

JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION NETWORK (FEMNET)



A New Year for Feminist Action!

Heri ya Mwaka Mpya, Barka da Sabon Shekara, and Ezi Afo Ọhụry!

Happy New Year, Sisters, Siblings, and Co-conspirators. As we step into 2026, we are energized and ready to continue the critical work of advancing gender equality and feminist principles across Africa. In our African feminist tradition, we welcome you to this year not just as a calendar change, but as a collective deep breath—a moment to remember that our rest is radical, our joy is resistance, and our solidarity is the bridge to the Africa we deserve.

This year promises both challenges and exciting opportunities, and we are committed to deepening our impact through advocacy. Let us move into this year not as survivors of systems, but as the architects of liberation.

1. Beyond a Project: How AACJ Became a Movement and Why It Will Endure



AACJ FEMNET partners during the Sustainability Forum in Mauritius

As the African Activists for Climate Justice (AACJ) Project nears the close of its five-year implementation (2021–2025), FEMNET convened a Sustainability Forum at a pivotal moment for the climate justice movement in Africa. Over the years, AACJ has evolved beyond a project into a powerful platform for feminist, community-led climate action across eight African countries, strengthening women's leadership, amplifying grassroots voices, and building alliances that link gender justice and climate advocacy.

The Sustainability Forum provided a strategic space for partners to reflect on achievements, document lessons learned, and engage in collective planning to ensure the gains made under AACJ are sustained. Through accountability, shared learning and co-creation of

practical sustainability strategies, the Forum focused on protecting and expanding the momentum, networks, and advocacy outcomes built over the past five years.

Recognising that movements do not end when projects close, the Forum emphasised strengthening partnerships, fostering shared ownership, and aligning national and regional priorities to carry the AACJ legacy forward.

Sustaining AACJ, participants affirmed, means sustaining collective power, long-term commitment, and a shared vision for feminist climate justice that continues to centre women, youth, and grassroots communities across Africa, beyond funding cycles and timelines.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Africa Disrupt CSW 70

FEMNET will convene the Africa Disrupt CSW 70 in Accra, Ghana, from 17th to 19th February 2026, under the theme **Centring Justice, Ensuring Equality for African Women and Girls**

The objectives of the convening are to:

- Advance transformative legal and policy reforms that uphold women's and girls' rights and dismantle structural and systemic barriers that continue to restrict their access to justice across Africa.
- Promote feminist approaches to justice and accountability systems that are inclusive, survivor-centred, and responsive to the lived realities of African women and girls ensuring fair redress, protection, and equality before the law.
- Position the elimination of gender-based violence as integral to peace, security, and the rule of law, by advocating for stronger implementation of regional and global commitments that link access to justice with sustainable development and social transformation.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1. AU-EU Youth Lab Cooperation Grants: Supporting joint advocacy work for youth-led (18-35) CSOs. Focus on policy influence and SDGs.

- Grant: €50,000.
- Deadline: February 12, 2026.
- Women, Peace, and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF): Programmatic funding for activities aimed at enhanced participation and leadership of women in humanitarian planning and response.
- Grant: \$30,000 to \$300,000.

<https://aueuyouth.com/grants/>

2. TWAS Seed Grant for New African Principal Investigators (SG-NAPI):

- Deadline: March 31, 2026.
- Urgent Action Fund for Africa: Rapid response grants for women's human rights defenders.

<https://twas.org/opportunity/seed-grant-new-african-principal-investigators-sg-napi>

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Faith-Word in Action (FWA), Democratic Republic of Congo



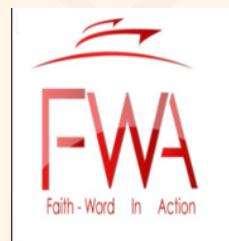
Faith-Word in Action (FWA) is a feminist organization based in the Democratic Republic of Congo working to advance the rights of women and girls, strengthen women's leadership, and promote the economic empowerment of communities. Active in Kinshasa, Kwilu, and South Kivu, FWA collaborates with local women's organizations, young leaders, and community actors to enhance their capacity to influence public policies and decision-making processes in support of gender equality.

Anifa Kalombola - Secretary General for Faith-Word in Action

Through its training, community mobilization, and advocacy programs, FWA works to combat gender-based violence, support the participation of women and girls in leadership spaces, and transform harmful social norms by engaging religious leaders, traditional authorities, and male allies in promoting positive masculinities. In Kwilu Province, its awareness-raising and training initiatives have already reached several hundred young people strengthening their engagement in gender equality and community leadership.

Committed to climate justice, FWA integrates a gender-responsive climate approach into its awareness, youth education, and community mobilization initiatives to strengthen the resilience of women and girls to the impacts of climate change and support their active participation in local and national sustainable development solutions. Through its work, FWA continues to amplify the voices of women and girls and promote their central role in driving social transformation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the wider Central African region.

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The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough."

— Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first female Head of State and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

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Questions or comments? Email us at m.anzaya@femnet.or.ke