

# ACCESS. COURAGE. SOLIDARITY.

A WRAP BY  
AWDF-RESOURCED PARTNERS  
AT WOMEN DELIVER 2023



AFRICAN  
WOMEN'S  
DEVELOPMENT  
FUND



AWDF successfully resourced 32 representatives of African feminist and women's organisations, feminist collectives and individual activists to access the Women Deliver 2023 Conference. Six of these partners actively served as session speakers and moderators linking their lived experiences, their constituencies' aspirations and lessons from their work to discussions enrich debate with policymakers, researchers, activists and fellow feminists on topics like trauma and sexual violence redress for gender-diverse people, women and girls.

A selected number of the AWDF-resourced partners reflected on the moments that inspired and challenged them at the WD2023. We are excited to share their insights with you. Drawing on their own words, this collection highlights the ways in which partners navigated power within and outside activist spaces, exhibited courage to learn through balancing voice and silence and celebrated the achievements and nonlinear journeys of African feminist movements each day. Join us to commune in their inspiration!

## *What was most inspiring for you and the movements you represent?*

"It was listening and learning about the resilience of so many Feminist movements and Organizations, despite the extreme challenges faced by colleagues where human rights movements are under attack. There was a sense of soldiering on and still working for justice and equality for all."

***Mpumi Zondi,***

SOPHIATOWN COMMUNITY  
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES,  
SOUTH AFRICA

"The conference inspired me in so many ways... the fact that we need to expand our tentacles as LGBT+ activists to look at the margins of the intersection we come with and also to decolonize our context-specific activism."

***Laila Yahaya (They/Them),***

ONE LOVE  
SISTERS GHANA



The Distinguished speakers and experts presented a wide array of theories and case studies, shedding light on innovative approaches to tackling gender disparities and promoting women's empowerment. The dynamic discussions challenged conventional paradigms, pushing us to think critically and creatively about our own work and its potential for greater positive change.

***Khawla Al-Azraq,***

PSYCHO-SOCIAL COUNSELLING CENTER FOR WOMEN, PALESTINE



In Burundian culture, to talk about sexual violence or gender-based violence is to violate customs. Burundian women in general, and minority women in particular, are ashamed to share the violence they have suffered, and will always be singled out. The Wosso movement has inspired me in the sense that we are going to encourage Burundian women to speak up, to share their lives, to create a safe space where women are free to express themselves without fear.

***Nduwayezu Marie Goreth,***

PLANÈTE DE FEMMES DU BURUNDI

The breadth of discussions on women issues. There was a lot of interconnectedness on the issues being discussed which were linked to the women empowerment agenda. Just being in a space where such relevant conversations were happening and LED by women was a real inspiration.

***Khadijah Abdul-Samed,***

SAVANNA WOMEN INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY (SWIDA-GHANA)

I was inspired by the spirit of positivity and complementarity of all on an ideology without any discrimination.

***Mme Doussou Kaba,***

DIRECTRICE EXÉCUTIVE DE GUINÉEN DES  
FEMMES POUR LA DÉMOCRATIE ET LE  
DÉVELOPPEMENT ASSOCIATION (L'ONG/  
AGFDD), GINUEA CONAKRY

*What was most challenging for you and the movements you represent?*

I observed that Feminist spaces seem closed off to inner groups -those that have previously worked together or have partnerships because of common networks that they belonged to. People who are relatively new to the space are not easily allowed in or the environment is not as warm.. It takes them being courageous enough to "declare themselves" and connect with individuals in these spaces.

***Mpumi Zondi,***

SOPHIATOWN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES,  
SOUTH AFRICA

Create more such spaces and funding opportunities so that women's empowerment is a reality and not a fiction in my country.

***Mme Doussou Kaba,***

DIRECTRICE EXÉCUTIVE DE L'ONG/AGFDD-  
GUINEA CONAKRY



I had to develop open energy to be in rooms where I am not included on the table and frame my interest and then use it as an entrance to gender-expansive discourse.

***Laila Yahaya (They/Them),***

ONE LOVE SISTERS GHANA





## *What is the one thing you are carrying forward with you?*

We need to revisit how we can be in solidarity with ourselves and address power dynamics within activism

**Laila Yahaya (They/Them),**  
ONE LOVE SISTERS GHANA

We are connected by the work of love that we do, no matter which part of the world we are in. In our moments of loneliness and despair in our work, I will take strength from the work of love that continues, despite the horrors and push back, not to give in and give up on the dream of re-imagining a world without capitalism, white -supremacy, patriarchy, ableism, homophobia and xenophobia

**Mpumi Zondi, SOPHIATOWN**  
COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES,  
SOUTH AFRICA

I was edified by the fact that more than 6,300 participants were defending the same cause, that even if we still have a long way to go, we are not alone in defending the cause of women, and that even the experiences shared by other feminist activists will help us overcome our obstacles.

**Nduwayezu Marie Goreth,**  
PLANÈTE DE FEMMES DU BURUNDI



My key takeaway from the conference is the organisational posture, the team spirit, the work with the heart, love, the spirit of leadership and empathy.

**Nilza Andre António,**  
MOVFEMME, MOZAMBIQUE



The need to fill the Gender Data Gap. It was gratifying to see the powerful initiatives being led by many women and people from other marginalised groups yet research suggests many women's efforts are not being recognised and collected for data generation to influence decision making and policy.

**Khadijah Abdul-Samed,**  
SAVANNA WOMEN INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY (SWIDA)-GHANA





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