008 coup d'état and put in place a legislative framework which ensures that all citizen enjoy their rights and women and children in particular are protected from all forms of abuse of their bodily integrity and dignity.

The Women leaders call upon the Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and the international community to act expeditiously to avert further strife in Guinea because unstable states are a big challenge to democracy building in Africa and derail the development agenda on our Continent and that of its people. The time for Action is Now!!!!

Background

On Monday 28th September 2009 Presidential Guard troops used excessive force to disperse an opposition rally in Conakry, Guinea, with about 50,000 participants protesting against the junta government that came to power after the Guinean coup d'état of December 2008. The protest march was fueled by the indication of junta leader Captain Moussa Dadis Camara breaking his pledge not to contest in the next Presidential vote due to be held in January 2010. The government had already banned any form of protests until 2 October, and when the demonstrators gathered in a large stadium, the security forces opened fire at them. At least 157 demonstrators were killed, 1,253 injured and 30, including Cellou Dalein Diallo, the leader of the opposition Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UDFG), were arrested and taken away in lorries.

For Further Information Contact:

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II. PRESS STATEMENT: 29th September, 2009

Enhancing Democracy in Africa through Increasing Women's participation

Lome, Togo - The time for action is now," If African women want to see significant changes in women representation and participation in political leadership by the year 2015 we have to transform the way we organize around women issues" This was the call made by the Minister of Social Action, for the Promotion of Women and the Protection of Children and Elderly Persons in Togo, Hon. Maimountou at the opening of the African Women's Leadership Conference. The Conference organised by African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) in collaboration with ROFAF drew participants from eight African countries namely Togo, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Sao Tome and Principe, Guinea, Niger and Gabon.

The African Women's Leadership Conference was officially opened by Mme Agnele Christine Mensah the Representative of the President of the National Assembly of Togo Hon. El. Hadji Abbas Bonfoh, who is also the Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee of the National Assembly of Togo (Parliament). "For peace and development to be fully realised in Africa women must play a central role in building strong democratic societies. Due to the numerous challenges and disadvantages they are faced with they need democratic institutions and systems that facilitate and secure their involvement and meaningful participation. However, as we all know power is sweet and no one will give it up readily" said Mme Agnele Christine Mensah. She therefore called upon women to work more together, to support different initiatives that aim to increase women's representation and effective participation in decision making at different levels. Women must also be in position to practically support female candidates to mobilize resources for their electoral campaigns and once elected to ensure that they remain active and effective.

FEMNET Executive Director Ms. Norah Matovu-Winyi said the purpose of the Conference was to bring together experienced as well as upcoming young women politicians in French speaking countries that have presidential or parliamentary elections in 2009 and 2010, to reflect on what has been the experience of women in political leadership in the countries represented. In preparation for the forthcoming elections the women leaders were called upon to reflect on what needs to be done differently in order to strengthen the role of women in democracy building. They considered initiatives in Africa that have contributed to the promotion of gender equity in political leadership in different countries. "In other words, the Conference was about celebrating and learning from the experiences of women that are active in politics in their respective countries and finding ways to overcome barriers to women's political participation" said Ms Matovu-Winyi.

Mme Massan d'Almeida, the Chairperson of ROFAF, which is the collaborating Women's Network in Africa for the French Speaking Countries, commended countries like Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, and Angola for making good strides in increasing the number of women in Parliament and in local government structures. She noted that women in Franco-phone Africa seem to be lagging behind. She challenged participants to use the Conference as a platform to analyse the root causes of this poor representation in West Africa. "Unless we inspire each other to take up the leadership challenge we shall continue to lament about the dismal statistics of women representation. Women in Africa have to constantly be reminded that taking leadership is about sharing power and authority and these will not be given up that easily by the power holders as there is no vacuum at present. To change the status quo, there is need for courage and commitment" Said Mme. Massan d'Almeida.

For three days the participants shared inspiring stories on the leadership journeys of various women that have worked against all odds to be elected, and sustained the gender equity debate alive and women's rights agenda as a priority in addition to addressing issues of poverty, gender budgeting, trade relations and regional integration. All these issues have an impact on the women's rights agenda. They explored the difference that women in positions of political power has made, and how women's effectiveness and progressive engagement in political decision – making can be further supported and strengthened particularly in the context of French speaking countries in Africa. The participants took time to discuss and strategize together on how best to support the candidature Mme Jacqueline Oble who is in the presidential race in Cote d'Ivoire in the presidential elections due in November 2009. Participants agreed to support Mme Oble by popularizing her candidature among the Ivorians in the Diaspora, by ensuring that she gains support among the African Presidents' club members and mobilizing women in Africa to contribute to her financial and practical needs in order to sustain her campaign for the presidency. The women leaders resolved to commit more time and resources to mobilise women at all levels to be actively involved in the governance of their

countries and to turn out in large numbers to vote in the forth coming elections. They called for support for civic education programmes at the community level to enable women and men to understand and appreciate the linkage between the vote, good leadership and their development goals.

Most importantly the women leaders developed and adopted plans for each of the eight countries in attendance to implement in the next one year. They committed themselves to popularize the Africa Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and to lobby their governments to ratify it and embark on its implementation as part of the electoral processes for the forthcoming elections in their respective countries.

To end the Conference Women leaders in the strongest terms condemned the killings and indiscriminate abuse of people's human rights including the heinous acts against some of the female demonstrators in Guinea that shocked the world on the 28th of September 2009. They resolved that enough is enough: Africans must work together to bring an end to bad leadership and governance on our continent. They called upon those in leadership in Guinea to end all forms of undemocratic ways of dealing with the opposition voices. The full statement on the situation in Guinea is attached hereto.

For more Information or to books interviews Contact:

The Executive Director of FEMNET

Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi: on admin@femnet.or.ke or

call the FEMNET Secretariat on **TEL: 254 20 271 2971/2**



III. SOLIDARITY MESSAGES



16th April 2009

Ms Elise Muhimuzi
Comité National Femme et Développement (CONAFED)
P O Box 5744, Kinshasa
Tel: (243) 9918406/ 081 9918406
E-mail: conafed@ic.cd

Dear Elise,

Subject: Solidarity from FEMNET Secretariat in Nairobi

The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) Secretariat in Nairobi learnt with regret about the dismantling in the office of CONAFED early April 2009.

FEMNET is writing to express solidarity with you and your staff during this very difficult time. The attack could be an attempt to silence you from championing the cause of women. We condemn this act in the strongest terms.

FEMNET believes that existence and effective functioning of civil society rests on guarantees of the freedoms of expression, association and assembly. However, when these freedoms are restricted or tempered with, civil society struggles to perform its vital role as watchdogs on government. This in turn also affects the role of civil society as defenders and protectors of human rights.

We would like to appeal to you and your staff to soldier on in your work of promoting women's development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Your work is critical in contributing to the reconstruction of the DRC which has experienced war and civil strife for over ten years now.

In solidarity

Norah Matovu-Winyi
Executive Director.

IV: MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE WOMEN OF RWANDA ON THE OCCASION OF THE 15TH GENOCIDE ANNIVERSARY



April 2009

KUSCCO Centre, Upper Hill,
Kilimanjaro Road, Off Mara Road,
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Tel: +254 20-2341516/7 Cell: 0725766932
Email: admin@femnet.or.ke
Website: www.femnet.or.ke

April, 2009 marks the 15th anniversary of the Rwanda Genocide. The worst genocide that the world has seen, with over 8000 men, women and children killed in a short period of one month. The African women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) sends this message of solidarity to all the women of Rwanda as the country reflects on this sad moment in its history which happened in 1994.

All people in Rwanda were indeed affected and at the same time we are aware that the women and girls faced untold suffering which violated their bodily integrity and dignity. The impacts of the horrors are still being felt today. We salute all the women of Rwanda who have managed to pull their lives together after the genocide and are now contributing significantly to the healing process, reconciliation and rebuilding the country by taking up leadership positions at all levels.

We also pay tribute to the government of Rwanda for creating and sustaining a conducive political environment that supports the participation of the women of Rwanda in the affairs of their country. Women voices have been heard and their has been support for the social and cultural transformation necessary to meet the new realities of the day in Rwanda. The 56 percent representation of women in the Rwandan parliament is testimony that women in Africa are capable of contributing to development in their respective countries and this example should be emulated by many countries in Africa.

It is our hope that Rwandan women will triumph over every obstacle that has been brought about by the genocide and will continue to play a critical role of ensuring that this never happens again anywhere in Africa.

In Solidarity

Norah Matovu-Winyi
Executive Director
FEMNET

V: COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED IN 2009

Statement from the Africa Women's NGO Consultative Meeting Beijing +15 Review November 16, 2009, Banjul, The Gambia

We, the representatives of civil society organisations addressing women's and human rights issues across Africa, **meeting in the margins of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15) on November 15 and 16, 2009 in Banjul, The Gambia;**

Having assembled to deliberate on the progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Africa since the last review (Beijing +10), to validate the Africa Regional NGO Shadow Report on Beijing +15 which incorporates national and sub-regional reviews from women's civil society organisations and networks;

Recognizing that the Beijing +15 Review process is taking place at a time of both great opportunities and challenges for African women in the realization of their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights;

Considering WITH GREAT CONCERN that although the process of implementation of Beijing Platform for Action over the last 15 years has utilized significant resources, progress remains minimal, slow and fragmented, and has not resulted in fundamental changes in the lives of the majority of women in Africa;

Noting that the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and human rights instruments that reinforce its provisions such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol on the Rights of women in Africa involves a range of stakeholders, the primary responsibility rests with member states of the African Union;

Further noting that the Beijing commitments have been repeatedly articulated as human rights guarantees which states parties are obligated to protect, promote and fulfil to the fullest extent possible, and that this requires visible and consistent political will and resources in order to deliver on this agenda;

We therefore highlight the following actions among others, specified in the Beijing +15 Africa NGO Shadow Report as an urgent **Call on African Governments** to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action over the next 5 years;

1. Ensure universal ratification of the African Union Protocol on Women's Rights, CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, as an indication of their political commitment to the human rights standards and urgently domesticate in full the instruments on women's rights to provide a legal basis for protecting, fulfilling and enforcing provisions on women's social and economic rights in particular;
2. Accelerate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and all women's rights commitments through a multi - sectoral approach, that States committed to in Beijing in 1995, by the end of the first three years of the Africa Women's Decade;
3. Ensure that structures established to lead the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda have adequate resources as an indication of member states' political commitment to women's advancement;
4. Ratify the African Union Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, harmonize the electoral laws and democratic structures with its provisions and consistently implement the African Union gender parity commitments at national and local governance levels by 2015;
5. Ensure that electoral and policy reforms are fully implemented to guarantee women's full and effective participation in leadership and decision-making in terms of equal representation, participation in political parties and as key stakeholders in the democratic processes of their countries;
6. Allocate funds from the African Union Women's Fund for training and education programmes for women politicians aspiring for elected positions as a priority to enhance their capacities to effectively participate in and influence decision making processes.
7. Enact Freedom of Information legislation in line with internationally accepted human rights principles and standards in order to guarantee citizens' access to critical information particularly to African women, to

facilitate their full and effective participation in governance, democratic processes and development.

8. Urgently implement their commitments to change attitudes and practices that negatively impact on the protection, promotion and fulfilment of women's rights by using the media among others, as a powerful tool for building public and targeted awareness and education on women's rights and advancement.
9. Meet their reporting requirements on progress made towards gender equality in Africa and where there is non compliance we call upon the African Union to institute additional mechanisms for ensuring accountability under the Protocol on the Rights of women (2003) and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004).
10. Address the burning issue of impunity in Africa with regard to violations of human rights of African citizens, particularly violence against women and children in conflict situations, and ensure fulfilments of commitments to the protection of women and children from all forms of violence;
11. Ensure that member states prioritise women's health as a human rights issue, particularly maternal, sexual and reproductive health, as a critical component of sustainable development in Africa, and intensify actions to reduce the feminisation of HIV/AIDS;
12. Take deliberate efforts to nominate female candidates for the position of Chairperson of the African Union Commission as a sign of equal sharing of leadership and responsibilities for delivering on the development agenda in Africa;
13. Invest in women's education with particular attention to science and technology training, to ensure that African women benefit from the changing global technology framework;
14. Build the capacity of rural women in agriculture and strengthen women's land rights as part of the process of implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and the AU Land Policy Framework and Guidelines;
15. Invest in research on climate change in Africa and its implications for women, and address gender dimensions with respect to mitigation, adaptability, response and compensation mechanisms. Invest in research and technology on clean and renewable energy sources ensuring gender analysis is integrated;
16. Desist from engaging in bilateral and international trade and economic agreements that undermine the regional integration process and impact negatively on women's rights and advancement;
17. Invest in women's entrepreneurship for effective economic empowerment and eliminate barriers to women starting businesses and small/medium enterprises and commit sufficient resources to infrastructural development that facilitates trade within countries and across borders in the region; and
18. Ensure that gender equality is incorporated in all planning and budgeting processes at different levels, and the deliberate development of sex disaggregated data and gender sensitive indicators, as one of the ways to guarantee effective implementation of all the Beijing commitments and as a strategy for promoting, protecting and fulfilling African women's right to development.

VI: REPORT ON FEMNET'S PARTICIPATION IN THE FISC/ CONFITEA VI

By Sophie Ngugi- Young Women's Leadership Institute
Date: 14th December 2009

Introduction

I got the opportunity to participate in the International Civil Society Forum (FISC) and International conference on Adult Education (CONFITEA VI) as a member of FEMNET. The FISC took place, between November 28th and 30th, 2009 while the Youth and adult education conference took place from 1st to 4th December 2009 in Belem Brazil. The CONFITEA takes place every 12 years with government representatives and the CSO members being observers. The following is a brief report outlining feedback on the process, brief on the conference and way forward.

Feedback on process: Preparation process

The following were strong points on the process

- The participation of FEMNET members from different countries was a strength as the members from different countries got to exchange views on the conference and on the issues of youth and adult education in general.
- Older and young members participation offered a chance for networking and the young members got a better feel of FEMNET through discussions on how/why FEMNET was formed from the older members including founder members
- Liaison role of FEMNET with organisers and other persons involved was great. For example the arrangement by FEMNET with the South African Embassy to issue transit Visas within few hours was quite beneficial

a) International Civil Society Forum

FISC provided a space for reflection and formulation of proposals that aimed to promote the exchange of experiences and influence the CONFITEA. There were caucuses held by different groups the Women's caucus and several issues were agreed upon. These were issues that needed to be lobbied to the individual government delegates for them to include them in the Belem declaration amendments. The CSO members also met everyday before the beginning of the Confitea to agree on the issues and suggest amendments to this. The following 10 issues were considered as crucial from FISC (A detailed copy is attached details can be found on their website <http://www.fisc2009.org/eng>)

1. The need for a recognition of lack of access to education as violation of the fundamental human and social right
2. Recognising that education of adults and young people is key to helping people, especially women, who are worst affected to cope with all types of crises like food, fuel, finance, conflict or climate
3. All data should be disaggregated by gender and other bases of potential discrimination (e.g. race, ethnicity, class, caste, sexual orientation, gender identity, generation, disability, geographical location, citizenship status, imprisonment etc). All surveys, research and data collection or reporting should focus on a continuum of literacy levels appropriate to people's life, work, cultural and linguistic contexts.
4. Adult learning should be recognised as the glue behind achieving all the MDGs and should therefore be prioritised in national plans
5. Governments should calculate the full cost of achieving quality education for adults and young people, and should agree to binding minimum targets for spending on adult education including at least 6% of national education budgets being spent on youth and adult education.

Conclusion: The key outcome document from this meeting was the Belem Framework. FEMNET should access the Belem Framework for action (as at the time of ending the conference the framework had some areas for editing and not yet online as at the time of report) and identify areas of interest that FEMNET can lobby the governments in the different countries of membership in conjunction with the ministry of education or relevant ministries.

Annex D: List of Renewed Organizational and Individual Membership as of December 2009

ORGANIZATIONS	
NORTHERN AFRICA	Egypt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA) • Egypt Business Women Association (EBWA)
	Morocco <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association Nationale Al HIDN • Association Feminine La Lumiere (AFEL)
	Tunisia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association pour la Promotion des Femmes Entrepreneurs (APROFE)
CENTRAL AFRICA	Cameroon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMNET Cameroon • Femmes Camerounaises Leaders pour la Paix et le Développement
	Gabon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ONG - SOIF
EASTERN AFRICA	Kenya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenya Adult Learners Association • Girl Child Network (GCN) • Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organisation (MYWO) • Women for Justice in Africa • Young Women's Leadership Institute (YWLI) • Womankind Kenya
	Tanzania <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) • Sahiba Sisters Foundation
	Sudan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PASED/LEAP

WESTERN AFRICA	Cote d'Ivoire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEMNET Côte d'Ivoire
	Ghana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groots Ghana
	Guinea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> USTG (Union Syndicale des Travailleuses de Guinée) Association des Femmes Entrepreneurs de Guinée (AFEG)
	Mali <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABESFA Association des Secrétaires, Assistants et Attachées de Direction du Mali (ASAAD) FEMNET - Mali Réseau d'ONG Maliennes La Kayesienne Syndicat National de l'Education et de la Culture (SNEC) Association pour la Promotion de la Femme et de L'Enfant au Mali (APROFEM)
	Nigeria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls' Power Initiative Women's Health and Rights Project (WHARP)
	Niger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONG Dimol (DIGNITE)
	Togo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Echoppe – Togo Santé de la Famille en milieu Rural et semi Urbain Togo
	Senegal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEMNET-Sénégal
SOUTHERN AFRICA	Malawi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGO Gender Coordination Network
	Mauritius <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cercle des Dames Mourides Baha'i Office for the Advancement of Women Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)
	Seychelles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seychelles Women's Commission (SWC) -Seychelles Gender Commission
	Zambia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGO Co-ordinating Committee (NGOCC) Zambia Association for Research Development (ZARD)
SUB-REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI) Fondation Reine Hangbe
INTERNATIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE)

INDIVIDUALS	
NORTHERN AFRICA	
Tunisia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saida Agrebi
CENTRAL AFRICA	
Burundi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therese Niyondiko
Cameroon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aleine Djessi Ndine Ep Zibi Nsoe • Glory Mbangwana
Gabon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoire Lasseni Duboze Nee Issembe
EASTERN AFRICA	
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Njogu • Pamela Nereah Kola • Mary Wandia • Esther Wanjiku Mwaura Muiru • Consolata Wangari Waithaka
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Ayeta Wangusa
Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatma Alloo • Dafrosa Kokulingilila Itemba
WESTERN AFRICA	
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorine Kenonou Djitrinou
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augustine Quashigah • Gifty Dzah • Roselyn Musa
Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niangandou Shila • Fatimata Ly Coulibaly • Manssaba Sissoko • Béatrice Malu Kabamba • Mama Koite Doumbia • Fatoumata Djire • Fatimata Sory Diallo • Mariam Diane • Assa Kante • Mariam Toure- Keita • Aiche Samassekou nee Berthe • Mariame Kane • Fatoumata Kone
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okeke Ngozi Juliana
Sao Tome & Principe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ana Maria Barbosa Net Amado D'Alva Torres • Maria des Santos Lima da Costa Tebus Torres
Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leontine Akuavi Akakpo • Dunstanette Macauley

INDIVIDUALS	
SOUTHERN AFRICA	
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan Nkomo
Swaziland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gcebile Ndlovu
Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Longwe • Mercy Siame • Susan Chilala • Matrine Chuulu • Sally Chiwama • Christine Kaseba-Sata
Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pamela Major Mhlanga • Tafadzwa Roberta Muropa

