

Weaving
African Feminist
Futures

2016
Activity Report



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Message from the CEO

Welcome to AWDF's summary of our work in 2016.

**It was a year of challenges, joy, celebration,
deep thinking and considerable sorrow.**

At the heart of the year was our learning from 15 years of support to African women's rights organisations. That learning grounded our ongoing development of our work - making our grant making as relevant and effective as possible for African women's rights; ensuring that we further developed our strategies to offer feminist capacity building to our grantee partners and stakeholders; developing new ways of communicating the work of African feminists and activists and building the knowledge base to strengthen our movements.

You will read how (prompted by a question from our Director of Programmes) we decided to use new methodologies to develop our Strategic Framework for 2017-2021, looking to the future to decide how best to invest in African women's rights activism in the coming years. My thanks to the AWDF staff team who wholeheartedly embraced our work developing an African Women's Rights Trends analysis, from which we developed a set of possible Future Scenarios, leading to our new strategic framework. Accepting and developing innovative ways of working in the midst of huge time pressures and while struggling with data that was often not gender sensitive was not easy, but I hope that as you follow our work in 2017, you will see the difference this thinking made.

2016 saw the 10th Anniversary of the African Feminist Forum, with the fourth regional convening co-hosted by the Zimbabwe Feminist Forum and AWDF. Being part of exciting, revitalising discussions was a reminder of the importance of gathering to set new agendas, remind ourselves of the achievements of our sister activists and promote intergenerational learning to guide our movements. There was true joy in celebrating, learning and sometimes mourning with our sister activists.

AWDF's 15th anniversary event in November was another opportunity to gather to celebrate achievements, share learning and revitalise our efforts. AWDF was registered in 2000 and started operations in 2001, giving us reason to celebrate our 15th anniversary for two years! Our thanks to our friends, partners and supporters who joined us for an evening of learning, promotion of the work of African women philanthropists and fundraising - informative and fun!

Yet 2016 was challenging in many ways. As we turned our gaze inward to strengthen our ways of thinking and working, we were hard pressed to maintain the levels of resourcing to our partners. Although our grantmaking figures dropped from our 2015 levels, our role as a core partner in the Amplify Change Fund meant that we were able to channel far larger resources to women's rights organisations through that pathway. Additionally, the hard work in 2015 and 2016 in identifying new sources of funding and nurturing our relationships with a variety of funders led to two exciting achievements. With the support of African women musicians, artists and activists, AWDF developed and in November, launched our SHEROES compilation and fundraising initiative. In the first few months of the yearlong campaign we have planned for SHEROES, we had already raised some of our highest amounts from individual giving to AWDF. We will count on your support in furthering the success of this initiative in 2017.



AWDF staff and grantee partners at the 2016 CEO Forum for Leadership and Governance, a capacity building convening in Nairobi for executive leaders of women-led organisations.

Another major achievement on the fundraising front was the collaboration with three other women's funds from other parts of the world that led to the development of the Leading from the South Fund, to support women's rights organisations and movements in the global South. The support to AWDF from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the largest single grant in AWDF's history and enables us to greatly expand much needed funding to women's rights organisations in Africa and the Middle East.

Yet, 2016 closed with a major blow for the AWDF family. Joana Foster, lawyer, women's rights activist, mother, sister, mentor and friend to so many of us in the African women's rights world, lost her battle with cancer and died in November 2016. As a co founder of AWDF, Joana's vibrant spirit will always be remembered and her work for the full achievement of women's rights on our continent and internationally will carry on for as long as AWDF is able to carry out her vision of support to African women's rights organisations and activists. Please see our website (<http://awdf.org/tributes-to-joana-foster-a-life-remembered/>) to read AWDF's tribute to a wonderful woman. Her smile, her laugh, her commitment to our movements and her unflinching respect and dignity linger with us.

Theo Sowa,
CEO

African Women's Development Fund

GRANTS AT A GLANCE

In 2016, The African Women's Development Fund focused on building what feminist coach and facilitator, Hope Chigudu, calls "an organisation with a soul".

We devoted the year to thinking clearly and analytically through our 4th strategic plan, for 2017-2020, and revising and strengthening a feminist grant strategy and framework that is unique to our constituency and can inform the development of feminist leadership and solidarity for other women's organisations in Africa and around the world.

2016 AWDF GRANTS

Countries with the highest number of applications:

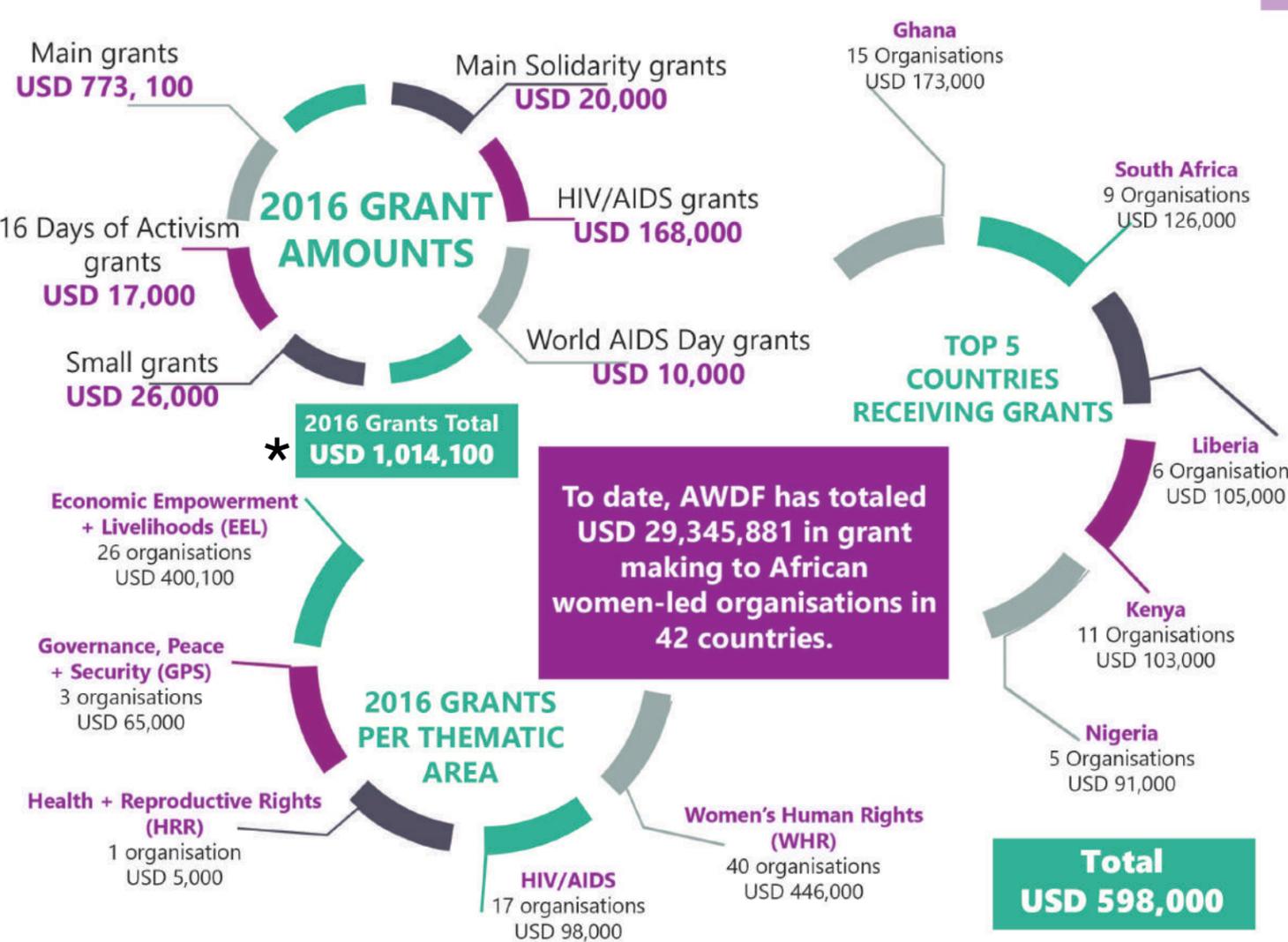
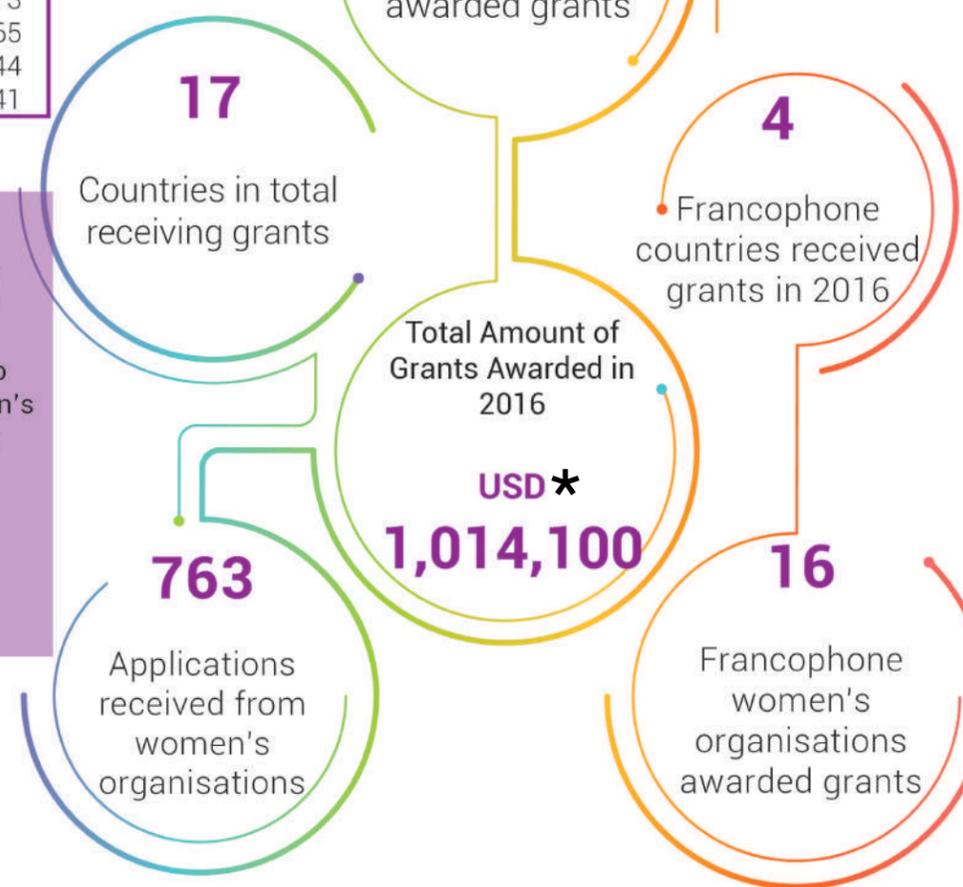
Uganda	149
Nigeria	73
Kenya	65
Ghana	44
DRC	41

Number of Women's organisations awarded in each country:

Ghana	15
Kenya	11
South Africa	9
Cameroon	8
Uganda	8
Liberia	6
Nigeria	5
Zimbabwe	5
Togo	4
Zambia	3
Malawi	3
Ethiopia	3
DRC	3
Senegal	1
Sierra Leone	1
Tanzania	1
Sudan	1

USD 134,500
Grants awarded to Francophone women's organisations in;

Togo
DRC
Cameroon
Senegal



AWDF puts ideology into action by providing technical and financial support to women's rights organisations to promote the realisation of women's human rights. In line with this, some grant funding in 2016 was prioritised and geared towards economic security and justice, fighting violence against women (VAW) and expanding opportunities for women living with HIV as a prevention strategy for larger communities.

The Grants department worked hard to strengthen engagement with grantee partners by supporting linkages to other donors and organisations for learning, exchange and support as well as providing references, donor contacts and visibility for grantees to key decision-making spaces.

As a second-year partner with Mannion Daniels and the Global Fund for Women in the SRHH advocacy fund, AmplifyChange, AWDF is currently managing 81 Amplify Change grantees who have received a total of 4,432,465 Euros. In total, 53 AWDF grantees have received funding from Amplify Change (more information on page 15).

* The 2016 grants total figure includes an amount of USD 24,100 that was reassigned from the previous year.

In 2016, AWDF embarked on a two-part strategic planning process focused on the question of how AWDF and African women's organisations can best contribute to shaping the future of Africa towards the achievement and implementation of women's rights.

To ground this, AWDF worked with Kenyan foresight practitioner Katindi Sivi Njonjo to produce a trends analysis – bringing together the gendered data around Africa's future trajectories. The resulting report, **Futures Africa: Trends for Women by 2030** will be the first of its kind, offering both statistics and analysis around key political, economic and social trends, and illuminating gaps in the data needed to accurately plan for the future of Africa through a women's rights lens.

Alongside this empirical process, the AWDF staff team and advisors also worked to generate scenario stories over the last half of 2016 – imagining four possible states for Africa in 2030 from a feminist and women's rights perspective.

Scenarios are STORIES about the future. They are stories because there are no facts in the future. We can only make educated guesses based on facts and intuition. They tell us what might happen in the future. The idea is not to predict the future but to understand what the future might look like and adequately prepare.

Katindi Sivi Njonjo
Foresight Practitioner

The stories are shaped by an analysis that the key independent drivers of change for women in Africa will be:

- shifting demographics (age and migration);
- the expansion and use of ICTs,
- (geo)political power dynamics;
- the nature of education.

AWDF Strategic Plan IV + Future-focused Scenarios

Our staff discovered over the course of an exciting and intense scenarios process that these drivers have implications on the ways we fund as a pan-African feminist philanthropic institution. This caused us to shift our thinking and strategy in preparing for the futures of Africa. This is the first foresight initiative focusing in-depth on gender dynamics, women's rights, and questions around the roles African women play in actively creating just futures for Africa. By designing a strategic framework based on this forward-thinking analysis, AWDF seeks to create a plan that allows for greater innovation and ways to maximise the impact of our work and that of the brave African women's organisations and movements that we support. Our commitment is to work together to build the best possible futures for the African continent.

In 2017, the scenario stories and AWDF's SPIV will be shaped into documents available for the public to engage more deeply within their own communities.



SHEROES: AWDF @ 15 Blazes New Trails

About the Project

Iconic activists Graça Machel, Nneka, Angelique Kidjo, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Tsitsi Dangarembga and Muthoni the Drummer Queen have joined forces in an exciting new audio-visual odyssey of music, film and poetry to celebrate the 15th anniversary of AWDF with the release of a new music compilation, **SHEROES: AWDF @ 15**.

This album of music, poetry and film by leading African women artists and activists, all dedicated to transforming the lives of African women and helping the continent reach its full potential.

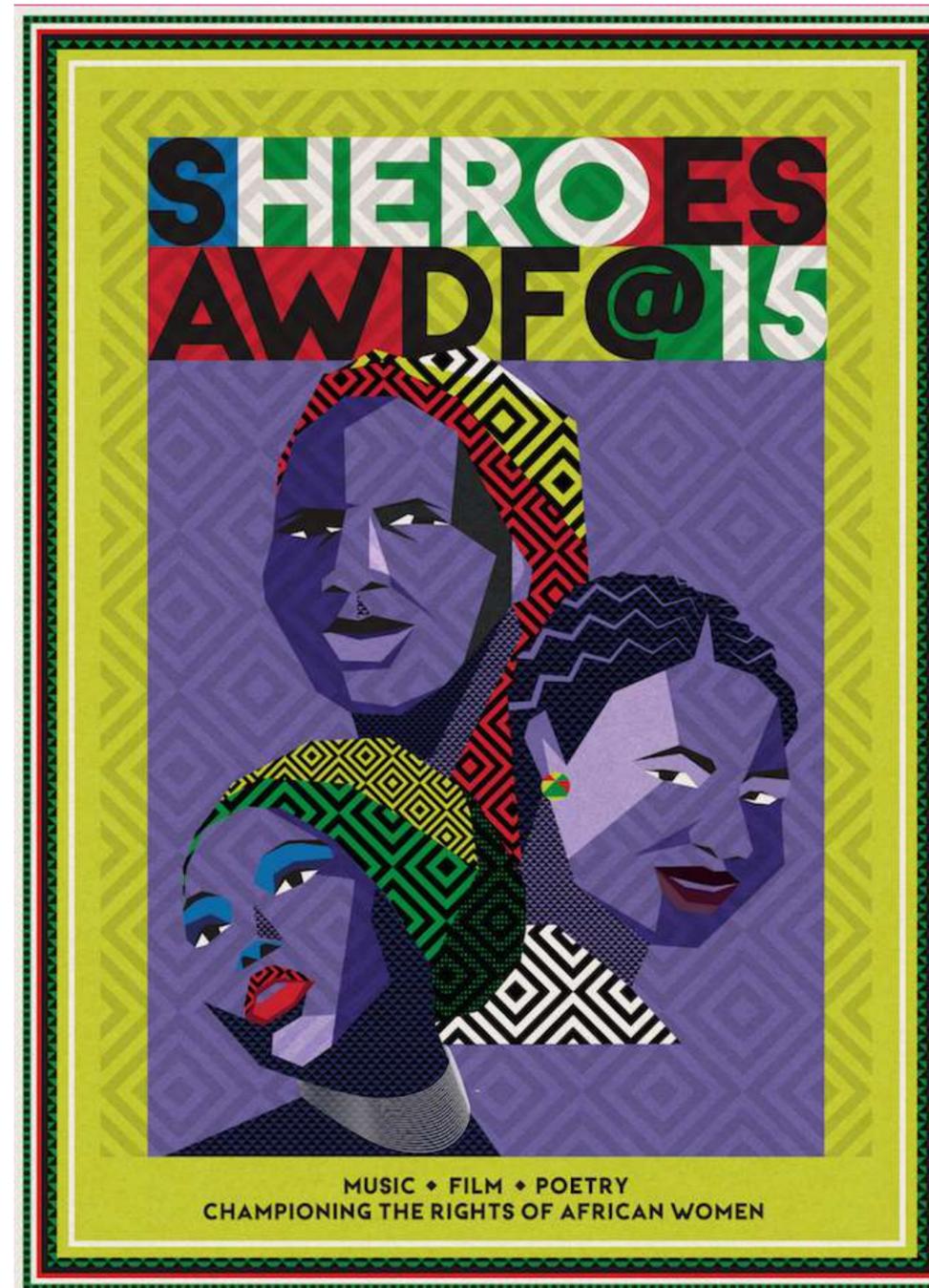
SHEROES: AWDF@ 15 is a stunning array of African poets, film and music makers, opening with a Foreword by Graça Machel and featuring legends such as Oumou Sangare, Angelique Kidjo, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Thandiswa, Abena Busia, Bi Kidude, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Stella Chiweshe, Sia Tolno, as well as bright new sparks including, Laurette La Perle, Somi, Yaba Badoe, Olutimehin Adegbeye, Omawumi and more phenomenal women. These women epitomise a deep enthusiasm and activism for women's rights, equality, and respect. Their passion-fueled achievements awaken the world to the valuable contributions African women make every single day.

This audiovisual project is a reminder of the energy of African women, and our distinct resource of power to transform lives. It also highlights the growth of AWDF during the last fifteen years as an organisation blazing new trails for African women's rights. The mission of this compilation is to create a broader spectrum of awareness about the work of the African Women's Development Fund as well as to mobilise additional financial resources to support African women.

The Response

As this is an awareness and fundraising initiative, three rivers of giving were determined: The Nile (gold option for USD 10,000), The Congo (silver option for USD 1,000) and The Niger (standard option for USD 100). By the end of 2016, 96 copies had been sold, predominantly through our informal networks, including two gold and two silver copies raising individual giving, particularly through AWDF's networks (as well as the personal relationships of staff and board) and relationships with other women's funds and organisations.

The album will become available online via iTunes for digital purchase in 2017. To enhance our digital fundraising skills, AWDF commissioned a consultant to develop an online fundraising toolkit for AWDF using the SHEROES compilation as a model for future resource mobilisation efforts. This campaign development should provide fascinating lessons and analytics about how and why people are motivated to support African women's rights and social justice movements. In 2017 we will push for further momentum behind the fundraising through SHEROES, targeting both our African networks and those in the American and European diasporas.



SHEROES: AWDF @ 15

An aural and visual odyssey of song, poetry and film by inspirational African women.

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) marks 15 amazing years as Africa's first women-led, continent wide grant maker, supporting more than 1200 women's organisations in 42 African countries.

We are releasing a **limited-edition** compilation of music, poetry and film by leading African women artists and activists, passionate about transforming the lives of African women and communities on the continent.

Join the celebration! Make a gift today and own a piece of African women's creative history.

Proceeds from SHEROES: AWDF @ 15 go to AWDF's work and help sustain resources for African women's activism.

AWDF's 15th Anniversary

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and activist, **Leymah Gbowee**, gave a keynote address that gave critical acknowledgement to the role that AWDF played in the Liberia peace action movement powered by women:

Your philanthropy guides us through that tiny light. Your philanthropy has been able to transform communities, nations, individuals, and even myself. Congratulations, Sisters. Bless you and I look forward to being 59 and celebrating 15 more years.

Always in support of feminist artistic expression, the anniversary event also included an original poetry performance by Nana Nyarko Boateng and music by Wiyaala and the Della Hayes Band. The event provided space to also launch the SHEROES compilation, garnering greater interest, exposure and financial pledges of support. A highlight film of the anniversary was captured and can be viewed on AWDF's YouTube channel.

In October 2016, AWDF celebrated fifteen years of active service promoting and resourcing African women's rights organisations with a celebration at Golden Tulip Hotel in Accra.

The evening featured an insightful conversation on feminist philanthropy between Jessica Horn, AWDF's Director of Programmes with AWDF CoFounder, Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi and *The StandPoint* television producer/presenter and founder of Girls in Need Foundation, Gifty Anti.



We are proud of our achievements.

Breaking ground in African philanthropy:

- Pioneering a unique grantmaking, capacity building and advocacy process designed to meet the needs of African women's organisations.
- Ensuring community-based organisations benefit from funding through innovative small grants programmes
- Creating an Endowment Fund to increase organisational autonomy and sustainability.
- The only African institution to rank in the top 20 foundations in the 2014 Foundation Centre's "Advancing Human Rights" report.
- Co-founding the African Grantmakers Network (AGN) in 2010, the first continental initiative of its kind.

Shaping understandings of African women's rights and lives:

- Building a body of knowledge and analysis on women's rights issues from an African feminist perspective, and raising the visibility of diverse African feminist voices.
- Challenging harmful and stereotypical depictions of African women in mainstream media, film and literature and in the development sector.

Being there when needed:

- Funding emergency response initiatives, including the #BringBackOurGirls campaign, and Ebola education, prevention and sanitation efforts in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.
- Investing in the infrastructure of movement building by helping to catalyse the growth of national feminist forums in multiple African countries.

Holding and advancing the line of Women's rights:

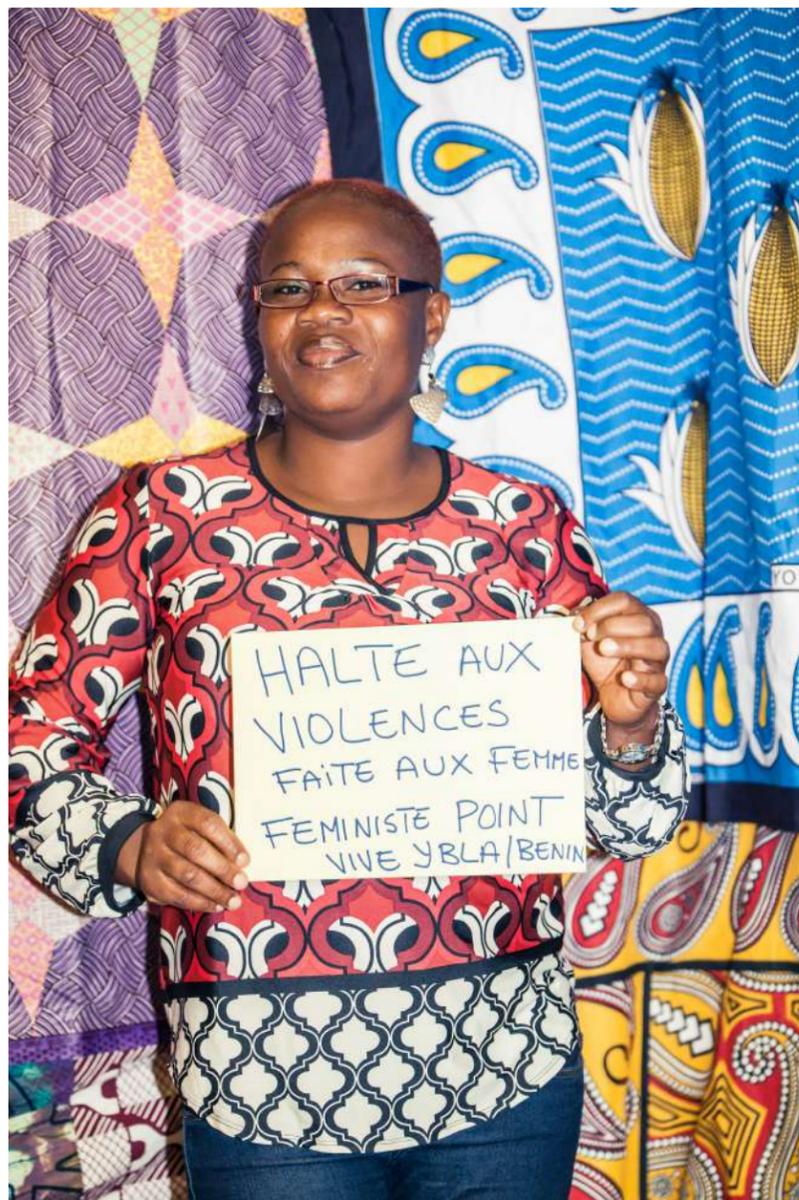
- Enabling African women's participation in critical policy debates and decisions, and bringing a consistent progressive voice to advocacy at the African Union, the United Nations and in discussions and decision-making on women's leadership, bodily autonomy and health, LGBTIQ rights, religious fundamentalisms and other critical issues in Africa.
- Facilitation of key regional networks that develop critical and strategic planning and action agendas. AWDF is host to the African Feminist Forum (AFF) and the African Women Leaders Network for Reproductive Health and Family Planning (AWLN).

The 4th convening of the African Feminist Forum (AFF) in Harare, Zimbabwe in April 2016 was also the 10th anniversary of the AFF.

This convening, co-hosted by the Zimbabwe Feminist Forum and AWDF, provided an opportunity for 160 feminists from 23 countries - members of national feminist forums on the continent - to celebrate the achievements and contributions of feminist movements to the development of Africa.

A wide range of in-depth sessions took place on subjects as varied as militarism and peaceful participation, governance and politics, religious fundamentalism and feminist spirituality, creative art sectors and sharing economies, feminist writing and analysis, research methodology and communication, resource mobilisation, intergenerational feminist activism, health and bodily rights, sex and sexuality, disability activism and how to build soulful organisations. The 4th AFF was preceded by a summit of feminists hosting a Francophone Forum and others hosting the Southern African Young Women's Feminist Forum.

In a moving ceremony, feminists also paid tribute to and celebrated the lives of sister friends who have been changemakers in their communities. Through music, poetry, literature, feminist knowledge and research as well as activist organising, the lasting legacies of our sister ancestors who have passed on were recounted in testimonies that spoke of love, strength, feistiness and incredible acts of kindness.



African feminism has given us a sense of citizenship, and I don't say that in the nationalist sense of coming from a nation-state. But rather citizenship as being very much aware that we are daughters of this soil, and that the soil belongs to us, and we have particular rights and entitlements, not as an act of benevolence or charity from governments or constitutions, but by a sacred process of belonging.

Isabella Matambanadzo
Zimbabwean Feminist
© AFF 2016

The 4th African Feminist Forum: Voice, Power, and Soul

It has taken so much love, thought, work and inspiration to bring us all here. The real achievement of the forum will be our ability to share our lessons, redefine our agenda and our ability to give each other support. So many feminist sisters are falling by the wayside, because they are burnt out, getting tired.

In this space, we do not have to wake up fighting; we wake up supporting each other. Let's walk away feeling proud to be African feminists knowing our sisters have our backs, intellectually, physically and emotionally. Let's make really good use of each other; let's strengthen each other. Let's be revitalised, replenished when we go a way...and, let's also have fun!

Jessica Horn
AWDF Director of Programmes

AWDF CoFounders and philanthropists, Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi and Dr. Hilda Tadria, are featured in the series. Academics Amina Mama, Sylvia Tamale, Ayesha Imam and Pumla Dineo Gqola- foundational thinkers in African feminist theory- speak with a movement voice about their politics and practice. Kenyan researcher and translator Wangui wa Goro, known for her translations of African writers Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Veronique Tadjo - explores the complexity of gender identity and family culture. Senegalese disability right activist and writer Aissatou Cissé encourages young feminists to expand the movement in resistance to continuing imbalances in the way that African girls and women and treated in comparison to boys and men. The youngest voice in the series, Âurea Mouzinho, reflects on the need for a collective revival of feminist organising in Angola (after leaving the 4th AFF her and fellow Angolan participant, Sizaltina Cutaia, went on to co-found the Ondjango Feminista - the Angolan Feminist Forum).

The interview series honours the diversity of our embodiments as African feminists, with interviewees speaking from the vantage points of different physical abilities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and ethnic and cultural identities. Each affirms a legacy of African feminist thought and praxis, rooted firmly in the genealogy of transformative African politics. The series will debut online in April 2017.

You can't write the history of Africa without talking about the contributions of African women in all spheres. We fought wars alongside men in the liberation struggles. We've always been the ones to pick up the pieces in our communities when everything else has fallen apart. It's that ability to question the givens and challenge the status quo that formed my early understandings of being a feminist.

Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi
AWDF Co-Founder
© AFF 2016

Much of the inequalities and injustices we experience - the devaluation of women's work - is grounded in patriarchy. African feminism must undo a whole structural basis of inequality.

I put value on what African women do - no matter where they are.

Dr. Hilda Tadria
AWDF Co-Founder
© AFF 2016

The AFF interview series, titled **Voice, Power and Soul: Conversations from the 4th African Feminist Forum**, and filmed during the convening, features what is likely to be, the largest and most diverse set of interviews with African feminists on film to date (28 women from 13 countries).

Women in the series narrate game-changing political moments, stories of activism unearthed from pan-African feminist research, and analysis of contemporary feminist struggles by the women who have bravely helped shape them. These include reflections from Mariam Kirollos, co-founder of Operation Anti-Sexual Harassment and Assault a rapid-action initiative set up in response to attacks on women protestors during commemorations of the Egyptian revolution. Kasha Jaqueline Nabagesera recalls the growth of the LGBTI rights movement in Uganda and the early and consistent solidarity that feminists in the Uganda Feminist Forum offered - a point often erased from accounts of activism against the infamous Anti-Homosexuality Bill.

Capacity Building Programmes



The Arts, Culture and Sports convening provided a space to practice strategic ways of engagement, cross-learning and solidarity by analysing how best to use the tools of arts, cultural production and sports to amplify women's rights, social justice and feminist storytelling.

*The commonalities between the participants' journeys quickly became apparent, with critical issues, trends and potentials echoed across fields and the continent. We set solid long-term goals which can be attained by taking immediate action. It is imperative that the momentum built during the convening be maintained through continued dialogue and implementation of **The Little Ways**, building on the small goals that will bolster existing networks and set the framework for the attainment of **The Big Ways**, or the long-term goals.*

Namata Serumaga-Musisi
Convening Facilitator
Uganda

AWDF's first Capacity Building convening for the Arts, Sports and Culture

Participants included poets, digital media activists, writers, journalists, cultural researchers, donors to the arts, visual artists, photographers, music artists, theatre and performance artists, sports and wellness experts. This allowed for creative connection and a synergy of ideas and strategies to unfold between the women.

The first day of the convening focused on individual experiences and observations. Participants were encouraged to share their processes of African feminism, touching on their own journeys in movement and exploring how arts, culture and sports can be used as organic tools of social change. The second and third days focused participants' energies on building strategy and increasing access to an evolving and creative African feminist ecosystem, through increased visibility. We are able to support each other - individually and collectively - if we are aware of each other's initiatives, challenges and needs. We increase our impact through greater outreach. Finally, we can share resources better through an inclusive and integrated network that is visible and can be sincerely felt.

Since 2010, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) has invested in arts, cultural production and sports to promote women's rights and feminist change on the continent by establishing partnerships with key women in these industries and building a strong base of women to help transform the portrayals of women. In 2017, AWDF launches a new strategy to provide greater focus, meaning and direction to our program support in these areas. This convening presented a great opportunity for AWDF to review and address funding approaches to Arts, Culture and Sports as we look towards a future-focused strategy towards sustainable change for women in Africa. By convening a range of partners including practitioners, researchers, policymakers and donors, we have a detailed analysis of the gap areas in our approach, key issues to consider, and a mapping of strategies for engagement to consolidate our gains going forward.

What does the process of creation mean vs. what artists produce? We have to focus more deeply on process. Emotionally, what is the outlet for our bodies? We take in so much, we're always processing trauma and violation. The work that I do is a channeling.

Sometimes I feel protective of the work I do like, "Don't ask me to entertain you". How do we create space that allows women artists to explore self-knowledge and histories of orality? How do we recognise the sacredness and integrity of the work that we are generating in a way that then allows us to engage with the world from a point of stability, sanity and rootedness?

What does art do in the world? How do we engage from there?

Rudo Chigudu
Zimbabwe

30

Participants from Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, and Senegal included:

6

Grantee Partners in media, academia, publishing, sports and wellness, photography, and journalism

4

Participants from AWDF's African Women Writers Residency

6

Women leaders from key art donor institutions in Ghana

(left) CEO Forum in Kenya, participants with AWDF Capacity Building Specialist, Nafi Chinery, and coach/facilitator, Paula Fray. (right) A participant shares during the Financial Management training in Lagos.



Linking AWDF's Capacity Building Successes

In 2016, a **Results-Based Programming convening** was held in Ouagadougou for 13 programme staff from seven grantee organisations in Burkina Faso in. A **Financial Management training** program was also held in Lagos for 16 participants from ten diverse grantee organisations in Nigeria. The coaching and mentorship in the **CEO Forum's Leadership and Communications** project ended in June 2016 with 12 women leaders over the course of ten months. The latest CEO Forum featured 35 women leaders and kicked off the Feminist Leadership and Governance Coaching Project - now in phase two of an extended process of mentorship for 20 women from ten grantee organisations.

Four organisations under the coaching project have secured additional funding for their organisations. Boxgirls Kenya, Negam Lela Ken New Association of Women Living with HIV/AIDS, NLK (Ethiopia), SAYWHAT (Zimbabwe) and Heal the Land Initiative (Nigeria) have raised approximately USD 1,000,000 this year from different donors. SAYWHAT alone raised USD 800,000 in 2016. These achievements were largely due to enhanced leadership, project clarity and strengthened institutional systems built during the AWDF capacity building process.

In Zimbabwe, Vimbai Mlambo of **SAYWHAT** has been promoted to the position of Executive Director after the former Director's departure this year. She has also been invited by UN Women to join a women's leadership group on HIV & AIDS in Zimbabwe where she will bring young women's voices and concerns into action. According to Vimbai, "AWDF's coaching project has truly been inspirational and contributed hugely to my personal development and prepared me for my new leadership position".

AWDF's **Health and Safety Technical Support Project** in northern Ghana included training workshops and the production of a manual providing important information on food health and safety practices that can be immediately implemented and shared with commercial and non-commercial food providers. Grantee partners have reported improved hygiene practices in terms of hand washing before handling food and keeping clean processing environments. The Tiehisuma Women's Group reported improved cleanliness of the centre due to daily, weekly and then intensive monthly cleanings. They also reported sharing the Health and Safety manuals with other groups such as a non-formal education shea butter processing group from Tolon District. Project participants are integrating knowledge from this into their work collectives and individual homes. This information has now made the women more assertive and their businesses more profitable. 560 copies of the Health and Safety Manual were produced and 270 copies distributed, mainly in the Wa region of northern Ghana. A digital version is available for download on the AWDF website and repository. The rest of the physical copies will be distributed in Eastern and Southern Africa in 2017.

Evernice Munando's executive leadership of the **Female Students Network (Zimbabwe)** increased national visibility in advocacy for violence against girls and young women in tertiary education during the AWDF project. FSN received both the Zimbabwe Human Rights (HRD) Civil Society Organisation Award and the 2016 UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education for leadership development and mentorship programmes for young women.

Susanne Muwazi (ARUWE, Uganda) has also been accepted into a one-year programme in women-centred leadership in the Canadian Women's Foundation Leadership Institute & Coady Institute at St. Francis Xavier University. She affirms that her participation in the CEO Forum and coaching project served a crucial role during her application process.

The Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (ME&L) program contributes to improving AWDF's ability to implement flexible, responsive, innovative and relevant programs that respond to the needs of the organisation.

This can be accomplished by bolstering performance, learning from past experiences and tracking progress and results. ME&L work also emphasises organisational risk assessments and results based-programme delivery that demonstrates an accountability to partners, including donors and grantee organisations. Information gathered also informed proposals and donor reporting during the period. It helped increase the visibility of AWDF by providing evidence for publication. It also contributed to increasing funding sources. The data and success stories collected provide information on the achievements of AWDF's program work and fundraising capacities.

Monitoring and evaluation visits were conducted in five countries (Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana, Togo and Burkina Faso). In all, 58 organisations were visited and reports produced on the site visits. During the mission visits, verification processes for grantee partners was conducted for multiple donor-funded projects.

Evaluations and Surveys. Three abridged versions of thematic and project evaluations were completed for Women's Human Rights (WHR), Economic Empowerment and Livelihoods (EEL) and the midterm evaluation for ACBF's Institutional Strengthening Phase II project. A Tracer study exploring the sustainability of AWDF grantee partner organisations from 2005 -2014 was also completed.

Key Lessons on Country Contexts

Gleaned through Site Visits

UGANDA

Visiting AWDF staff noted in Uganda, as in most of the country contexts we work, that most organisations are going through critical fundraising challenges. This is detrimentally impacting organisational sustainability and contributing to an inability to retain qualified staff.

With low staff numbers, work can quickly overload.

One key lesson for grantee partners is to focus on strategic planning of program activities for the year that are tied to specific work responsibilities and deadlines. There is a need for organisations to link program planning with actual implementation to ensure that they are in line with the vision and mandate of the organisation, and organisational objectives and goals. Poor planning is one of the reasons for inadequate documentation of organisational activities and outcomes. This demonstrates missed opportunities for many women's organisations to showcase their achievements and to harness the value of their work towards resource mobilisation.

Another resource challenge is being able to afford the high cost of engaging an external auditor to conduct the necessary checks and balances for sound financial management. A majority of the organisations visited have financial reports but few are conducting annual organisational audits. Despite these issues, all the organisations expressed an interest in continuing to work on women's economic empowerment initiatives.

The recommendation to AWDF - as funder - is to strengthen in-country networks across Africa to help conduct in-depth due diligence before grants are awarded to new organisations.

NIGERIA

Most organisations are grappling with dwindling donor funding for women's rights. On top of this, office rental costs run high across the country which threatens the visibility and stability of most organisations that are unable to afford these exorbitant charges.

AWDF staff discovered that those organisations working in economic security are having a difficult time providing sustainable rates of startup capital to women groups after skills acquisition trainings. This stunts the growth of businesses that require funding to emerge or remain active.

Funding for sustainability is further complicated by issues of governance (financial accountability, the lack of well-detailed HR organisational policies, and accurate/compelling documentation of work). Gaps in programme clarity and leadership transitions persist and deeper capacity interventions are needed.

TOGO

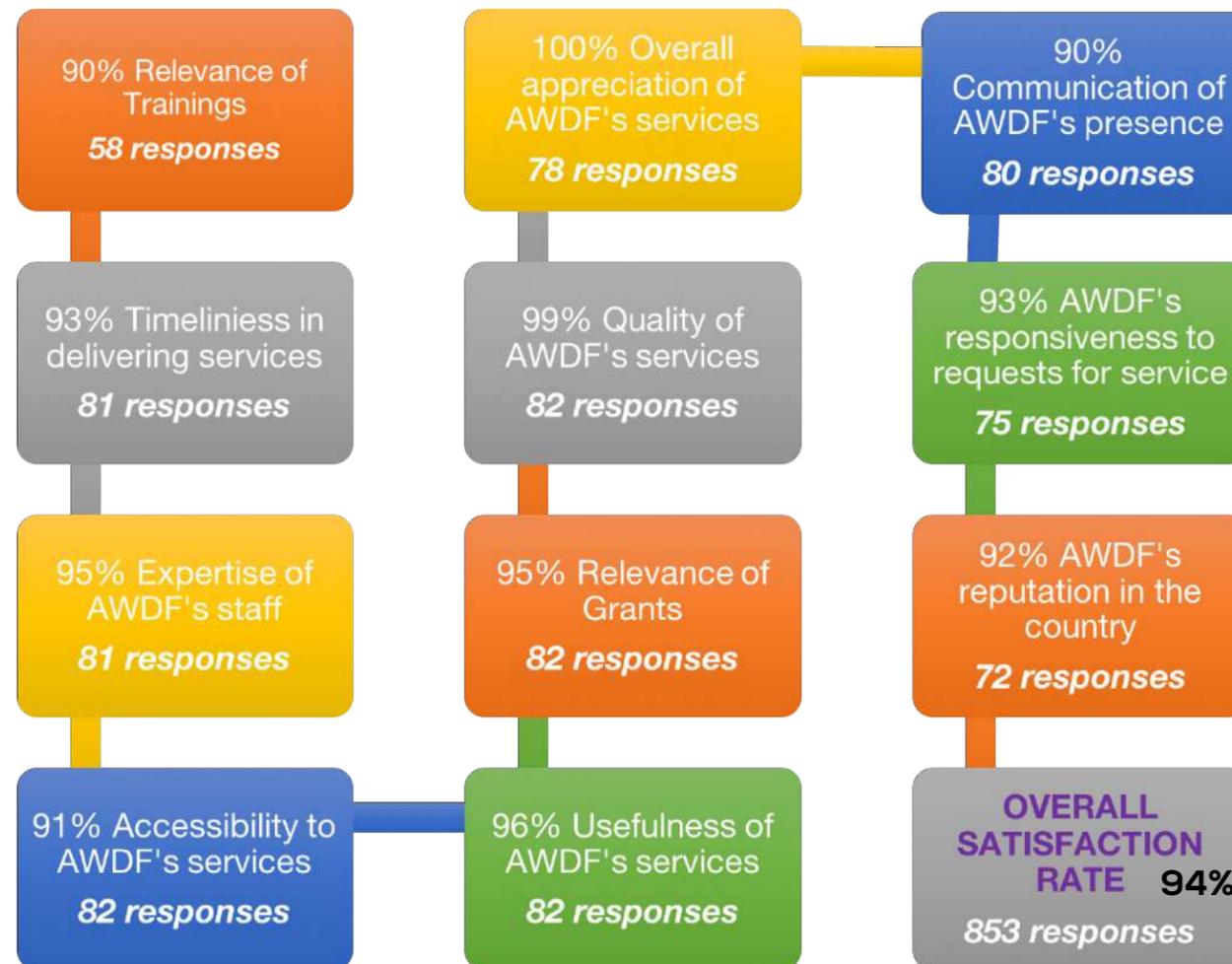
In the Francophone country of Togo, maintaining full-time staff is a serious issue. Institutional support, especially funds for staff remuneration, is lacking. Resource mobilisation and programme sustainability for organisations are common challenges.

It is important to note that despite such instability, the overall financial management practices and capacities of grantees visited are favorable and all the organisations visited have adequate financial systems in place. This is due to the spirit, ambition and passion of the grantee partners in Togo to follow strategic processes. However, most grantee partners expressed the need for critical capacity building, particularly financial management and resource mobilisation.

Here are some examples of our grantee partners' 2016 successes in Grant making, Capacity Building and ME&L:

- Heal the Land Initiative – Nigeria: Due to multiple AWDF grant investments and capacity building support, HELIN has become a model of HIV/AIDS organisation in Akwa Ibom for learning and skills sharing. Their advanced leadership qualities has attracted the attention of the Akwa Ibom State Agency for AIDS Control who has provided the mandate to advocate for the passage of the anti-stigma bill whilst the state agency provides technical and other forms of support. The state agency has also assigned a lawyer to assist HELIN with all the legal issues involved in the advocacy process.
- Women Environmental Programme (WEP) - Nigeria: WEP was awarded a grant of USD 20,000 to advocate for the appointment of women to at least 35% of all appointed positions in the new government. The project has resulted in women taking up leadership roles at community development levels such WATSAN committees. The deputy speaker of the House of Representatives has agreed on a 15% quota for women in leadership and governance of the State. 3 women are now commissioners of Education, Women and Religious Affairs. CSO activities are now more coordinated and focusing on one agenda, to promote women's rights and leadership and lobbying for the equal opportunities bill to be passed into law.

- Slum Women Initiative for Development (SWID) - Uganda: As a result of a sensitisation program, 500 women from ten groups gained knowledge on land rights. Out of this, 120 women are serving as TOTs on women and land rights issues in their communities. The TOTs act as paralegals and provide advice on land related issues in their respective communities. The report from the land office shows an increase in the number of women processing land titles. There is also a change in the mind set of men in relation to land ownership in Walkuba and Masese subdivision resulting in increased joint land ownership processes (names of the wives and children included on the land ownership documentations, lease titles). This has contributed to the decrease in the number of widows ejected from their matrimonial homes upon the death of their husbands.



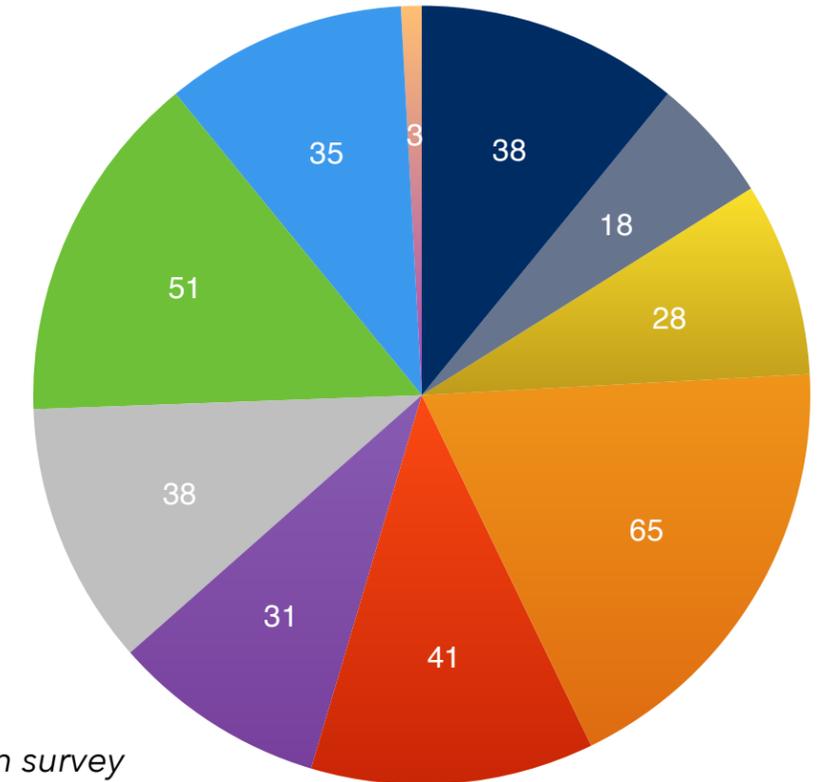
Monitoring, Evaluation + Learning

Grantee Recognition survey

This annual survey focused this year on organisations supported in 2014. 90 out of 106 organisations responding had received some form of recognition or award. Of the 90, 85 (94%) acknowledge AWDF's role in receiving promotion. More than half of the organisations surveyed were invited for a meeting or event (72%) and asked to make a public speech (57%).

The infographic shows the types of recognitions received by grantees >>>

- Grantee Recognition Survey: Number of Grantee Organisations**
- Certificate of recognition (42.2%)
 - Plaque (20%)
 - Resources (money/materials) 34.4%
 - Invited for meeting/event (72.2%)
 - Public recognition by influential community member (45.6)
 - Media Recognition(34.4)
 - Asked to represent community/local authority for meeting/event (42.2)
 - Asked to make a speech (56.7)
 - Invited to be a member of board/committee (40%)
 - Other (3.3%)



Satisfaction survey

A questionnaire was sent to 113 organisations and responses were received from 82 organisations. From the analysis of responses gathered from grantee organisations supported in 2015 with more than USD 5,000, 94% are satisfied with the AWDF services they received (grant making and forums/interventions). The areas the survey focused were: relevance, quality, timeliness and usefulness of AWDF services. In addition to this, grantees were asked to evaluate their satisfaction levels comprehensively of AWDF's services, particularly, the expertise of the organisation's staff; accessibility to learning products; communications on organisation's performance; the responsiveness to request for services and organisation's reputation in the country were asked.

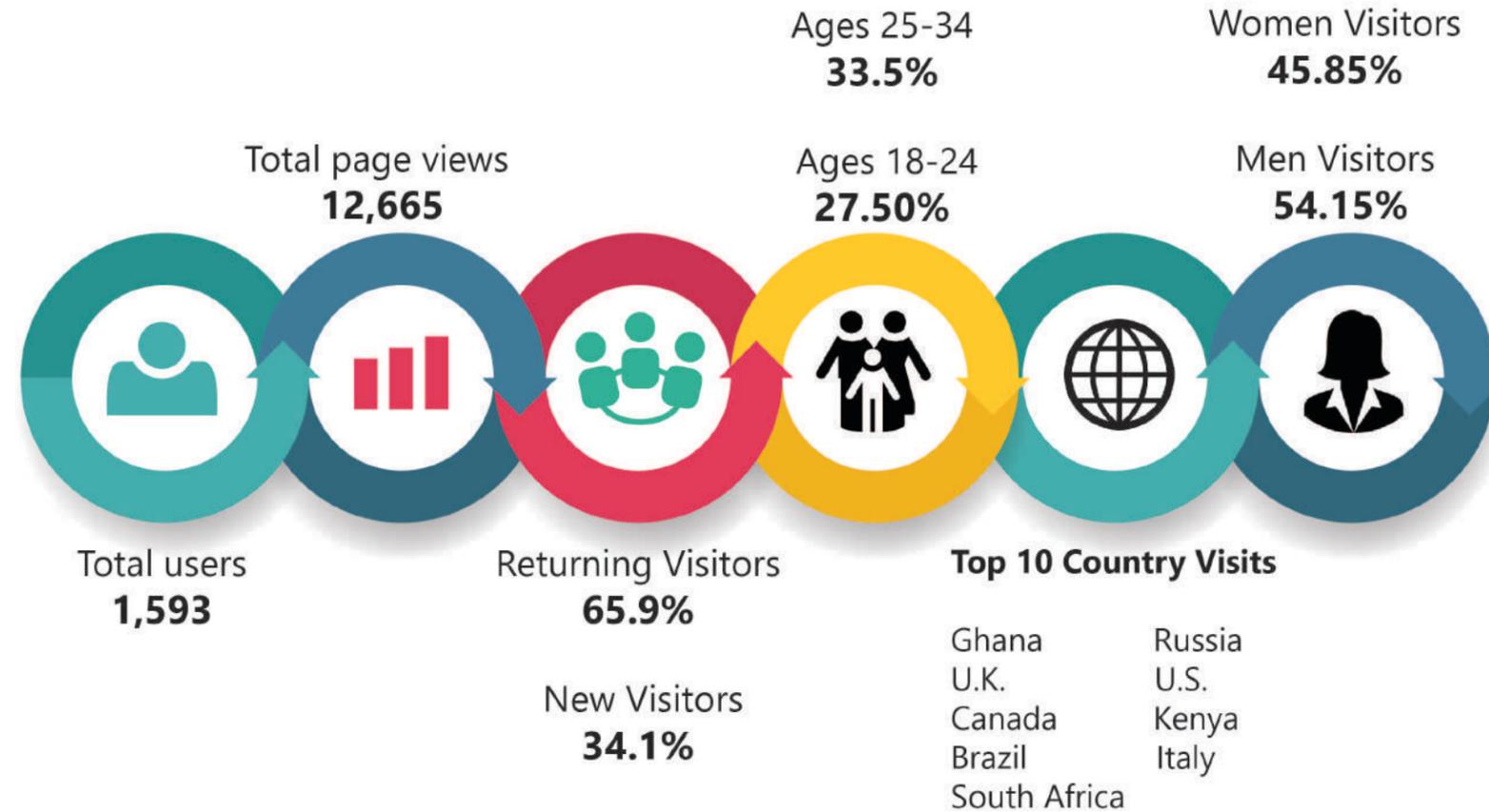
What we are learning from the surveys are that we should work across the organisation to systematically align our work. We can mine at the intersections of AWDF, donors and grantee partners to achieve maximum impact. Also simple and self-explanatory data collection instruments help to improve reporting and results.

<<< The infographic presents the grantee summary of AWDF's satisfaction rate assessment.

AWDF DIGITAL REPOSITORY

AfriREP

January - December 2016



AWDF's Resource Centre activities (AfriREP, Resource Centre Catalogue, Resource Centre Day) highlights the importance of documenting and archiving AWDF and African feminist historical memory. The AfriREP materials are open-access and available for the public to read and download which expands our reach. The digital catalogue gives AWDF immediate access to the library of materials available in the Resource Centre even when out of office. Resource Centre Day provides staff with the tools to conduct research effectively and efficiently, to update our writing and presentation styles and to learn how to ensure personal and professional digital security.

AWDF Digital Repository. The AfriREP database expands every month with new publications in a wide range of sectors and subjects. At present, there are 475 publications in the system. This number reflects publications created by AWDF as well as our grantee partners and open-access publications that are relevant to our work by other CSOs, women's networks, feminist activists, researchers and academic institutions.

AWDF Resource Centre Catalogue. We are manually inputting each collection item in the Resource Centre into a digital tracking and retrieval system featuring more than 3,000 materials.

Resource Centre Day. Three Resource Centre Day events were held this year. This series of learning sessions featured hands-on training for staff on uncovering the wealth of our CARLIGH research databases; KeePass and ensuring digital security of our work; how social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Storify can raise visibility of our work through our networks; and Prezi software, an exciting alternative to PowerPoint presentations.

CARLIGH Research Databases: AWDF joined as a member institution with the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH) which provides access to more than 35 unique databases. We held a research seminar and produced a database guide for staff on using CARLIGH. Research is an important part of the work that we do. The CARLIGH databases provide access to a wide range of fields to enhance our work, accuracy, storytelling and statistical evidence. This can help embolden our reporting processes, fundraising efforts, presentations and writing.

Wellness/Self-Care

The Getdown Breakdown. This exciting activity is a stress reliever, energiser and connector for staff. Three days a week, staff gather in the afternoon for a one-song jam session where we get to dance, laugh and enjoy one another's company. The Getdown Breakdown promotes staff wellbeing and connectivity and reminds us that part of revolution-making is in embracing life, laughter and dance. This is also a part of our activism and a great addition to the HR department's promotion of monthly skills sharing sessions on wellness, personal and professional development; weekly "desk massage therapy" sessions and aerobic exercise classes on-site at the office three evenings each week.

Documentation

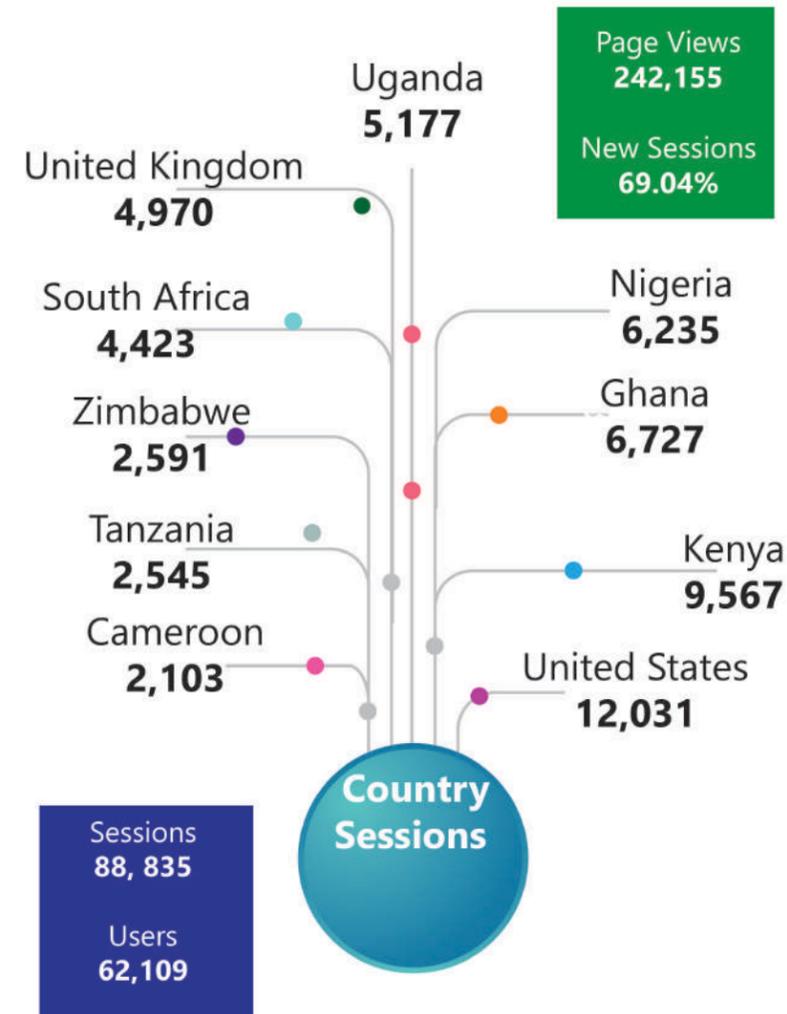
Knowledge Management Strategy: In strategising the organisation's plan over the next four years, we determined collectively that we must improve institutional capacity to conduct research, archiving, story development, presentations, proposals and other writings, social media, documentation and critical analysis of our work. This means being able to expand sustainable systems for feminist knowledge and historical memory through AfriREP, the AFF and AWDF websites and the building of the Resource Centre Catalogue. We can also look to amplify the capacity of staff to understand and interpret organisational impact for diverse stakeholders (through the Activity report, organisational reports and commissioned works, organisational learnings, skills sharing sessions, Resource Centre Day, AIMS database, scenario stories/SPIV). We can use this energy to build a desire and passion for research, multimedia learning, artistic activism and analysis.

AWDF Murals Project. A series of colorful murals began taking shape at AWDF House in early October 2016, created by self-taught visual artist, Maku Azu. The murals document historical African feminism as well as African women's movements for rights of sex workers, LGBTQIA communities, Liberian women's movements for peace and resolution, activist women with disabilities, domestic workers and office workers. The murals also explore themes of growth, expansion and freedom through motifs of trees, birds, chants of Voice, Power and Soul in different African languages, and quotations from the AFF Charter. Staff members have also joined in and participated in creating artwork on the lobby mural. The murals will be annotated, photographed and posted online in 2017.

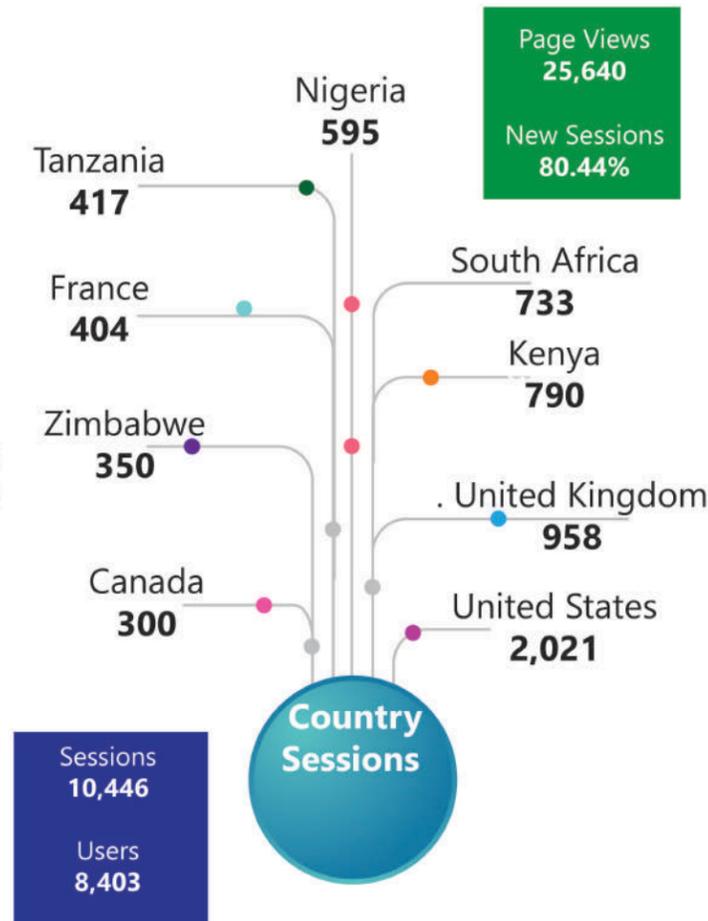
Communications



AWDF Demographic Data



AFF Website Data



AWDF's 2016 International Women's Day events included a photo exhibition entitled, "Don't Call Me Beautiful", by Nana Kofi Acquah featuring AWDF-commissioned images of grantee partners and feminists working with our organisation. This was followed by a panel discussion exploring gender, sexuality, identity and representation in popular media moderated by Kinna Likimani (Mbassem Foundation) and featuring Nana Kofi Acquah, award-winning author Yewande Omotoso, radio and TV presenter, Akua Blakofe and AWDF Knowledge Management Specialist, Sionne Neely. A rousing concert by feminist Malian musician, Fatoumata Diawara, was also held in partnership with Alliance Francaise d'Accra for a socially diverse audience.

A campus discussion about ending rape cultures and violence against women also took place at the University of Ghana - Legon. A panel featuring Jessica Horn and Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah, AWID Communications Manager, along with university students provided a safe space to discuss openly. There was especially vigorous participation from young women secondary and university students who were aware and assertive in claiming their bodily rights. We carried forward this focus on young women through a Strategic Plan IV approach targeting young women in grant making, outreach and advocacy, as well as through the movement building development of the Young Feminists Gathering.

In 2016, AWDF increased visibility online with local and international press, weekly social media activation and website posts.

For example, AWDF's impact stories of grantee partners in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Gambia who helped defeat Ebola, were published widely in The Guardian, The Journalist, Quartz News and AllAfrica.com. Through this exposure, we help to amplify the voices of our grantee partners.

Over the last year, AWDF has experienced a growth in AWDF's virtual reach and growth of our profile (our social media followers have tripled over the last 18 months) on national and international platforms. In April, the AFF website was launched featuring sections to learn about the histories of women's movements and change makers on the continent in a dynamic and powerful manner.

In preparing the new strategic plan, AWDF's Communications strategy became more multifold and focused on local, regional, continental and global forms of engagement. In 2016, we built ground for stronger strategic communications through strategic planning processes. A 'refreshing' of AWDF's design and communications approaches also kept our brand contemporary and compelling. We also revised our language in more feminist ways in our brochure and other promotional materials, precisely evaluating how we define terms and communicate messages about ourselves and our work. We also proactively practiced feminist procurement by identifying African women designers to work with and overseeing the production of existing communications and advocacy materials with a higher design value (the AFF Charter; AWDF brochure).

Global and Local Advocacy

USA

SDG indicators event and Southern California Grantmakers event both in Los Angeles, AWDF USA event in NYC, UN General Assembly meetings in NY.

Convening on behalf of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota (WFM) for AWDF

Europe

Women Deliver in Copenhagen; Action Aid event; Comic Relief & Unilever board meetings; DFID Girls Education roundtable; African Diaspora Women's Forum; Future Funding Forum; Amplify Change Donor meeting (London). The Queens Young Leaders Awards and reception at Buckingham Palace. European Foundations Centre annual conference, PtP conference in Hanover, UK; Global Partnership For Education Commission meeting in Oslo, Norway; Power & Care conference in Brussels; UBS Philanthropy forum in St. Moritz.

Global Fund for Community Foundations Philanthropy Summit – Advisor on the Summit Planning Committee

Ghana

Participation in the 7th African Conference on Sexual Health and Rights and facilitated women's pre-conference and 2 other sessions.

Launch of the Women's Situation Room in Ghana. SDG philanthropy platform meetings in Ghana and the USA, African Feminist Responses to Violence Against Women and HIV meeting to prepare feminist counselling tools, AWDF/Ford/APN.

CEO Visits

23 advocacy and outreach trips were undertaken by the CEO and other staff members in Africa, (Senegal, Zimbabwe, South Africa) USA and Europe. In Africa these included: FastDev Conference in Senegal, INWF Africa funds meeting in Zimbabwe, Grandmothers gathering in South Africa, International Aids Conference.

Participation in Prospera (INWF) Africa regional meeting for the Second Strategic Planning Session



CEO was the Keynote speaker at ISTR Africa, Concerned Africans Youth Forum, Mandela Washington Fellows regional conference, WSR event, NEWIG Women Drivers Graduation, African Conference on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, Golden Media Awards ceremony, Golden Media Awards Women in film seminar.

AU SDG meeting: AfDB Gender 4 Results meeting

Participation in International FP Conference in Bali and facilitated 2 sessions

Feminist Philanthropy, Advocacy + Outreach

This year marked our 15th Anniversary, and a celebration of AWDF's work in feminist philanthropy and social justice transformation.

In 2016, we increased AWDF's profile, nationally, regionally and internationally, including through traditional and social media uptake, documentation and dissemination of learning. We are continually innovating strategies to raise the profile and visibility of AWDF and women's rights organisations, most especially, our grantee partners. We've accomplished this through our own grant making practices but also through partnerships with AmplifyChange and now the Leading From the South collaboration. We are consolidating our fundraising and programmatic relationships and influencing other donors to sincerely give both more and more relevantly to African women's rights.

AWDF is innovating philanthropy by raising the voices of African women in new or different platforms, particularly the UNDP national philanthropy platform meeting; the 1st Ghana National Philanthropy Forum; the Golden Movie Awards film seminar and awards, and the Unilever Sustainable Living Panel. AWDF expertise is also being used to establish an ME&L framework for the West African LGBT fund for rights and social justice.

AWDF is also increasing awareness of philanthropy in Africa, promoting effective investment in global south women's rights and raising new partners for AWDF through moderating or speaking at activities and events such as the Future Funding Forum (funding global South civil society), Southern California Grantmakers forum and the Hilton Foundation's SDGs and data meeting. We are also developing new and improved ways of increasing individual fundraising through the SHEROES compilation.

The Young Feminists Gathering

In December 2016, The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) launched a new monthly initiative, The Young Feminist Gathering (YFG), to increase visibility, solidarity and innovation among young women living, working or visiting Accra, Ghana.

The purpose of the group is to mobilise diverse women between the ages of 18-35 to come together, learn and engage with concepts and practices of women's rights, African feminism, social justice and transformative leadership. YFG is a safe and inclusive space for women and women-identified persons to congregate, express themselves and support one another to realise individual and collective dreams. 30 women attended the first meeting.

Claiming Space

Here are suggestions by participants for the vision and focus of the YFG space:

- Create a forum space (physical and online) where women can consciously support each other. Focus on network building and increasing online activism.
- Develop a learning space where we can increase our knowledge and unlearn harmful patterns of thinking. Educate ourselves on African feminism thought and practice.
- Amplify space for women to speak up and embrace our voices. Here we come together so that we don't feel isolated. We are not alone!
- Increase the space for collaborating on projects between young women. This space should spark new forms of change.

- Create a mentoring system for transferring knowledge. Explore ways to share skills, talents and capacities with one another.

- Organise a workshop on "mansplaining" so that we understand different strategies to dismantle this.

- Share information on how to navigate personal relationships and personal politics.

- Transmit rituals of self-care to one another.

- Discuss sexuality, pleasure, sexual consent and other forms of wellness (esp. mental and emotional health).

Resource Mobilisation and Global Partnerships

'Leading from the South' - a new fund to resource women's rights activism in the global South

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Fondo Mujeres del Sur (FMS), the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI) and the South Asia Women's Fund (SAWF) celebrated a major milestone for global South women's funds by being selected for 'Leading from the South' (LFS), a new 40 million euro fund to support activism devised, implemented and led by women's rights organisations in the global South. Developed and implemented by three regional and one international women's fund, the new funding facility is supported by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of their policy on women's rights and gender equality and their 'Dialogue and Dissent' programme.

Through grantmaking, capacity building and other resourcing, LFS will strengthen women's movements in the global South. The fund's focus on women's rights, on advocacy and on elimination of marginalisation and discrimination highlight a strong alignment with a range of the UN global goals, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 5 on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

The four Women's Funds will manage LFS over the next four years, resourcing activism and strengthening women's rights movements in Asia (SAWF), Africa and the Middle East (AWDF), Latin America and the Caribbean (FMS) and globally for indigenous women (FIMI).

Emilienne de Leon Aulina, Executive Director of Prospera (International Network of Women's Funds) stated 'It is wonderful to see the recognition of the solid work women's funds have been undertaking to support women's movements across the world. As activists themselves, women's funds are closer to the ground, understand context and have proven to be adept at funding transformation'.

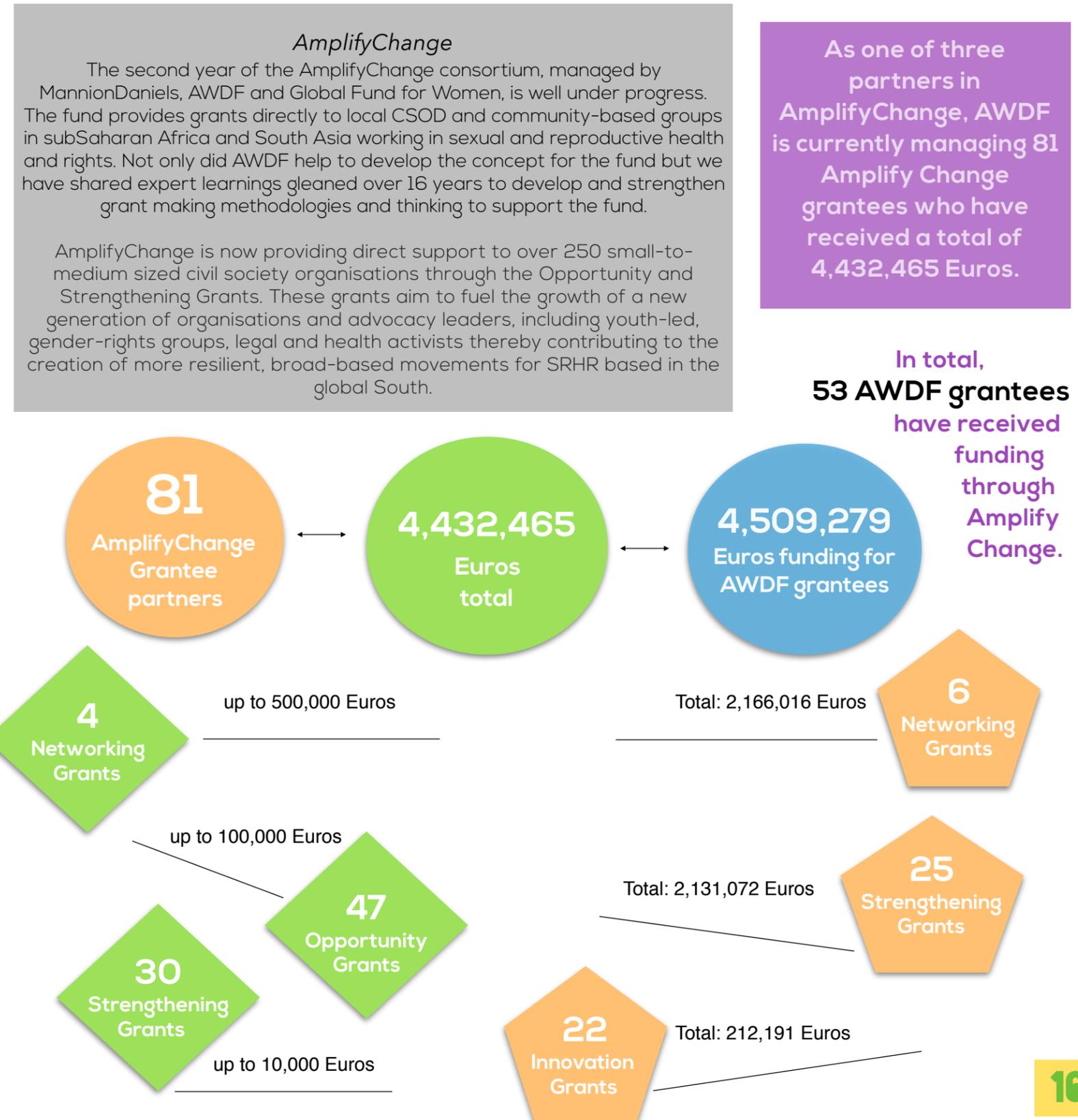
The Executive Directors of the four funds highlighted the importance of the new fund - 'It is essential that local, national and regional organisations are enabled to set our own agendas and resource our own visions. This fund will power change for women's rights organisations in the South and strengthen our movements'.

One of the most profound transformations of the past century is the shift in the social and political status of women and girls and in the growing acceptance in societies around the globe that women's rights and gender equality are desirable goals. Over the past 30 years, the work of women's rights organisations and movements has led to nothing short of revolutionary changes in public attitudes, law, governance, and in the private sector and civil society.

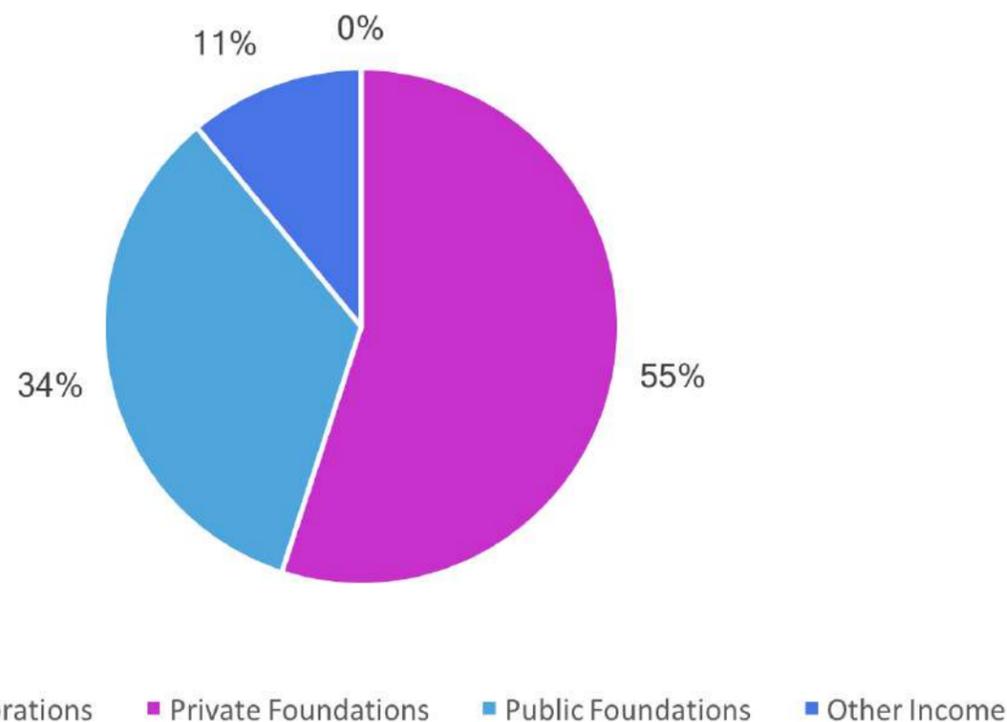
Despite this, and the key role that women's movements have played to secure progress for women's rights, women all over the world still face inequality and violation of their rights on a daily basis and much remains to be done to achieve justice and equity for women. Yet research from sources such as the Association for Women Rights in Development (AWID) show women's rights organisations to be struggling for sufficient funds to maintain their work. Leading From the South intends to change that dynamic. The Fund will officially be launched in early 2017, along with the first calls for grant proposals from the four managers of the Fund.

In 2016, we were able to exceed our resource mobilisation vision to raise 3 million USD and secure the organisational budget.

Our central goals within this strategy were to increase individual fundraising contributions; consolidate and increase flexible funds, including through earned income; and develop a detailed strategy for achieving a more diverse funding base. We were able to accomplish this with partnerships such as Leading from the South and AmplifyChange.



2016 AWDF Revenue Analysis



Since 2001, the African Women's Development Fund has provided

USD 30 million

in grant making to 1,300 women-led organisations in 42 countries.

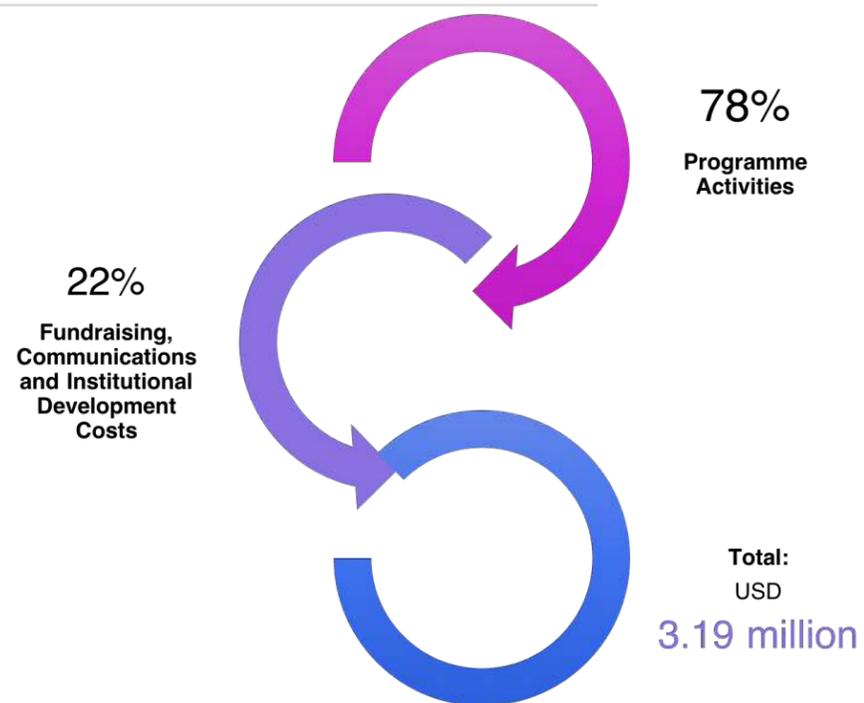


2016 operating expenses amounted to **USD 3.19 million** compared to an available budget of **USD 3.42 million**.

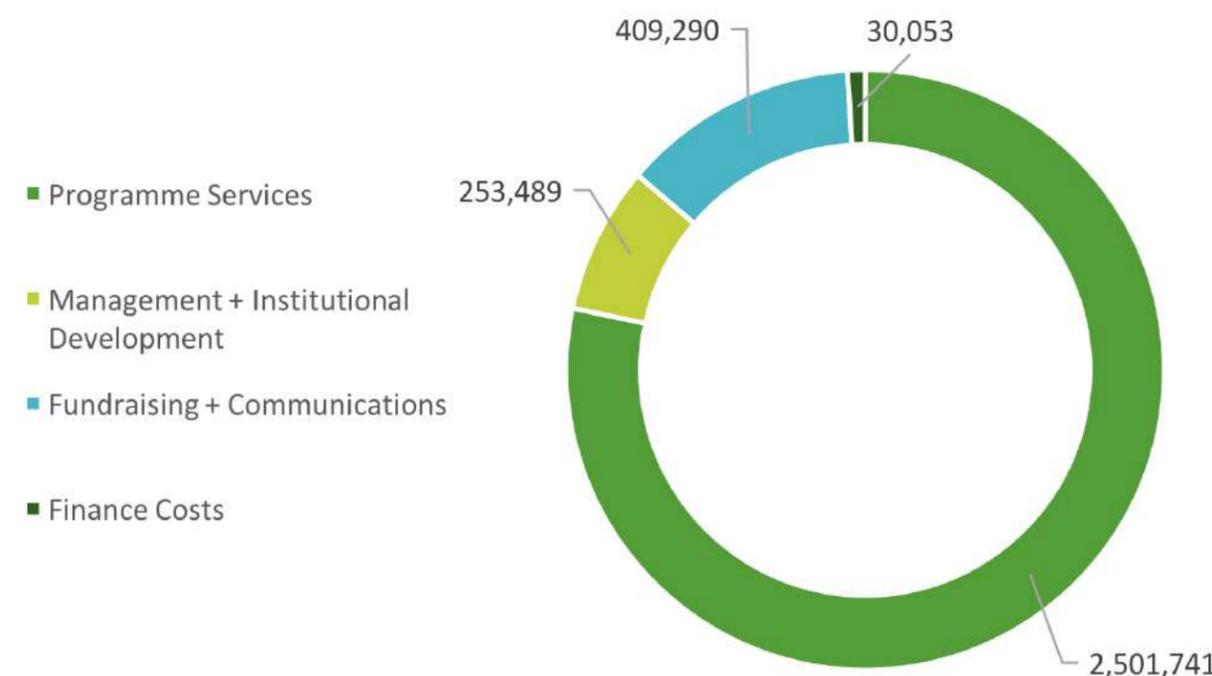
The actual expenses for 2016 was the lowest compared to the average annual expenses of USD 4.53 million, made over the last five years.

There was a decrease in operating expenses by 32% between 2015 and 2016 - a drop from USD 4.69 million to USD 3.19 million.

Capacity Building funding also dropped from USD 484,318 in 2015 to USD 188,529



2016 Operating Expenses (USD)



2016 Grants Awarded: **USD 0.99 million**

31% AWDF's 2016 total expenses

41% AWDF's 2016 programme expenses

We appreciate the dedicated contributions of our donors to resource African women's movements. In addition to our institutional funders, the African Women's Development Fund received donations from over 40 individuals in 2016.

- African Capacity Building Foundation
- AJG Foundation
- Anonymous Institutional Donor
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Comic Relief
- Catapult Foundation
- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ford Foundation
- Foundation for a Just Society
- Global Fund for Women
- Heyman Family Fund
- Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
- Levi Strauss Foundation
- MacArthur Foundation
- Mama Cash
- Novo Foundation
- Safe Abortion Action Fund
- The Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa
- Open Society Foundation
- Stephen Lewis Foundation
- Trust Africa
- Urgent Action Fund
- Women's Foundation of Minnesota





**Her smile, her laugh,
her commitment to our movements
and her unfailing respect and dignity
linger with us.**

We pay tribute to

JOANA SILOCHINA FOSTER

CoFounder
African Women's Development Fund

1946 - 2016