

APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER

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



Back-to-Back Brilliance: The April Agenda!

Hold onto your seats because April was an absolute, non-stop powerhouse of a month! We set things in motion by crossing oceans to bring the absolute fire to the Women Deliver conference in Melbourne, Australia, where we were all about unapologetic African feminist resistance, radical movement-building, and shattering global power dynamics to ensure our voices don't just echo, but rewrite the entire agenda!

But the momentum didn't stop Down Under—we packed up that electric energy and flew straight into the unmatched advocacy, continental solidarity, and system-disrupting vibez at the 12th session of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-12) in Addis Ababa. From Melbourne to Addis, FEMNET was on the ground, taking up space, and making it loudly and beautifully clear: African feminists are the blueprint for the future!



FEMNET at Women Deliver 2026: Advancing African Feminist Leadership on the Global Stage

FEMNET was proud to participate in the Women Deliver 2026 Conference, held from 27–30 April 2026 for the first time in the Oceanic Pacific, in Narrm (Melbourne), Australia, where global feminist leaders, advocates, and allies gathered to shape bold, collective action for gender equality and justice. Our engagement was grounded in amplifying African feminist voices and centering lived realities in global policy conversations.



Across various sessions and strategic dialogues, we contributed insights on transformative leadership, ending gender-based violence, climate justice, and strengthening movements led by and accountable to women and girls.

A key highlight of our presence was our side event on the margins of the conference, titled: **“Reclaiming SRHR through Care Economies: Feminist Pathways to Economic Justice and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls.”**

The session convened partners, activists, and feminist allies for a powerful and reflective dialogue on how care economies can be leveraged as a feminist pathway to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), economic justice, and the elimination of violence against women and girls. Through this engagement, we reaffirmed a simple but urgent truth: feminist movements are strongest when they are connected, resourced, and rooted in solidarity across regions.



Her Power Partnership



The **HerPower** Partnership has united to counter the growing anti-rights agenda spreading across the globe by strengthening collective action, harmonizing messaging, and presenting a bold counteroffer for newer generations. Centered on advancing the rights of girls and women in Africa, the

Coalition works to ensure that adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) can claim, protect, and exercise their rights in line with the Maputo Protocol, while amplifying their voices through girl-led movement building and advocacy.

The Coalition is grounded in the belief that AGYW thrive when three interconnected dimensions are strengthened. At the individual level, girls and young women must have access to quality resources, services, and opportunities that build their education, health, leadership, agency, and resilience.

At the group level, AGYW must be empowered to collectively organize, speak out, and influence issues that affect their lives through peer networks, grassroots organizing, and movement building. At the enabling environment level, families, communities, institutions, and policymakers must create safe and supportive ecosystems that protect



rights, challenge harmful norms, and strengthen collective action. Bringing together the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA), and Save the Children Denmark (SCD), the Coalition continues to strengthen collective advocacy efforts across Africa. Together, the partners have also produced a film that presents the purpose and vision of the Coalition, serving as a powerful tool for campaigning, awareness raising, movement building, and driving tangible action for girls' rights and gender equality.

[Watch the film here](#)

[#AfricanFeministStories](#)

Not a Moment. A Movement: Inside the Pamoja Circle in Melbourne

FEMNET co-hosted the Pamoja Circle on the sidelines of the Women Deliver 2026 Conference, on the evening of **29th April**, in partnership with Urgent Action Fund-Africa and Global Affairs Canada.

As captured in reflections from the gathering, the Pamoja Circle was not a typical gathering, it was a deliberate



feminist space for African women's movements, allies, funders, and defenders to pause, reconnect, and reaffirm solidarity beyond the formal conference agenda. The convening brought together participants in a vibrant, culturally grounded atmosphere where joy, storytelling, and collective reflection became central to movement building.



The Circle emphasized that African feminist movements are not only defined by advocacy in formal policy spaces, but also by the relationships, care, and shared resilience that sustain them. It created room to reflect on the realities facing women and girls, while also celebrating survival, leadership, and the strength of interconnected

movements across the continent and diaspora. A key takeaway from the gathering was the importance of movement spaces that nourish both strategy and spirit, recognizing that rest, joy, and community are essential to sustaining long-term feminist organizing.

[Read more about the circle here](#)

The 12th Session of the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (ARFSD 12)

The 12th session of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-12) which was held in in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** from **April 28 to April 30, 2026**, brought together a powerful delegation of policymakers, civil society actors, and development experts to confront the continent's most pressing challenges.



The high-energy opening ceremony set a tone of absolute urgency, with continental leaders delivering a resounding call to move past incremental policy shifts and embrace systemic, coordinated execution. Under review during this session was a critical suite of Sustainable Development Goals: **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**, **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**, **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**, **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities** and **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**

A major institutional highlight of the forum was the official passing over of the Bureau's leadership from Uganda to Mauritius. However, the forum concluded with an unexpected twist as delegates were unable to settle on a venue for next year's gathering; consequently, member states and African governments were strongly urged to submit their expressions of interest to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) secretariat to host the upcoming 13th session.

Amidst these high-level continental debates, FEMNET brought radical grassroots brilliance to the forefront by hosting an incredibly successful side event titled, "**Financing Care, Powering Equality: Feminist and Youth-Led Pathways for Africa's SDGs' Progress.**"

The session was an absolute catalyst of transformative ideas, unpacking how centering the care economy and investing in intersectional, youth-led advocacy are the foundational blueprints needed to truly accelerate Africa's developmental goals. The discussions proved that structural transformation cannot happen without dismantling economic injustice and funding the feminist movement sustainably.

[Click here](#) to read more on our side event, and [click here](#) to read the full, comprehensive discussions summaries of the ARFSD-12.



Meaningful Engagement for Transformative Action (META) Partners Inception Meeting.



The journey toward a more accountable, inclusive, and transparent Kenya achieved a major milestone this month as the Meaningful Engagement Transformative Action (META) project hosted its foundational Partners Inception Meeting in Nairobi. Following a rigorous nationwide selection process that culminated in the unveiling of 16 sub-grantee organizations, this intensive three-day workshop, held from **April 21st to 23rd, 2026**, served as a critical launchpad for upcoming regional implementations running through June 2027.


Led by the META consortium—comprising FEMNET, The SDGs Kenya Forum and

WECF International—the diverse partners representing youth, feminist, indigenous, and disability advocacy groups from across Kenya’s economic blocs engaged in deep dives covering programme orientation, rigorous EU financial accountability compliance, and strategic communication. Armed with strengthened technical capacities and aligned with the EU’s key focus areas—including the Green Transition, Governance, Peace and Security, and the Global Gateway’s Digitalisation—these grassroots and regional actors are now fully equipped to drive climate justice, civic participation, and gender equality across the country and beyond.

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD) fifty-ninth session on 13-17 April 2026.

FEMNET participated in the 59th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD59) through the High-Level UNFPA Signature Side Event themed “The Infrastructure of Survival: Harnessing Tech, Innovation and Catalytic Capital to End Preventable Maternal Deaths in Africa.”





Represented by Ms. Nene Goita, SRHR & EAWG Officer at FEMNET, the organization contributed feminist and civil society perspectives to continental conversations on maternal health, health sovereignty, and sustainable financing for maternal survival. FEMNET emphasized the need



HIGH-LEVEL PANEL: OVERHAULING THE SUPPLY CHAIN WITH SOVEREIGN INNOVATION AND CATALYTIC CAPITAL AND MARKET SOVEREIGNTY

Ms. Nene Goita
SRHR & EAWG Officer, FEMNET

for governments and partners to move from short-term pilot interventions to long-term policy integration by strengthening public financing, community accountability, regional coordination, and people-centered health systems that ensure no woman dies from preventable maternal health complications.

UPCOMING EVENTS

META Steering Committee Meeting and Structured Dialogue on Governance, Peace and Security

The Meaningful Engagement for Transformative Action (META) project will be hosting a **CSO steering committee meeting in Nairobi, Kenya from 20th – 21st May 2026**, and a hybrid inclusive structured dialogue for Kenyan Civil Society Organizations, in partnership with SDGs Kenya Forum and Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF International) and with support from the European Union Delegation to Kenya.

The CSO Steering Committee will bring together civil society representatives from Kenya's six Regional Economic Blocs, government authorities, and development partners and will be hosted under the theme 'From Dialogue to Democratic Action: Strengthening Governance, Civic Participation and Inclusive Partnerships. This strategic two-day meeting will focus on building proactive, resilient democratic pathways ahead of the 2027 general elections. Key sessions will involve reviewing the implementation strategy for the new Online Dialogue Platform, planning the onboarding process for the next Youth Sounding Board (YSB) cohort, and synthesizing regional insights from ARFSD-12 to align critical civil society priorities for the upcoming High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2026. Additionally, participants will engage directly with the PBO Regulatory Authority to map out actionable compliance steps following the critical PBO Act transition deadline.



Hybrid **CSO-EU Dialogue on Governance, Peace and Security** in Kenya which operates as a critical, multi-stakeholder component of the META framework's Inclusive Dialogue Mechanism, hybrid event will bring together diverse civil society organizations, youth representatives, and the European Union Delegation to Kenya. The dialogue will serve as a vital platform to address growing democratic vulnerabilities in Kenya's pre-election climate, particularly pushing back against identity-driven political mobilization and digital frontiers of electoral interference like state disinformation. Participants will focus on identifying systemic barriers to civic participation, highlighting urgent peace and security issues affecting minority and indigenous groups, and unpacking the proactive role of CSOs in civic education and election monitoring. The session aims to generate actionable policy recommendations that cement transparent, values-based governance and human rights protections within ongoing EU-Kenya cooperation frameworks.

Reshaping an African Feminist Agenda to End Gender-Based Violence (19th -21stMay2026)

The convening Reshaping an African Feminist Agenda to End Gender-Based Violence will bring together feminist organizers, advocates, and women's rights organizations from across Africa to strengthen collective advocacy, deepen movement building, and advance coordinated feminist action to end GBV. The meeting aims to create space for critical conversations on accountability, feminist legal advocacy, narrative power, digital safety, trauma-informed organizing, coalition building, and survivor-centered approaches, while reflecting on the growing challenges facing feminist movements, including rising femicide, shrinking civic spaces, online violence, and weak implementation of gender justice frameworks across the continent.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1. Funding Opportunity for Women's Rights and Equality Initiatives (Mediterranean Women's Fund)

This fund is dedicated to boosting small, grassroots, women-led organizations and associations that are often underfunded or newly established (within the last 5 years).

- **Focus Areas:** Eliminating violence against women, pushing for legal and social gender equality, expanding sexual and reproductive rights, and advancing youth leadership/intergenerational organizing.

Target: Women-led grassroots organizations and youth-led feminist collectives operating within North African Mediterranean countries



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- Grant Value: Up to €10,000
 - Deadline: May 5, 2026
 - Link: [Mediterranean Women's Fund 2026 Call](#)

2. UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD)

While a broader fund, the IFCD strongly prioritizes youth-led and women-led NGOs using creative industries, arts, and cultural advocacy to promote social justice, human rights, and gender equality.

- Focus Areas: Projects that foster the creation, production, and distribution of diverse cultural goods, particularly projects championing women and youth creatives at the grassroots level.
- Target: Registered local NGOs and civil society organizations across eligible African countries.
- Grant Value: Up to \$100,000 per project
- Deadline: May 6, 2026
- Link: [UNESCO IFCD Grants](#)

3. AWDF Participatory Grant Advisory Panel (GAP) Open Call

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) is actively calling for African feminist practitioners and advocates to join its participatory grant making panel. While this is a paid leadership/advisory opportunity rather than a direct organizational project grant, it places youth and women leaders at the center of deciding how massive funding pools for child protection and gender justice are distributed across Africa.

- Target: African women, youth activists, and feminist allies working in gender justice, trauma-informed care, and survivor support.
- Deadline: Applications open through early May (Closes May 18, 2026)
- Link: [AWDF Grant Advisory Panel Call](#)

4. Urgent Action Fund-Africa (UAF-Africa) Rapid Response Grants

If your youth-led or women-led NGO requires immediate funding for an unexpected advocacy opportunity, defending a woman human rights defender, or counteracting sudden civic pushback, UAF-Africa is the primary mechanism.

- Focus Areas: Security grants, emergency litigation, and urgent strategic movement-building interventions.
- Target: African feminist organizations, unregistered woman/youth-led collectives, and human rights defenders.
- Deadline: Rolling / No Deadline
- Link: [Urgent Action Fund-Africa Emergency Grants](#)



Ghana

SHE 360



At She 360, art is one of the powerful tools employed to convey what we advocate for—decent work, action on climate, economic justice for women and sexual rights. Our drums beat louder, voices convey the sharp, deep feelings of girls married off before age 18, without their consent.

Through our creative arts group (Sabo Ladies) we create that safe space for women and girls to have that uncensored discussions that matter most. Through this community, even those who have lost their voices quickly find them, speak the loudest, sing away their sorrows and gain back their confidence to question, to create, to build and thrive together.

We are conversation starters, delving into difficult conversations, uncensored, no labeling, with no mistakes, no judgement. With creativity and art, even mistakes still play out beautifully.

Our impact lives with young people particularly women who come in rough, raw, unpolished with no skills or source of livelihood. They transform exit with livelihood skills, stronger voices and directed at purpose. Together with our partners, She 360 has connected and still hold the hands of over 100 in our learning space, providing targeted support from our coaches all the way from starting creative businesses and sustaining livelihoods to policy influencing in industry and to making impact themselves. Christened Women Digitally Connected (Women Digicon), decent livelihoods for women through training, tools support and micro grant support has already been delivered and changing lives. Previously supported by the Netherlands based support group-Gerep Gerescharp. All programs are interlaced with sexual health, climate change awareness and women leadership and governance.

The next round of our Women Digitally Connected will have more tools support for 100 more learners on need basis. We will also need more modern instruments and costume sets for our creative group to beautifully convey these critical messages in a more creative, innovative way in a more conducive environment, or better still, get transported in their beautifully branded vehicle for this better life crusade. Will you support us walk this journey and achieve this goal?

Contact person: Sherifatu Yakubu

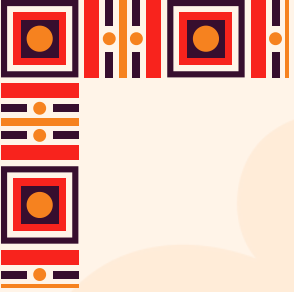
email: she360.she360@gmail.com

Contact Number: +233206609138

Facebook: <https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61550857389996>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/she-360-lbg/?viewAsMember=true>





We must continue to unite in sisterhood to turn our tears into triumph. There is no time to rest until our world achieves wholeness and balance, where all men and women are considered equal and free."

Leymah Gbowee (Liberian Peace Activist and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)



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

