



Terms of reference

Consultancy: Development of AWDF's strategic framework

Background and rationale

Established in 2000, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) is a feminist grantmaking foundation that supports local, national and Africa regional women's organisations working towards the promotion and realisation of women's rights and recognition of African women's leadership in all spheres of life.¹ As Africa's first women's fund, AWDF plays a pioneering role in of both feminist movement-building and philanthropy on the continent.

AWDF works to strengthen and support the work of African women-led activist organisations who hold and advance the line on women's rights on the continent and yet often have limited access to mainstream funding for a variety of reasons, including size, language, location, and marginalisation. We do so through the provision of funding for projects focused on our three priority thematic areas; through tailored capacity-building programmes and movement-building initiatives; through the building and sharing of knowledge about women's rights and feminist approaches to promoting them; and through amplifying and celebrating African women's voices and African feminists' messages.

AWDF started as a grant-making organisation with a grant-making budget of about USD 350,000 supporting small to medium sized organisations, mainly community women's groups on the African continent. In its 21-year history, AWDF has disbursed almost USD 51 million to women's rights organisations in Africa (and recently in the Middle East through one of our flagship initiatives, Leading from the South). AWDF receives its funding from a range of bi-lateral and international donor agencies, private sector entities, African and international philanthropists, and the African Diaspora.

AWDF's current work is guided by our 2017-2021 strategic plan, entitled "[Shaping the Future](#)". Reflecting our commitment to work together to build the best possible futures for the African continent, the strategic plan was developed based on data on future trends for African women, with an in-depth focus on gender dynamics, women's rights, and questions around the roles African women play in actively creating just futures for Africa.²

AWDF is now seeking to develop a new strategic framework to guide our work over the next ten years (2022-2032). This process comes at a critical time, as the world has experienced seismic changes since the above-mentioned were developed (including the challenges and opportunities facing African women, the organisations and movements that support their rights, and those affecting the regional and global ecosystem in which we operate), and as AWDF is reflecting on what growth means after 21 years of existence.

AWDF is therefore seeking to engage a consultant, a team of consultants or a consultancy firm to support the development of the strategic framework.

¹ As an intersectional feminist organisation, we have an inclusive understanding of the word "women". The women and the women's organisations we support are, are led by, and work with all marginalised girls and women, including lesbians, bi, trans, queer and intersex women.,

² The research is compiled in the report [Futures Africa: Trends for Women by 2030](#).

Purpose and scope of the consultancy

The purpose of the strategic planning process is to develop a new strategic framework that will guide AWDF's work and institutional transformations over the next ten years, with the aim to increase our impact and ability to fulfil our mandate.

Elements of the strategic planning process will include (but will not be limited to):

- A critical review and if needed, a refresh of AWDF's vision, mission, values and theory of change.
- A situation analysis of the organisation (e.g. strengths, weaknesses and unique value proposition) and of the ecosystem in which it evolves (e.g. opportunities and threats related to the state of women's rights in Africa, trends of feminist organising, funding for women's rights and the philanthropic sector in Africa and globally).
- An assessment of the 2017-2021 strategic plan and of its implementation.
- The identification of AWDF's goals, key strategies, guiding principles and thematic priorities for the coming ten years.
- Stakeholder management: A purposeful and meaningful process to include the perspectives of the AWDF team and Board, of a wide and diverse range of African feminist activists from across the continent, but also of key partners and potential partners, including from the donor community. A strategic advisory group is being developed to that effect.
- Development, validation and finalisation of the strategic framework.
- Support to the AWDF team for the costing of the strategic framework, for the implementation planning for the 2022-2025 period, and for the identification of organisational development priorities.

Proposed methodology and deliverables

The consultant(s) will provide strategic, technical and facilitation support to AWDF in the development of its new strategic framework. We suggest that the strategic planning process follows the below phases, which will be finalised with the consultant once she has / they have proposed their methodology:

- Inception phase (to refine the scope of work, methodology, process and timelines, as well as the strategic questions and key priorities). Deliverables: Inception report including workplan and detailed methodology.
- Research, consultations and analysis (to gather and analyse key documentation and input from various sources and key actors). Deliverables: Report presenting the outcomes of the desk review and consultations and the proposed outline of the strategic plan; engagement with advisory group, organisation and facilitation of a workshop to present the findings and proposed contents of the strategic plan; workshop summary.
- Development of the strategic plan. Deliverables: Draft strategic plan, organisation and facilitation of a virtual meeting to present the draft plan to AWDF, meeting summary; Final strategic plan including feedback received.
- Presentation and dissemination of the strategic plan. Deliverables: Presentation of the strategic plan to AWDF Board, development of a public-facing/summary version of the strategic plan, development of a PowerPoint presentation about the strategic plan for AWDF's usage.

- Support to the AWDF team for the costing of the strategic framework, for the implementation planning for the 2022-2025 period, and for the identification of organisational development priorities.

Supervision of the work and collaboration with AWDF

The consultant or team of consultants will work directly with AWDF's CEO and a small working group composed of AWDF staff from across workstreams.

Practical details

The consultancy will take place from September 2021 to March 2022. We envisage that 60 to 75 working days will be necessary to complete the consultancy.

Consultant profile

The consultant or team of consultants should have the following qualifications and experience:

- Minimum of 5 years of work experience in women's rights, human rights, philanthropy and/or international development.
- Expert knowledge of women's rights feminism, women's rights and the feminist movement in Africa; understanding of philanthropy desirable, with an understanding of African / Global South contexts.
- In-depth understanding of feminist principles and how they relate to strategy and organisational development;
- Demonstrated experience in strategic and/organisational planning.
- Excellent research, analytical and writing skills.
- Experience in developing, leading and documenting consultations.
- Strong project planning and management skills.
- Ability to work independently and deliver on time.
- Written and spoken fluency in English is required; ability to work in French is desirable.
- Excellent presentation, interpersonal and facilitation skills.

How to apply

Interested consultants, team of consultants or consultancy firms should express their interest by submitting:

- A technical proposal (5 pages maximum). This should outline your approach, the steps you will take to successfully complete assignment, any proposed revisions to the proposed approach or timeline, and details regarding your availability.
- A financial proposal.
- A CV (max 3 pages) for each consultant involved in the work.

The deadline for submission of proposals is 31 August 2021. Proposals should be sent by email to consultants@awdf.org with "Strategic planning consultancy" in the subject line.

In line with AWDF's mission, qualified and interested African women are encouraged to apply.