



TERMS OF REFERENCE

FEMINIST LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME COACHES FOR PORTUGUESE - SPEAKING AFRICA

Introduction

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) envisions an Africa where gender justice is fully realized for all African women, girls, and gender-diverse people, and where dignity, freedom, and collective wellbeing are a lived reality. Guided by its Strategic Framework (2023–2033), AWDF invests in resourcing, nurturing, and strengthening African women's rights and feminist organizations, movements, and leaders. Central to this vision is the recognition that resilient organizations require both strong institutional systems and leaders who are equipped to navigate increasingly complex political, social, and organizational environments.

As part of this commitment, AWDF is implementing a leadership and organisational strengthening programme for feminist organisations in Portuguese-speaking Africa. The programme combines individualized coaching, governance strengthening, and collective learning to support organizations in building sustainable institutions while strengthening the leadership capacities of the women who lead them.

Project Overview

The programme aims to strengthen organizational governance, institutional effectiveness, and feminist leadership across five organisations in Portuguese-speaking Africa. Two representatives from each participating organization will take part in the programme, resulting in a cohort of ten (10) leaders. Recognizing that organizational transformation and leadership development are mutually reinforcing, the programme adopts an integrated approach that combines:

- Individual leadership coaching
- Organizational development support
- Board governance strengthening
- Collective learning and peer exchange
- Engagement with thematic experts on emerging issues affecting feminist organizations and movements

Purpose of the Consultancy

AWDF seeks to engage two (2) Bilingual (Portuguese & English) experienced coaches to accompany participating organizations and leaders through a structured one-year coaching journey. Working closely with AWDF and other thematic facilitators, coaches will provide tailored support that strengthens leadership practice, organizational effectiveness, governance, and institutional resilience while supporting leaders to navigate the opportunities and challenges of organizing within African feminist contexts. Coaches will

serve not only as technical advisors but also as thought partners who foster critical reflection, learning, wellbeing, and values-based feminist leadership.

Mode of delivery

The coaching model combines individualized accompaniment, organizational strengthening and collective learning. Each coach will work closely with assigned organizations while collaborating with thematic facilitators engaged throughout the programme. These facilitators will lead sessions on priority issues affecting feminist organizations and movements, including feminist political education, organizational wellbeing, anti-rights organizing, movement sustainability and other emerging priorities.

The coaching approach is expected to be participatory, adaptive and grounded in feminist principles, creating space for reflection, learning and practical application throughout the programme.

Expected Outcomes and Indicators

By the end of the programme, participating organizations and leaders are expected to demonstrate:

- Stronger board governance systems, policies and practices.
- Enhanced organizational effectiveness and sustainability.
- Strengthened feminist leadership, including communication, management and strategic decision-making.
- Increased confidence, agency and self-determination in organizational, public and personal leadership.
- Stronger cultures of shared leadership, delegation and accountability.
- More intentional organizational practices that promote collective care, wellbeing, reflection and continuous learning.

Scope of Work

Each coach will be responsible for:

- Participating in programme inception, baseline assessments and organizational capacity assessments for assigned organizations.
- Co-designing tailored coaching plans that respond to organizational priorities and leadership aspirations.
- Providing regular one-on-one coaching to assigned leaders, focusing on feminist leadership, organizational management, communication, strategic thinking and navigating the realities of feminist organizing.
- Accompanying organizations to strengthen governance, leadership structures and organizational systems, including facilitating one governance strengthening session for each Board.
- Contributing to programme-wide learning spaces, including the *Inception Forum* and *Closing Forum*, and collaborating with thematic facilitators where appropriate.
- Documenting progress, emerging learning and recommendations throughout the coaching process.

Deliverables

- Co-leadership in baseline and due diligence/needs assessments.
- Regular individual coaching sessions with assigned leaders.
- Governance board training session for each organization.
- Inception, Mid-term and Final reports documenting progress, key learning and recommendations.
- Active participation in all project forums.

Timeline

The coaching period will be for one year, in alignment with the project implementation plan (provided separately). Specific dates for activities and deliverables will be determined in consultation with the selected coaches and AWDF. The key milestones include:

- Inception Forum: August
- Coaching Activities: Ongoing throughout the year
- Governance Strengthening Activities: Ongoing throughout the year
- Closing Forum: End of project

Recruitment of Consultant/Coach

1. Fluency in Portuguese & English (written and spoken).
2. Proven experience providing executive, leadership and organizational coaching, preferably within feminist, women's rights or civil society organizations.
3. Demonstrated experience in organizational development, governance strengthening and institutional accompaniment.
4. Strong grounding in intersectional feminist principles and a demonstrated commitment to gender justice.
5. Deep understanding of the political, social and cultural contexts shaping feminist organizing in Lusophone Africa.
6. Experience facilitating participatory and adult learning processes.
7. Strong coaching, facilitation and relationship-building skills, with the ability to cultivate reflective, accountable and supportive learning spaces.
8. Existing relationships within African feminist networks, particularly in Lusophone Africa, will be an advantage.
9. Familiarity with trauma-informed, wellbeing-centred and collective care approaches to leadership development will be an asset.

How to Apply

Interested institutions may submit a proposal to consultants@awdf.org by 31st July 2026. Proposals should comprise the following;

- A technical proposal (maximum 5 pages) outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology and facilitation approach, work plan, and how they intend to deliver the required scope of work and expected outcomes.
- A detailed financial proposal presenting the proposed budget for the assignment, with a clear breakdown of all anticipated costs.
- Profile/CV of the consultant, highlighting relevant expertise and experience in individual and organisational capacity strengthening and delivery of similar assignments.