

Memories of Water

The AWDF 2020 Annual Report



Introduction to the Theme

It is said that there was once a community of women who flew with the birds. Women who caught pieces of the clouds and the seeds in the sky and the water in the air and brought them all to land. This is the story of the conjure women. Most women have known this story, so many have forgotten it. In this community, water was sacred. It held the stories of the animals that walked through it, the plants that touched it, and the people who bathed in and drank from it.

Some stories you tell like a secret. Softly. Softly



A glimpse into the vast sea

If ever there was a time for conjurers, 2020 was the time. If ever there was proof that water remembers, 2020 was the proof. This year, our grantee partners created visibility and voiced women's rights issues, pushed and succeeded in putting laws in place that protect women, created understanding around harmful norms and policies, built women's political, financial, and advocacy skills, increased women's representation in political office, improved women's access to and ownership of property, and responded to the needs of their community in a time of COVID-19 and other crises.

Internally, it was a time of reflection, change and growth. Our Director of Programs, Jessica Horn and CEO, Theo Sowa, both left AWDF in 2020, leaving behind a legacy of feminist leadership rooted in radical imaginings of freedom, of what we can be and how we can fund our dreams for African women's futures. Our impact in 2020 is a reflection of their vision and labour, hand in hand with our grantee partners and staff.

In 2020, AWDF funded 136 grants to organisations in 32 countries, primarily on the African continent.



- West Africa**
Benin-3
Burkina Faso-4
Ghana-5
Liberia-2
Mali-2
Nigeria-16
Senegal-3
Sierra Leone-1
Togo-6
- North Africa**
Algeria-1
Egypt-1
Morocco-1
- East Africa**
Burundi-2
Ethiopia-1
Kenya-17
Rwanda-2
Somalia-1
Somaliland-1
Tanzania-4
Uganda-17
- South Africa**
Botswana-1
Namibia-1
South Africa-13
Malawi-1
Mozambique-1
Zambia-1
Zimbabwe-6
- Central Africa**
Cameroon-6
DRC-9
- Middle East**
Jordan-1
Lebanon-3
State of Palestine-3

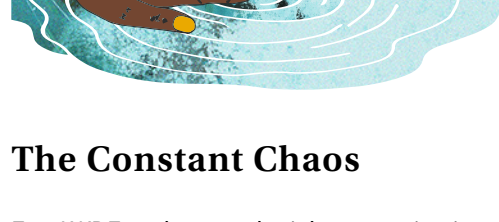
A glimpse in words

- Steered donor engagements for sustainable financing of African women's organisations
- Reimagined feminist capacity building
- Nurtured African women's voices
- Connected more users to African feminist knowledge
- Increased feminist community engagement

Grantee adaptations

While every context has its own peculiarities, grantees noted similar struggles and adaptations for dealing with a COVID-19 world. Processes were delayed, organisations, staff and communities were in lockdown, and resources were diverted to address emerging needs. Grantees did what so many were doing globally, they attempted to take the work online and address the specific needs brought on by the pandemic.

For example, Women and Land in Zimbabwe (WLZ) developed and put in place an organisational COVID-19 preventative and preparedness plan to prevent the spread of the virus. Visit the [full report](#) to continue reading their adaptation story



The Constant Chaos

For AWDF and women's rights organisations, 2020 was more than just COVID-19; it had the elements of every other year before it - all of the violence, the trauma, and the chaos that women deal with and work against.

In Nigeria, the rapes and murders of two Nigerian students, Vera Uwaila Omosuwa and Barakat Bello, sparked a campaign in the streets and on social media. AWDF awarded grants worth \$57,000 to seven feminist organisations in Nigeria to support rapid action in the anti-rape campaign. One of our grantees, the Women Environmental Programme, engaged with Members of the Benue State Houses of Assembly to enact the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law, and after citizen campaigns, the State Governors in Nigeria called for a state of emergency over the rape of women and children, and 14 states enacted the law.



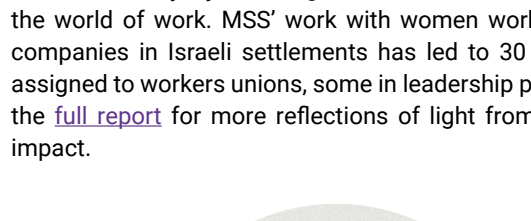
All That is Touched is Changed

APPROFES in Senegal worked to ensure that local leaders commit budget allocations within their municipality to support women and girl survivors of violence. Discussions and debates around VAWG led to the establishment of alert and monitoring committees in the localities of Guinguineo, Dara Mboss and Gandiaye.

Women in Law and Development in Africa operating in Togo supported the ratification of the Maputo Protocol in 14 West African countries and ensured systemic change that led to access to productive land resources for over 12,000 women farmers. It has also led to the mobilisation of 526 traditional leaders working on shifting norms and policies around child marriage in Togo, Benin and Mali.

The Institute for Young Women Development (IYWD) in Zimbabwe, through its Feminist Popular Education program, trained and developed young women running for political office in local government and is working on passing a 50/50 quota system for women's representation in government.

Mother's School Society (MSS) in the State of Palestine enhanced the role and position of women within the family and community by enabling them in various fields, including the world of work. MSS' work with women workers in private companies in Israeli settlements has led to 30 women being assigned to workers unions, some in leadership positions. Read the [full report](#) for more reflections of light from our grantees impact.



Campaigns and Commemorations

As part of the 2020 Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) campaign, AWDF funded women's rights organisations working to intensify education and awareness on preventing violence against women and promoting women's access to comprehensive mental health and wellness services.

We also collaborated with the Young Feminist Collective (YFC) to commemorate the International Women's Day under an exposition entitled "Women at the Centre: Art x Feminism," that explored how women's work in the arts helps transform narratives about feminism and womanhood. The gallery showcased photos, paintings, prints, short films and live music and poetry performances with multiple artists, including Ria Boss, Edem Robby, Selasie Djameh, and Yaa Addae.

The Paddles and Treasures

Total Income: \$10,644,617

Total Expenditure: \$10,400,569

Grants awarded: \$8,357,892.00

Programme Management: \$872,768.00

Management and Institutional Development: \$409,663.00

Capacity Building Activities: \$136,533.00

Fundraising and communication: \$428,495.00

Other Programmes: \$195,218.00

* Please refer to our 2020 audited accounts for a comprehensive year for the year.

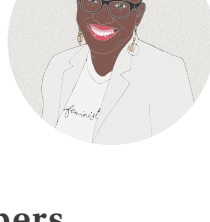
[View the full report here](#)



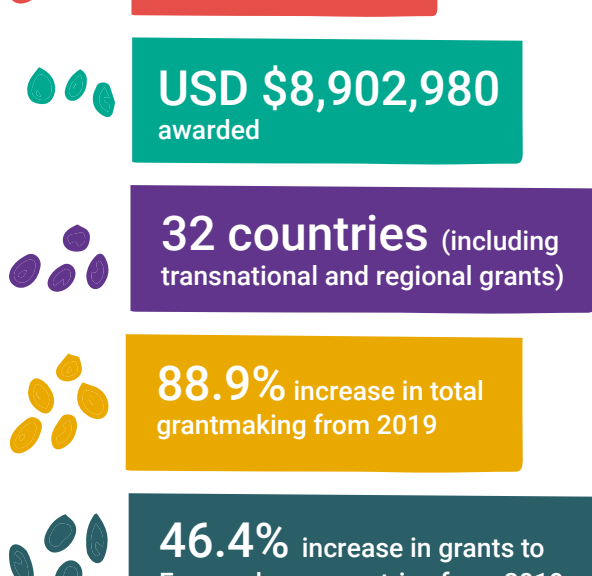
Message from the CEO

As the new CEO of the African Women's Development Fund, it is with great joy that I introduce this report to you. It is a compilation of the work of African women's organisations, AWDF's exceptional contributions to women's rights in Africa in 2020, and a celebration of the determination of the staff and the leadership of my predecessor, Theo Sowa in an incredibly challenging year. Read the full CEO remarks [here](#).

Françoise Moudouthe, CEO



A Glimpse in Numbers



AWDF's grants in 2020 cover our three priority areas.

Body and Health Rights
85 grants
USD \$4,136,160
27 countries

Economic Security and Justice
22 grants
USD \$2,057,750
9 countries

Leadership, Participation and Peace
29 grants
USD \$2,709,070
17 countries

A total of \$122,000 of all the grants in 2020 went to responding to the emergency elements in the year, particularly COVID-19 rapid response and anti-violence campaigns led by women's rights organisations across the continent.

Prepping the Waters, Cleansing the Soul

Every year, we test the waters. We check the temperature, and we prepare ourselves for the coming of the days. Whether the waters are calm or treacherous, like our sisters throughout the continent, we prepare for the mundane and the extraordinary.

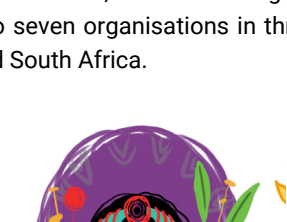
Healing the Healers

This year deepened AWDF's belief in centring the health, healing, and emotional wellbeing of African women. More and more African feminist spaces were full of stories of power and change, but also of fatigue and disillusionment with growing violence and discrimination against women's rights organisations and activists across continent. We allocated time, resources, and tools to reach the women who drive the work in their communities and in the movement. Read the [full report](#) to see our 2020 engagements under the CREATE Initiative and how we reimagined our capacity building work in 2020.



Solidarity Through Workplace Giving

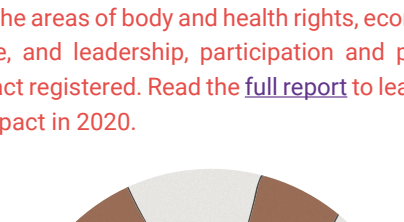
Since 2006, AWDF staff have contributed money into the workplace-giving fund managed by staff members who donate a part of their monthly salaries to fund projects that they choose through an internal committee. In 2020, AWDF staff gave \$11,000 in emergency support to seven organisations in three countries - Lebanon, Nigeria, and South Africa.



Leading From the South

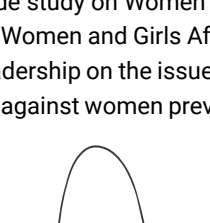
The Leading from the South (LFS) is a ground-breaking partnership built on a foundational belief in the power and capacity of Global South women's funds. It is a collaboration between four Global South women's funds - AWDF, Fondo Mujeres del Sur (FMS), International Indigenous Women's Forum- AYN Fund (FIMI), and Women's Fund Asia, (WFA) and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Under this partnership, AWDF awarded a total of 48 grants by the end of 2020. This support enabled grantees to create tangible change in the areas of body and health rights, economic security and justice, and leadership, participation and peace. Here is some impact registered. Read the [full report](#) to learn more about the LFS impact in 2020.



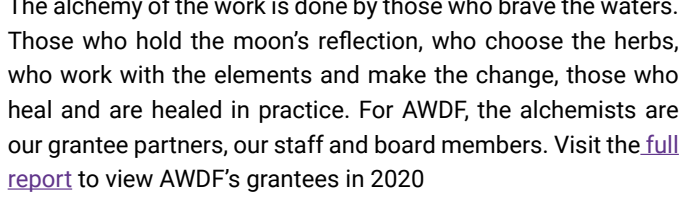
Spotlights on Feminist Knowledge and Engagement

In 2020, AWDF cultivated partnerships for knowledge and evidence-based engagement on women's rights issues. We launched AWDF's continent-wide study on Women and NCDs in Africa in collaboration with the Women and Girls Africa Summit, amplifying African women's leadership on the issue and steered continental debate on violence against women prevention using the (VAW) prevention primer.



The Conjurors

The alchemy of the work is done by those who brave the waters. Those who hold the moon's reflection, who change the herbs, who work with the elements and make the change, those who heal and are healed in practice. For AWDF, the alchemists are our grantee partners, our staff and board members. Visit the [full report](#) to view AWDF's grantees in 2020



Institutional Donors

- Anonymous Institutional Donor A
- Anonymous Institutional Donor B
- Both Ends
- Comic Relief
- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Equality Fund
- Fidelity Investment Charitable Gift Fund
- Foundation for A Just Society
- Ford Foundation
- Global Affairs Canada
- Global Fund for Women
- Individual Donors
- Libra Foundation
- Mama Cash
- New Venture Fund
- NoVo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation
- Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)
- Prospera International Network of Women's Funds
- Stephen Lewis Foundation
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Women's Foundation of Minnesota

Flow

The flow of water is continuous. The waters' edge is an illusion; there is no end. There is just the constant and persistent existence of life. The future is always creating itself, always present. 2020 is 2019, and it is also 2021. The water remembers, and the water is also constantly changing. The conjurers make it so. Below are the words of a sister. Imaginations in sisterhood, dreams of freedom, reflections of hope and power to carry us on.

