



Feminism in Action

Evaluation of AWDF's
MDG3 Project

Taaka Awori
October 2011

Acknowledgments

I can truly say that I have enjoyed conducting this evaluation. Listening to stories of courageous women who are making a difference in this world always fills me with awe and inspiration. I owe special thanks to everyone who facilitated the process, some of whom include the staff at AWDF: Sarah, Zeytuna, Gertrude, Mohammed and all the members of the Grant making team. I am grateful to Myesha in South Africa and Kunle in Nigeria for all the logistic arrangements that were so efficiently made.

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To all of you I am deeply grateful.

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Acronyms

AnexCDW	Activists Networking Against the Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers
AGN	African Grant Makers Network
AWDF	African Development Fund
CEDIC	Centre for Development and Intercultural Communication
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAS	Femme Africaine Solidarite
FOWODE	Forum for Women in Democracy
GIMPA	Greenhill Institute of Management and Public Administration
IWRM	International Workshop on Resource Mobilization
KIND	Kudirat Initiative for Democracy
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEMPROW	Mentoring and Empowering Programme for Young Women
SGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SWEAR	Soroti Women's Entrepreneur Association
TFT	Training for Transformation
WABA	Women's Assistance and Business Association
WILDAF	Women in Law in Development in Africa
WIMBIZ	Women in Management and Business

Executive Summary

In 2008, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) received a grant of €5 million from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote achievement of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 on women's empowerment. The grant was provided for a three-year period from 2008 to 2011 and was implemented as AWDF's MDG3 Project. As the project is coming to end, between July and September 2011, AWDF commissioned an independent consultant to conduct a summative evaluation. The evaluation sought to achieve four key objectives: (i) document activities undertaken; (ii) assess outcomes arising from the activities undertaken; (iii) assess which strategies were most effective; and (iv) based on this, make recommendations for future programming. In addition to this, the evaluation sought to assess the extent to which AWDF, as a feminist organization, had lived up to feminist principles in implementation of the project.

The first objective of AWDF's MDG3 Project was to strengthen women's political participation and end violence against women through grant making to 150-180 organisations. The evaluation found that from October 2008 until June 2011, the organization awarded 232 grants to women's organizations in 25 countries, surpassing the original target of 150-180 organisations. A number of outcomes were evident from grant making. These included increased levels of income to marginalized women; marginalized women gained vocational, technical, business and financial skills; women living with HIV and AIDS experienced increased confidence and empowerment; vulnerable and marginalised women gained knowledge about sexual and reproductive issues and women were elected into political offices. In examining AWDF's approach to grant making, the evaluation found strengths in the fact that significant funding was provided to small women's organisations "off the main road"; valuable institutional support was provided to grantees; funding was provided for women's urgent and practical needs; there was flexibility in use of the grants; and AWDF employed a simple application form and reporting format. The challenges, however, included: the absence of multi-year funding for most grantees; limited funding to Francophone countries; and delays in communication.

The second objective of AWDF's MDG3 Project was capacity building which primarily occurred through institutional support grants. In addition to this, however, AWDF organised a number of capacity building events including the Leadership Forum and various Resource Mobilisation workshops. The outcomes of these activities included increased capacity to mobilize resources within African women's organizations. The focus on resource mobilization was clearly a strength in the capacity building programme, in that it responded to a pressing need within African women's organizations. The challenges in AWDF's approach, however, was that other than the

institutional support through grant making, the capacity building was very event driven and there were insufficient opportunities for grantees to learn from each other.

The third objective of the MDG3 Project was to strengthen the African feminist network, which was accomplished by convening the African Feminist Forum in Dakar and supporting national feminist forums in Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda. The outcomes of these activities included and strengthened African feminist movement at regional and national levels. The fourth objective of AWDF's MDG3 Project was to change negative depictions of African women in the media which was accomplished through a film festival with the Nigerian film industry. The evaluation found that this was a very effective very powerful medium to change the narrative about African women given that millions watch Nigerian films every day yet to date the image of women in these movies has been less than positive.

The fifth and final objective of the MDG3 Project was to produce innovative education and knowledge building for educational purposes and advocacy. This was achieved through the publication of critical studies such as the Profile of African Women's Leaders and the Baseline study on Women in Political Participation. While AWDF experienced a number of delays in completing the publications, many of these publications have been used by the women's movement in Africa and globally to strengthen their institutions and conduct advocacy.

Ultimately, the evaluation found that through the MDG3 Fund, AWDF and its partners were able to effect significant changes in the lives of women and gradually shift the manner in which society respects and upholds women's rights. For this reason, this evaluation would ultimately rate AWDF's MDG3 Project as a resounding success. The evaluation also revealed that while there is room for improvement in some areas, on the whole the strategies and approaches used by AWDF to implement the programme can be described as nothing less than "Feminism in Action."

“An evaluation is not a judgment, but a tool with which to learn”
Leonard Frank, Community Development Resources Association, South Africa

1. Introduction

In 2008, the African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF) received a grant of €5 million from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote achievement of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 on women’s empowerment. The grant was provided for a three year period to achieve a number of objectives namely:

- To strengthen women’s quantitative and qualitative representation in political participation at local national and regional levels, and those working to end violence against women through grant making for their work.
- To build the capacity of women’s organisations and networks for long-term sustainability by providing them with skills training and convening them for opportunities to learn and share information.
- To strengthen AWDF’s movement building work with the African Feminist Forum in order to ensure the ongoing conceptual clarity and focus of women’s organisations and women’s rights activists in Africa.
- To use popular culture to challenge negative stereotypical depictions of African women in film and music through engaging key players in the industry to create alternative images.
- To produce a body of knowledge, reference materials and information for wide dissemination for educational and advocacy purposes.

Activities supported by the MDG3 Project were to be limited to 16 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, namely: Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The initial term for the project was from October 2008 to June 2011. However, AWDF requested and received additional funding from the Netherlands Government to continue with the project until December 2011.

Between July and September 2011, AWDF commissioned an independent consultant to conduct an evaluation of its programme under the MDG3 Project. The evaluation consisted of a review of relevant documents on the project, visits to grantees in four countries and meeting with key staff of AWDF. This report contains the findings of the evaluation. It begins with a description of the evaluation framework namely: the value system underlying the review, the objectives, the methodology and the limitations. It then provides a summary of the activities undertaken in the past three years and following this examines financial expenditure under the programme. The main part of the report is the findings chapter in which it provides evidence of outcomes arising

from activities undertaken in the project and assesses the effectiveness of strategies and approaches used by AWDF and to a lesser extent its partners. Based on these findings, recommendations are provided for future action. The report concludes with an assessment of the MDG3 Project against the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

2. The Evaluation Framework

The Values Guiding the Evaluation

Underlying all evaluations is a value system that should be made explicit. As stated:

“At the core of an evaluation are values – e_valu_ation. We measure and critically examine policies, programs, and practices against the values we consider to be important. Evaluation claims time to reflect, to assess and to document which in turn results in the opportunity to celebrate success and re-focus where necessary. In order to seek the information we believe to important, we need to ensure our values are reflected in the evaluation framework.”¹

The values underlying this evaluation are centred on the principles of feminism. AWDF defines itself as a feminist organization and thus the evaluation of its work assesses the extent to which it has lived up to feminist principles. As stated in the African Feminist Charter: “As African feminists our understanding of feminism places patriarchal social relations structures and systems which are embedded in other oppressive and exploitative structures at the centre of our analysis.” Thus the assessment of the impact of the MDG3 Project necessarily implicates the impact of the fund on patriarchal social relations. The Feminist Charter is also clear about the institutional ethics governing feminist organizations such as AWDF. Thus the evaluation not only examines the impact of AWDF’s work on patriarchy but also assesses the extent to which the approaches, strategies and stance of AWDF were in line with the institutional ethics set forth in the African Feminist Charter. In this respect feminism, as articulated in the African Feminist Charter, can be said to provide the lens through which this evaluation was conducted.

Objectives

Keeping the perspective of feminism in mind, this evaluation was a summative one and thus essentially sought to:

- (i) document activities undertaken;
- (ii) assess outcomes arising from the activities undertaken;
- (iii) assess which strategies were most effective; and
- (iv) based on this make recommendations for future programming.

¹ Bobbie Boland (2003): *The Feminist Principle of Evaluation*, Dawn Ontario Disabled Women’s Network.

The purpose of the evaluation was also to provide valuable information to AWDF in preparation of its final project report to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Methodology

The evaluation used a combination of primary and secondary material as data sources. Primary data was collected through one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders namely: AWDF staff, AWDF Board Members and Grantees. 37 Grantees were visited in four countries: Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda.

Secondary material included various reports by AWDF on the activities supported under the MDG3 Fund. These include the MDG3 Project Annual reports, the updates on Monitoring and Evaluation activities for the MDG3 Project and Monitoring visit reports. Additionally, AWDF has undergone a number of organization-wide evaluations which have included a review of some of the initiatives supported by the MDG3 Fund. These evaluations thus provided a rich source of information for this process. These previous evaluations also influenced the sampling of countries and projects to be visited because effort was made to visit countries/projects that were not included in prior reviews. Finally, documentation from grantees was reviewed which included their reports on usage of the funds and other relevant materials.

Limitations

Time is a precious commodity that is scarce when most needed. Travelling within Africa makes time an even rarer commodity given how long it takes to travel between countries and process entry visas. This evaluation could certainly have benefited from more time to hear from a much larger group of grantees. Thus the diversity of voices directly heard was limited. Efforts were made to mitigate these limitations by ensuring that even though not as many countries and grantees were visited, grantee and site visit monitoring reports were carefully reviewed and the findings from these were captured in this report.

3. Summary of Programme Activities

The following presents a summary of programme activities since the inception of the programme in 2008 under the five objectives: grant making, capacity building, feminist forums, popular culture and education and knowledge building. The assessment of these activities is provided later in Section 4.

◆ Grant making

The objective for which grant making was used in this project was: “To strengthen women’s quantitative and qualitative representation in political participation at local, national, and regional levels, and those working to end violence against women.” The target was to fund 150-180

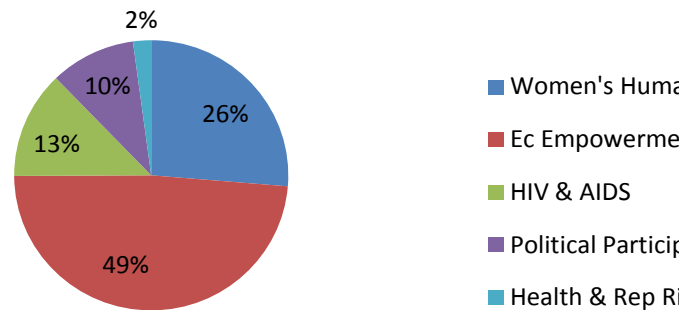
organisations between October 2008 and June 2011. AWDF more than surpassed its target. From October 2008 until June 2011, the organization awarded 232 grants to women’s organizations working in 25 African countries and at the regional level. Even though, AWDF’s MDG3 Project was limited to 16 African countries, the organisation awarded a little over €700 in total to 11 organisations in 9 countries beyond the original 16 for activities on World AIDS day. Apart from this, all other grants in the project were limited to the 16 countries.

The following table shows the number of grants awarded each year.

Grants Awarded per year		
Oct 2008 – June 2009 (9 months)	July 2009- June 2010	July 2010 – June 2011
36	121	75
Total Grants awarded Oct 2008 – June 2011: 232		

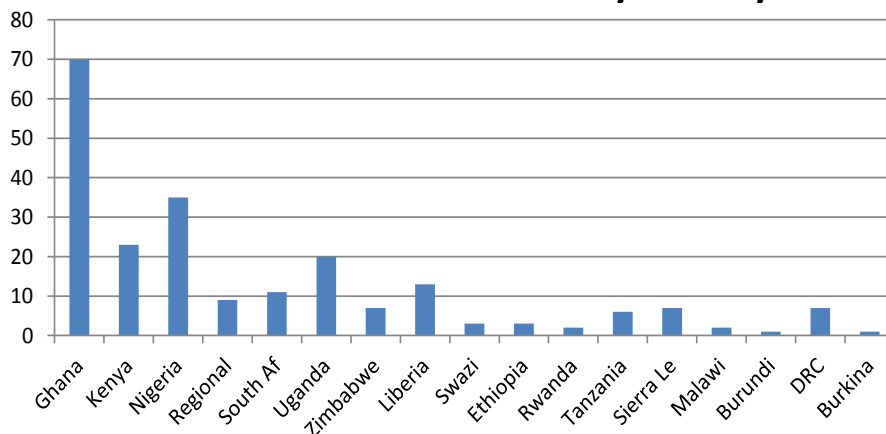
AWDF’s proposal stated that it would award grants for women’s political participation and violence against women. Eventually grants were awarded to organizations working in five out of the six thematic areas under AWDF’s strategic plan. These are women’s human rights, women’s political participation, HIV and AIDS, economic empowerment and health and reproductive rights. Within these thematic areas, the MDG3 Fund was used to benefit women from marginalised groups namely: rural women, Lesbian and Bisexual women, young women, disabled women, widows, trafficked women, commercial sex workers, and women living with HIV and AIDS. The following chart reflects the number of grants awarded in the three years by AWDF’s thematic areas. As the chart indicates, the largest number of grants was awarded within the economic empowerment thematic area. This was influenced by the presence of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) where a large number of grants under \$5,000 were awarded to organizations to work on economic empowerment issues. Women’s human rights received the second largest number of grants which can be accounted for the fact that this included a wide variety of activities ranging from violence against women to trafficking of young girls.

Grants by thematic areas

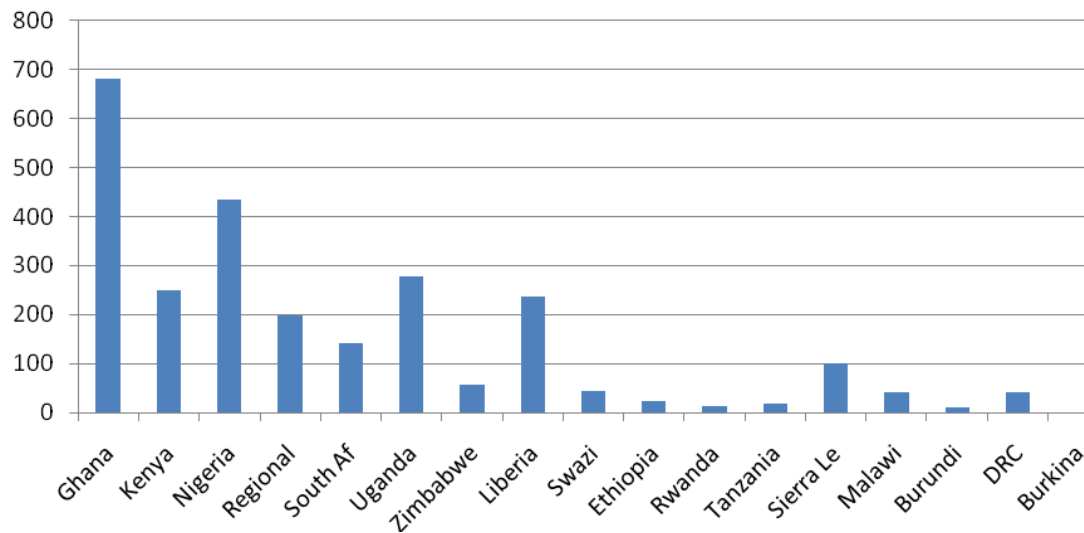


The grants can also be analysed in terms of allocation by country. The chart on the following page reflects the number of grants awarded by country and regionally. It reveals that the largest number of grants were given to organisations in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Liberia. Again, this is not surprising since these are the countries in which the SGP is currently operating. The chart also reveals that few grants were awarded to francophone countries. Out of €2.6 million in total awarded to grantees, only €67,590 (roughly 2.5%) was awarded to organisations in francophone countries, namely Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC. More is said about the challenge with francophone countries later on the report. The chart following this reflects the value of grants awarded by country. This too shows the same pattern as the previous table with the value of grants to Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Liberia being the highest.

No. of Grants awarded by country



Value of Grants awarded by country by 100k €



In terms of the size of the grants awarded, a significant percentage was between \$5,000 and \$25,000 per year with only a small percentage above. In addition, all but a few grants were for one year only. The size and duration of the grants enabled AWDF to reach large number organizations in the three year period. However, as will be discussed later, this had implications on the type of impact that could be achieved. This is because grantees argued that multi-year funding with larger amounts is critical to achieve the kinds of changes in society sought. More is said about this in the findings chapter of the report.

◆ Capacity Building

The second objective for which AWDF received the MDG3 Fund was to build the capacities of women's organisations. This was to build on AWDF's existing capacity building programme which is premised on the understanding that effective organisations are better placed to fulfil their mission and maximize their human and financial resources. A significant part of the capacity building for grantees under AWDF's MDG3 Project was done through grant making in which partners received institutional support to strengthen their organisations depending on their specific needs. These costs were reflected in the grant making budget lines. Separate from grant making, AWDF funded and directly implemented a number of interventions as follows:

† **Skills Building workshops.** AWDF either directly convened or supported the organisation of a number of workshops and meetings to increase the capacity of African women's organisations. They included the following:

- ✱ **The Leadership Forum.** Held in Kampala, Uganda, this meeting brought together Chief Executive Officers, Executive Directors and Board members of regional and sub-

regional women's organisations to discuss and develop a collective strategy for the leadership and management challenges facing women's organisations

✳️**The International Workshops on Resource Mobilization (IWRM).** IWRMs are trainings in which the fundraising capacity of non-profit organisations are built. AWDF contributed to the costs of organising the IWRM in Bangalore in 2009 and supported African women to participate in these trainings. In addition, it supported the establishment of IWRM Africa and sponsored some of its grantees to attend the African regional IWRM in Uganda in 2010. In all AWDF has sponsored 55 grantees to attend these trainings.

✳️**GIMPA Certificate Course in Resource Mobilization.** In collaboration with Resource Alliance, AWDF established a certificate course on resource mobilisation at the Greenhill Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) in Ghana. Lasting 20 days the course enabled participants to understand the main sources of non-profit funding and to know how to conduct donor prospecting and research. Participants were also trained on resource mobilisation techniques such as diaspora fundraising, fundraising events, payroll giving and corporate fundraising.

✳️**Workshop on Resource Mobilisation and Leadership In Women's Organisations, 2010** -- Francophone participants from the DRC attended this workshop which took them through the different strategies for resource mobilisation and issues to consider in leading an organisation.

†**International colloquium on women's empowerment, leadership development, international peace and security.** AWDF contributed to convening the International Colloquium which took place in Monrovia in March 2009. The conference brought together about 3,000 delegates and provided them with an opportunity to learn from each about the best practices in women's empowerment, addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development.

◆ **Movement Building and the African Feminist Forum**

The third objective under the MDG3 Project was to strengthen AWDF's movement building work with the African Feminist Forum in order to ensure the ongoing conceptual clarity and focus of women's organisations and women's rights activists in Africa. This was achieved through the following activities:

†**African Feminist Forum.** The African Feminist Forum is a biennial conference that brings together African feminist activists to deliberate on issues of key concern to the movement. It is essentially a safe and autonomous space for feminists from the continent to discuss issues of concern. In 2010, with support from the MDG3 Project, AWDF convened the African Feminist

Forum in Dakar, Senegal. The theme of the 2010 Forum was Feminist Connections and included discussions on how the feminist movement in Africa can address the dis-connection they were experiencing between the self, the movement, the community and the broader world in which they sought to effect change.

†**National Feminist Fora.** AWDF also supported national Feminist Fora in Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda which were at the forefront of protecting women's rights within their respective countries. For example, the Nigerian Feminist Forum played a leading role in defeating the Indecent Dressing Bill, a proposal that would have statutorily regulated the dressing codes of Nigerian citizens. They also led the protest against a State Senator who sought to marry an underage girl. In Uganda, the Feminist Forum played a leadership role in the efforts to mobilise civil society action against the anti-Homosexuality Bill.

◆ **Using Popular Culture to Challenge Negative Depictions of African Women**

The fourth objective for which AWDF received the MDG3 Fund was to use popular culture to challenge negative stereotypical depictions of African women in film and music through engaging key players in the industry to create alternative images. This was primarily achieved through a film forum described briefly below.

†**Film Forum with the Nigeria Movie Industry on Women and the Dynamics of Representation.** In June 2010, AWDF in collaboration with the Lufodo Academy of Performing Arts in Nigeria held a workshop with the Nigerian Film Industry otherwise known as "Nollywood." The 2 day meeting, which brought together key producers and actresses in Nollywood, women activists and members of academia, raised awareness about how African women are depicted in Nollywood movies and how this reinforces negative stereotypes.

◆ **Knowledge Building and Education**

The fifth and final objective of AWDF's MDG3 Project was to develop innovative education and knowledge building programs for education and advocacy. To achieve this objective, AWDF directly implemented or funded the implementation of the following activities:

†**Women Leading Africa** - The profiles of the Africa Women Leaders, which has been compiled but is yet to be completed, captures the experiences, images and life stories of African Women Leaders and Feminists.

†**Baseline study on Women in Political Participation in 16 African Countries** - AWDF developed 16 Country Profiles which detail the status and emerging trends on women's

human rights in these countries. The objective of the survey was to ensure that AWDF and its grantees design interventions with a good understanding of the context in which they are to be implemented.

†**The Compendium: African Women's Agency** – AWDF compiled into a resource pack for grantees, the key declarations, reports, responses, recommendations, communiqués and initiatives generated from African women's human rights organising and advocacy from 1994 to the present day.

†**Feminist Image Book.** AWDF published the Feminist Images book, 'Voice Power and Soul' in 2009. In the book, 79 African feminists describe their personal evolution as feminists, their activist work and their vision for an African continent.

†**Knowledge sharing about African Feminist Philanthropy.** As part of the MDG3 Project, AWDF has sought to increase understanding around African feminist philanthropy. This occurred through learning and sharing with other grant makers globally and through support and engagement with the African Grant-Makers Network (AGN), a network of African grant makers in which AWDF is a co founder and a current co- chair.

†**Publications.** AWDF developed a number of publications to strengthen the specific skills of women's organisations. They include:

- ✦ The Communications Handbook;
- ✦ The Financial Management Handbook;
- ✦ The Strategic Management Planning Handbook for women's groups;
- ✦ The Resource Mobilisation Handbook;
- ✦ The Feminist Organisational Development tool; and the
- ✦ The Compendium of Human Rights Instruments.

4. Summary of Project Expenditure

AWDF was granted the largest award from the MDG3 Fund with a total of €5 million for the three year period. By end of June 2011, the organisation had spent €4,639,542. The 2009 and 2010 annual audited accounts of AWDF indicate that there were no shortcomings in the organizations internal control systems. This is an indication of sound financial management of the MDG3 Fund by the organisation. In addition, as the variance column in the preceding table reflects, expenditure during the three years was very close to what was budgeted without significant over expenditure or under expenditure other than under capacity building and grant management. The total budget for AWDF's MDG3 Project along with expenditure as of June 30th is provided below:

Cost Area	Budget Items	Activities	Total Budgeted €	Total Expenditure € (as of 6/30/11)	Variance €
Programme Costs	Grant making	Grant making to organizations in 16 African countries and at a regional level	2,557,950	2,629,570	-71,620
	Capacity Building for Grantees and Feminist Forums	Feminist Forums, Skill Building workshops, Feminist ancestors book, grantee publications etc.	1,032,060	863,387	168,673
	Popular Culture, Education and Knowledge Building	Popular culture, publications etc.	437,120	380,702	56,418
Grants Management	Grants management	Monitoring, outreach, evaluation	486,300	335,697	150,603
Operational Costs	Op costs	Contribution to rent, utilities etc.	486,570	430,185	56,385
Total			5,000,000	4,639,542	360,548

5. Findings

This section of the report sets out the major findings of the evaluation with respect to the five objectives which, for purposes of these section, have been grouped into three as follows: (i) grant making, (ii) capacity building and the feminist forums; and (iii) popular culture, innovative education and knowledge building. For each of these areas, the report: begins by documenting some of the major outcomes. Up to this point, the terms ‘outcomes’ and ‘impact’ have been used interchangeably. However, a conscious choice has been made in this findings chapter to focus on outcomes. This is because outcomes may be understood to be observable changes in individuals, groups and organisations that could potentially contribute to the long-term, sustainable improvement in women’s lives. Impact is on the other hand would include long-term, sustainable

changes in the conditions of women that structurally address patriarchy and the conditions that keep women oppressed. AWDF could only contribute indirectly to this. Thus while some observable impacts have been included in the findings, the evaluation primarily captured changes/outcomes which could be directly attributed to AWDF's support under the MDG3 Fund.

The findings chapter of this evaluation not only documents the outcomes but also assess the strategies and approaches used by AWDF to achieve these changes. The yard stick in this assessment is both grantee feedback and the ethics of feminist institutions set forth in the African Feminist Charter. Finally, for each of the programme objectives, the findings chapter provides recommendations based on the lessons learned.

✳ Grant making

As of June 2011, AWDF had spent €2,628,570 in grant making. As noted previously, this included awarding 232 grants to women's organizations in 25 African countries in its key thematic areas: Economic Empowerment, HIV/AIDs, Health and Reproductive Rights, Women's Political Participation and Women's Human Rights. Violence against Women, which AWDF had indicated in its proposal as a key area it wanted to focus on was addressed under Women's Human Rights thematic area.

Outcomes:

Summarizing the totality of change, when it is experienced in the lives of women and girls, in the growth of organizations and in the change in attitudes within a society, is never a simple task. Too often numbers are used in the development industry to determine the value of change. The bigger the number often the more value the change. While quantitative data is important, when your core mission is changing the way society thinks and is organized, as it is for AWDF, numbers tell only half of the story. When you speak to the women who are at the fore-front and the centre of what AWDF is seeking to do, they talk about changes in relationships, changes in confidence and changes in income levels. Thus what is provided in the following summary of grant making outcomes are some numbers, but primarily the essence of the changes experienced from the perspective of the grantees.

Marginalized Women

✓ **More women enjoyed a higher level of income.** Marginalized women who benefited from support provided by AWDF grantees stated they are now enjoying increased incomes. Their incomes were raised when they were provided with credit or assets such as cows, goats, milling machines and sewing machines. The assets were used to generate income while the credit was put

into small businesses which generated sustained income. With more money in their pockets, the women stated that they were able to meet their basic needs around food, clothing and shelter. They were also able to take better care of their children in terms of education and health. Many stated that having an increased income made them more powerful in terms of decision making within the home and in society. Increased incomes also had spill-over effects on the enjoyment of other rights. As one woman stated: “When you have money and you want to join politics and your husband says no, you can still go ahead if you want. But if you don’t have any money, what can you do.” Increased income thus became a foundation for increased political leadership for women. Another woman stated, “If you are facing violence in your home and you have no money, it is very difficult to leave.” Thus, the increased incomes for many women represented the foundation for increased confidence and enjoyment of other rights.

Member of Soroti Women’s Entrepreneurs Association



✓An increased number of young and unemployed women gained vocational and technical skills. A large number of women gained vocational and technical skills after being trained by AWDF grantee organizations. The skills included bread making, bee keeping, batik/tie dye making, bead making and computer technology among others. The skills training at times involved particularly marginalized groups. For example, 60 women from a pygmy tribe, a group that has experienced high levels of discrimination and social exclusion in the DRC, were trained in soap making. Within the MDG3 Project, the extent to which these skills translated into viable businesses for the women varied. Lesson learning from the grantees reveals that when the skills building was coupled with other support then the likelihood of it leading into a viable business or a sustained income was higher. The other support could include high quality business and entrepreneurial training, some seed capital to start the business, and possibly some follow up

coaching or mentoring. Without any of this other support, the chances of turning the skills into a sustained income were lower but not impossible.

✓**Over a 1000² women were equipped with entrepreneurial, business and financial skills.** Usually in conjunction with skills training, over a 1000 women learned the fundamentals of running a business. Again the impact of these training events on actually enabling the women to run successful businesses was dependent on the provision of additional support. For example, the grantee organizations stated that seed capital has been found to be critical given women's limited access to credit facilities in Africa. In addition, when the training was done by entrepreneurs and those in the business, as was done by SPINnet in Ghana, very practical knowledge about marketing and about production could be shared. Furthermore, as SPINnet and Women in Management and Business (WIMBIZ) in Nigeria revealed when the women have a mentor or someone they can call when they have difficulty in the business, this can be critical in ensuring that their businesses succeed. Another factor found to be particularly effective in translating these skills into thriving businesses is enabling the women to think like entrepreneurs. This type of thinking can be best captured by the statement by the Chair of the Soroti Women's Entrepreneurs Association (SWEAR) in Uganda, when she stated: "There is no reason to be poor because there is a market for everything as long as you leave 20 km from Soroti town...take me to the desert and I'll start a business with anything!"

✓**Increased income earning potential of Women living with HIV and AIDs.** Women living positively with HIV reported that as a result of the support they received from AWDF grantee organizations, they are enjoying increased incomes. For example, SWEAR provided women living positively with cows which produced milk which the women are selling. The Lugi Foundation, also in Uganda, provided women living positively with goats and piglets. In Ethiopia, Negem Lela Ken New HIV Positive Women's Organisation provided women living positively with business and entrepreneurship skills training, provided sewing machines and supported the women to develop strong partnerships with micro and small business development agencies. The increased income for the positive women had the same spill-over effects on other rights described earlier. With an increased income, the women could first and foremost stay healthy through a regular nutritious diet and appropriate ante-retroviral treatment. The women stated that they can now also contribute to taking care of their children and participate in decision making in the home. All of this in turn contributes to the reduction in stigma faced by the women.

✓**Increased confidence and empowerment of women living with HIV and AIDS.** For many women, an increased income led to increased confidence and feelings of power. Coupled with

² This number is an estimate based on the grantees which provided information on the number of women they trained. It should be noted that not all grantee organizations provided this information.

income generation programmes, many of the organizations also created support and counselling groups for the women. For example, the Topsy Foundation in South Africa provides support groups for HIV- positive women in Mpumalanga. These became a safe space where women could talk and receive support from each other. In another instance, the media through the radio was used to encourage positive women. For example, the Gender Centre in Ghana had a regular radio programme on HIV and AIDS where they would share information and give advice. The women listeners who called in reported that they were relieved to feel that they were not so alone in what they were facing and that there were those who understood what they were going through.

✓ **Stigma of Women with mental disorders reduced.** In a majority of African countries, mental illness and disability is a source of social stigma and social exclusion. Through support to a number of organisations, the issue of stigma was addressed and confidence of women with mental illnesses increased. For example, Basics Needs International in Ghana formed self help groups for women with mental disorders and conducted a media campaign to address stigma. The women involved in the programme reported that attitudes towards them had changed and their status in the community had improved.

✓ **Confidence of Women who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transgendered Increased (LGBT).** Increasingly on the continent, being LGBT subjects one to extreme discrimination, physical abuse and even death. Women who are LGBT are extremely reluctant to access services that may require them reveal their sexual orientation. Through a grant to the Akiba Uhaki Foundation in Kenya, however, the confidence of LGBT women was improved so that they were able to access appropriate health care.

✓ **Increased access of women to critical health and reproductive services.** Through support provided to a number of organizations, women had increased access to vital health and reproductive service such as family planning, HIV&AIDS counselling and testing and antenatal Care/ management services. For example, between 2009 and 2010, the Nana Yaa Memorial Trust in Ghana was able to provide 1,129 women access to health and reproductive services. This is critical given that the levels of maternal mortality in many African countries are staggering often caused by the limited access of pregnant women to appropriate health care. In Swaziland, the Breast Cancer Network was able to provide holistic counselling and support to women with breast cancer. Lesson learning from grantees revealed that the sustainability of providing these services is increased when the organizations work closely with the Government Health Ministry.

✓ **Vulnerable and marginalised women gained knowledge about sexual and reproductive issues.** Young women in particular stated that they are now able to make informed decisions about their bodies and sexuality because of the relevant information they received from AWDF

grantees. For example, the Centre for Development and Intercultural Communication (CEDIC) in Ghana used drama to educate young women working as porters (otherwise known as kayaye) in the Mallam Atta and Nima Markets on reproductive health and adolescent sexuality. In Uganda, the Mentoring and Empowering Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) ran a 2 -week's social survival skills programme for girls in secondary schools. They also held intergenerational dialogues where younger and older women openly discussed issues around reproductive rights and women's rights generally.

Women's Leadership and Political Participation

Some of the outcomes documented from AWDF grants to organizations working on Women's Leadership and Political Participation include the following:

✓ **More women have the confidence and knowledge to stand for political office.** Women who have been supported by AWDF grantee organizations stated they now have the skills, knowledge and confidence to run for political office. This occurred as result of the training they were provided by grantees. For example, Women's Assistance and Business Association (WABA) in Ghana, Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) in Uganda, Ajungule Community Project (ACP) in Nigeria all trained women on issues such as how to mount an effective campaign, how to fundraise, how to engage with the media and how to garner family support (particularly your husband's). In many instances, the resource people for these trainings were female politicians so the information provided was very practical and hands on. From discussions with some of the women who were trained, a key lesson arising is that while training women to have confidence and knowledge is important, training alone will not automatically translate into a significant increase in the number of women in political leadership positions. For example, according to some of the women in Ajengule community in Lagos, Nigeria who were trained but did not stand for political office, even though they now have confidence they still face two major barriers: financing and acceptance by their political party. Over and over again women cited these as the two main barriers still facing women entrants into politics. As one political aspirant in Lagos stated: "If you don't have support from the political hierarchy, forget it you will not go. I was all ready to stand and then the party asked me to step aside for a man."

✓ **Women were elected or appointed to political offices.** Despite the barriers mentioned above, a number of women contested for political office and won their seats. All of these women were trained by and received support from AWDF grantees. For example in Ghana, 19 women who were trained by WABA were elected to local government positions in 2010. In Nigeria, Moving Minds contributed to the appointment of 2 women as Local Government Chairpersons and 1 as a Deputy Chairperson. Thus while the numbers are still small, grantee organizations were able to show how their work contributed to getting women into political leadership positions.

✓ **Women Parliamentarians connected with critical constituencies within the women's movement.** For many women holding political office, the pressure to meet party demands and respond to the electorate means that their ability to play a leadership role in championing women's rights may be compromised. Experience has shown, however, that when these women work in partnership with women's rights organisations, they discover a powerful support base from which to advocate on women's right issues. Support from the MDG3 Project resulted in this happening. For example, in Malawi, the National Women's Lobby Group, trained 18 women Parliamentarians in leadership skills and linked them with women rights organisations. To date, the National Women's Lobby Group states that the impact of the training and networking is already evident in the level of advocacy by the Parliamentarians who were trained in pushing for the Bills protecting women's rights.

✓ **Increased leadership capacity of women.** In a number of countries, women stated that their leadership capacities have been significantly strengthened. This not only translated into benefits in their lives but also into benefits to the communities in which they live. For example, a number of women strengthened their leadership capacities after the Institute for Social Transformation (IST) in Uganda sponsored them to undergo the Training for Transformation (TFT) programme. One of the participants went on to mobilize her community after a Doctor who had murdered his wife was released on bail. After the community protests, the Doctor was rearrested. The leadership capacity of those already occupying leadership positions was also strengthened. For example, with support from AWDF, Abantu in Ghana was able to convene its biennial conference for women local government councillors in which they learn from each other and gain knowledge on specific issues.

Case study - the story of Rose Akello

Rose Akello from Abim District in Northern Uganda was trained in 2010 as part of the Entrepreneurial and Transformational Leadership Fellowship Program offered by iCON an AWDF grantee. As a result of the leadership training, Rose was able to save some money from her meagre salary of 200,000 Ugandan shillings (\$ 77) to start a poultry and piggery farm. From her poultry farm with over 200 chickens, she is able to sell 5 trays of eggs daily. She has currently started up a piggery farm that currently has 10 pigs. She also opened up bar and sells local brew. Rose together with other 5 other women (all iCON Fellows) started up a saving scheme and encouraged women to join. Currently the scheme has about 15 women who have been able to save 2,200,000 Ugandan shillings (\$ 846). She opened up her individual bank account with DFCU bank. She stated: "it was always my husband who would make the important decisions in our home because my financial contribution was very small, but now I can also contribute to important decisions in the home."

✓Increased networking and advocacy by women’s rights organizations at the regional level.

Grants to regional women’s organizations such as Women in Law in Development in Africa (WILDAF) and Femme Africaine Solidarite (FAS) enabled women’s rights organization to form a collective voice at the sub-regional and regional levels. It also enabled national women’s organizations to hold their governments to account to regional and sub-regional commitments on women’s rights. For example, FAS strengthened women’s organizations to hold their governments through the African Union, to account on their commitments made in the Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality in Africa.³

Violence Against Women’s Human Rights

Some of the outcomes documented from AWDF grants to organizations working on Violence Against Women include the following:

✓The rights of young women and girls protected. Young women and girls are particularly vulnerable to rights violation because of their age and their sex. Through engagement of a number of AWDF grantees, young women and girls were able to enjoy the right to education and the right to be free from violence. For example, BASICs International in Ghana provided after-school programs to children in a fishing community in Chorkor, Accra. This is a highly impoverished community where as stated by the Executive Director of the organization: “if a girl reaches the age of 14 and does not have children, she is a success story.” With support from the AWDF MDG3 Project, BASICs was able to hire a full time coordinator for the girls programme which eventually led to more comprehensive support by the organization to keep girls in school. In the Western Cape of South Africa, young girls who had been trafficked were able to access higher quality, coordinated services from government and NGOs. This was as a result of training for government and NGO conducted by Activists Networking Against the Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers (AnexCDW).

One of young girls attending the after school offered by Basics International, Ghana

³ The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SGEA) was adopted by the African Union Heads of States in 2004. As part of the SGEA, Heads of States and Governments committed themselves to report annually on their progress towards gender equality.



✓**Increased protection of women from violence:** Women victims of domestic violence were able to obtain increased protection as result of support from AWDF grantees. For example, through the grant awarded to Project Alert in Nigeria, women who have suffered violence have a shelter entitled “Sophie’s House”, where they can go if they choose to leave the abusive relationship. Women in Uganda have access to legal services and financial assistance from a Victim’s Fund as a result of the grant provided to FIDA Uganda. The grant to FIDA Uganda also enabled them to conduct advocacy on re-drafting the Bill on Sexual Offences Law to allow for stronger protection of women who are victims of violence.

Lessons about which strategies are most effective

The experiences of grantees revealed that some strategies were more effective than others in the various thematic areas. Many of these lessons are confirmed by the literature. Some of the lessons about some of the most effective strategies are summarized in the table on the subsequent page by thematic area

Emerging Lessons About Effective Strategies by Thematic Area

Thematic Area	More effective (+)	Less Effective (-)
Women’s Economic Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Business training imparts not only skills but teaches participants to think like an entrepreneurs + Business training linked to seed capital so that women have the opportunity to use their newly imparted skills + Business training conducted by entrepreneurs who understand the market and are thus able to provide practical tips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing skills training in hairdressing, tie-dye making without showing women how to have a competitive advantage in a market that is already saturated - Skills training without any seed capital - Income generation projects that do not address the underlying causes of women’s lack of economic empowerment such as ownership of land/property and lack of women’s access to credit.

HIV and AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Holistic support for women who are living positively which integrates economic support, treatment, psycho-social support and policy engagement + using radio to reach out to women, make them feel that they are not alone and encourage them to test for HIV 	-Support for women living positively which does not include their whole family.
Health and Reproductive Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Drama as tool to attract the youth + Inter-generational dialogues on sexual and reproductive rights 	
Women and Political Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Training women who are interested in standing for political offices and using women politicians to do the training + Engagement with political parties to get commitment to support an increased number of women in political positions + Training the women within the electorate to “protect their mandate” by knowing how ensure there is no vote rigging 	-One off training events for women interested in standing for political office
Women’s Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Conscientizing women on feminism and their rights so that they can advocate on their own behalf + Violence against women programmes that combine advocacy with service provision (shelters, legal aid and counselling). 	-One off international meetings without clear results

What worked well in AWDF’s grant making

✓ AWDF reached small women’s organisations “off the main road”. A significant proportion of African women live in rural areas, far “off the main road.” Organisations formed by these women rarely have access to sufficient funding to enable them to achieve their vision. With the MDG3 Fund, however, AWDF was able to fund many such organizations often under the small

grants programme which is designed to reach small, community/rural based grassroots women's groups in selected countries. AWDF's funding of so many of these organizations reflects their recognition that these organisations are more in touch with reality in their communities and thus should be in the lead in addressing patriarchy at this level.

✓Grantee organisations valued AWDF as an African organisation, run by African women and based on feminist principles.

While power dynamics, inherent in any donor/recipient relationship, were present between AWDF and its grantee organisations, grantee organisations consistently said that: "they [AWDF] get us." According to them, AWDF's way of working with grantees reflected a deep understanding of the context for African women that

"You don't want to disgrace yourself in front of AWDF because they are not just giving you money. They are giving you their vision for women."
AWDF Ghana grantee

seemed to come from the fact that the organisation was run and managed by African women themselves. This came out in the manner in which AWDF supported organizations to strengthen their proposals, the technical support they provided during implementation of the projects and the spirit in which the monitoring visits were conducted. In this respect, it was easy to develop a genuine partnership based on sisterhood and solidarity rather than on the transfer of resources. All of this contributed to increased empowerment of the organisations, who often stated that because of the support from AWDF, they felt more capable and strong as an organisation.

✓AWDF supported women to openly discuss and deal with difficult issues. Abortion and homosexuality are examples of issues that society finds difficult to address without significant moralizing and judgment. This has implications for women and their rights to make choices about their bodies and their sexuality. Grantees stated that they valued AWDF's willingness to support the discussion of such difficult issues. For example, MEMPROW's intergenerational dialogues and survival skills trainings deal with the difficult issue of abortion. Similarly, AWDF was one of the few sponsors of Stand Point, an award winning programme on national TV in Ghana in which difficult issues such as incest were discussed.

✓The provision of institutional support was highly valued by grantees. Overwhelmingly, organizations stated that they valued the institutional support provided to them as part of the grants. Indeed, many of the grantees met as part of the evaluation stated that they owed their growth and status as an organization to the institutional support provided by AWDF. This enabled AWDF to achieve one of the main objectives of the MDG3 programme which was to strengthen women's organizations in Africa.

✓ **AWDF funding responsive to women's urgent and practical needs.** Many of the grants awarded, particularly those in the economic empowerment thematic area, supported income generating projects that addressed the grinding poverty faced by women. Addressing these urgent and practical needs of women reflected AWDF's respect for grantees and appreciation for the context in which these organizations operate.

✓ **AWDF funding found to be flexible.** Development processes and the struggle to secure women's rights do not often occur in a linear manner. Grantees stated that unanticipated changes occurred that either delayed implementation or required them to use some of the grant money differently from what was planned. In these instances, when sufficient justification was provided, they stated that AWDF was very understanding and flexible. Grantees stated that they found this to be a major strength in a funder. AWDF was also found to be flexible in terms of the types of items funded, funding a mix of project costs and institutional costs.

✓ **AWDF's grant making was aligned with feminist principles on sexual identity and orientation.** In the context of increased homophobia on the continent, LGBT women represent a particularly vulnerable and marginalized group. Given the high levels of discrimination against them, usually led by powerful politicians and religious groups, many civil society organizations have been reluctant to openly challenge the growing homophobia. By funding organizations such as the Uganda Feminist Forum and Akiba Uhaki, who work with groups of LGBTs, AWDF reflected its commitment to the principle set out in the Feminist Charter that women have freedom of choice and autonomy regarding bodily integrity issues including sexual identity and sexual orientation.

✓ **Grantees found the application form and reporting format simple and easy to use.** Many grantees stated that one of the things they really valued about AWDF was the simple application form and the reporting format. They added that in contrast to the onerous requirements asked by other donors, these were simple and easy to use. As stated by the former Executive Director for Pistseng Trust in South Africa: "Please tell them I love the format for the final report, it helped you reflect, it was very useful!"

✓ **Small strategically provided money was leveraged for bigger impact.** By providing small funding for strategic issues, AWDF funding was leveraged for bigger impact. For example, AWDF provided \$25,000 to Basics International, the organization in Ghana providing after school support to children in Chorkor. Eventually, Basics was able to leverage this funding to obtain a home for girls which was found to be a much more effective way of dealing with the problems faced by girls in the neighbourhood. Nana Yaa Memorial Trust also in Ghana stated that AWDF provided them with a small grant to design a book for pregnant mothers to record their medical history.

This book has now been adopted by the Ministry of Health and is used by pregnant mothers all over Ghana. It has no doubt prevented many maternal mortalities as doctors have ready access to the mothers' medical history at all times.

What did not work so well with AWDF's grant making

✓ **Funding for one year found to be too short to effect long-lasting change.** Majority of the grants awarded were for one year. Overwhelmingly, grantees were unanimous in their feedback when they stated that multi-year grants are more effective. This is because many of the changes they are seeking to implement rarely happens in a one year, they argued. While AWDF's one year grants can serve as seed money to seek for other funding, this is not always guaranteed. Similarly, while they can reapply for subsequent funding, Grantees argued that the time and transactional costs involved in this process could be avoided by providing multi-year grants. AWDF staff stated that they are indeed aware of the need to offer more multi-year grants and plan to do so in the future to the extent the organization receives multi-year funding.

“We are in the business of changing how people think and that takes time.”
Carol Bower, *Chair, AnnexCDW*

✓ **Fewer grants awarded to organizations in francophone countries.** Despite significant efforts, AWDF was not able to award grants to Francophone countries to the same magnitude as the Anglophone countries. Indeed, even though Burkina was one of the 16 countries AWDF targeted for MDG3 Funding, no organization applied for and received funding from this country. A number of factors have been raised as reasons for this challenge including differences between the women's movement in Francophone countries compared to Anglophone countries, different styles of communication in French versus English which gets reflected in the proposals and reports and the limited number of bi-lingual staff within AWDF. Clearly, this is something AWDF is acutely aware of and a number of strategies are already being implemented to address this.

✓ **In some instances, support to income generating projects never went beyond meeting the immediate needs of women.** As noted previously, one of the strengths of AWDF's grant making was its responsiveness to the immediate needs of women. Experience has shown that a woman whose children are hungry and out of school will not be amenable to hearing about political leadership and reproductive rights even though they are all related. Experience has also shown, however, that the most effective programmes combine support to addressing immediate needs as well as support to engaging on rights issues. Unfortunately, a number of grants awarded under the MDG3 Fund never went beyond support to immediate needs. Thus the opportunity was missed to use this funding as an entry point to address rights issues in terms of the structural factors underlying causes of poverty and patriarchy.

✓**Delays experienced in communication and transfer of funds.** Frustrations were experienced both by AWDF and grantees in communication and in the transfer of funds. AWDF would write to grantees and experience significant delays in getting a response and grantees would write to AWDF and experience the same problem. On the grantee side, problems may have been caused by poor internet connectivity and access to internet. On AWDF's side, delays were sometimes caused by the sheer volume of communication received from grantees and interested applicants. Banking procedures in many countries also affected delays in receipt of funds. In the future, AWDF's plans to recruit a full time staff to handle the small grants programme. This may reduce the work load on the existing grants making team and enable faster communication from the organization.

Recommendations for AWDF for future grant making

Much of what is being proposed in AWDF's next Strategic Plan as part of scaling up its grant making would address some of what did not work so well under the MDG3 Fund. These include intensifying outreach activities in low coverage areas (French, North Africa, and Portuguese speaking countries), strengthening small grantees capacity through technical support and providing capacity building platforms for grantees at the national level. In addition to this, AWDF may consider the following two recommendations to strengthen its grant making.

✓**Combine support for immediate needs to engagement on strategic issues.** While this might not be possible for all it grants, as much as possible AWDF should ensure support for immediate needs is eventually leveraged for engagement on rights issues. Two of AWDF's grantees provide interesting models for how this might be done. Moving Minds is an organization in Ekiti State in south west Nigeria. With support from AWDF, Moving Minds provided women with loans to address their immediate needs and organized them women into cooperatives to ensure repayment and to grow their capital. The cooperatives supported by Moving Minds have also been trained on women's rights issues and now serve as activists in their communities. Most recently, they have been campaigning to get more women in political leadership and are advocating for justice in a defilement case that is before the courts. The second organization is Women on Farms, a feminist organization based in Stellenbosch in the Western Cape of South Africa. The organization works with female farm workers through movement building. This includes the provision of political education, the provision of practical information about labour rights and support for campaigning and advocacy. Ultimately, Women on Farms enables the women to meet their immediate needs through fair labour practices in their employment but they also enable the women to be agents of deeper structural change in society through the movement building. All of this is done through a feminist framework.

✓Provide post grant training and accompaniment support to young organizations, particularly those in SGP. Visits to small women’s organizations as part of the evaluation revealed that many of them could have benefited from ongoing support and accompaniment during the life time of the grant. While they all valued the technical support provided during the monitoring visits, it is not realistic to expect that the small grants team in Accra can provide the type of accompaniment needed by these organizations. One option for AWDF to consider is to first bring these young organizations together for a 2-3 day training in country shortly after award of their grants. During this training, participants would be introduced to both content and operational issues. On the content side, participants would be introduced to the concepts of feminism and women’s rights and the best practices and strategies for effecting change in their particular thematic area. This would also be the opportunity to explore how projects addressing immediate needs can be complemented with rights issues. On the operational side, participants will be introduced to AWDF’s reporting and financial accountability framework. Existing grantees may also attend some of these sessions as part of refresher training. A team of local resource persons or specific in country organisations, who have a demonstrated track record of working with women’s grass roots organizations from a feminist perspective would then provide on-going accompaniment to the organizations. They would also support AWDF in monitoring. Under the MDG3 Project, monitoring was extensive where all 232 organizations were visited once and sometimes twice. Given that these organizations were in 15 different countries and were off the “main road” the toll on the few members of the grant making team was enormous. The accompanying resource persons or organisation would not eliminate the need for AWDF to do monitoring altogether, but it would allow the organization to limit its monitoring to a few organizations. Indeed, any plans AWDF has to scale up its grant making portfolio would have to include careful consideration of how to outsource some of the responsibilities that will become increasingly difficult for the current complement of grant making staff to manage on their own.

✳ Capacity Building and the African Feminist Network

As of June 2011, AWDF had expended €863,387 on capacity building and the feminist forum. In its proposal to the Netherlands Government, AWDF stated that it was seeking to: (i) develop a strong African feminist network which could proactively and collectively work towards sustaining the gains women have made in Africa; and (ii) build the capacity of women’s organizations and networks for sustainability by providing them with skills, training and convening them for opportunities to learn and share information. The following section of the reports assesses the extent to which AWDF was able to achieve these objectives, notes what worked well or not with respect to capacity building and provides recommendations for future action.

Outcomes

✓ **African feminist movement strengthened at regional and national levels.** Bringing feminists together for the third African Feminist Forum strengthened the feminist movement on the continent. It provided a safe space for the women to discuss issues of importance, in this case “connections” between the self, community and the movement. The African Feminist Forum also served as a powerful space for ensuring that feminist organisations are “walking the talk.” This was achieved through a process entitled the Great Trial in which organisations were held to account on the principles set out in the Feminist Charter. Holding the African Feminist Forum provided impetus to the development and growth of the Senegalese Feminist Forum which was required to be in place before the country could host the Forum. This is likely to encourage the growth of feminist fora in other francophone countries. Finally, support for the national feminist fora in Senegal, Nigeria and Uganda enabled feminists in these countries to develop a collective platform for engaging with patriarchy.

✓ **Women’s organizations have increased capacity to mobilize resources.** Many of the participants who attended the resource mobilizations workshops stated that their skills and ability to fundraise had increased significantly. Not only did the participants who attended the courses benefit but a number of them, such those from the Gender Centre in Ghana and Project Alert in Nigeria, stated that they conducted ‘step down’ trainings for other staff and partners. Some of the voices of those who attended the training are captured below.

“Before I thought: how could I be begging people for something that they should know is necessary. Now I know I am only a link for the people who have resources and the people who have needs. Since then I have written to so many people. I don’t feel shy any more. I am more aggressive in trying to source for funds.” **Nana Yaa Memorial Trust (Ghana) Mrs. Gloria Okwaning**

“We have to move away from traditional methods to fundraising and mobilize resources from within us. Most of the women here are not educated but have rich local skills and IWRM has challenged us to tap into those skills to mobilize resources for our work.” **Single Mothers Association, (Ghana) Stella Abagre**

“The mixture of the topics presented was very useful and covered all topics that will make me a successful fundraiser. It has also boosted my confidence and given me tips on how to nip potential fundraising problems in the bud.” **FEMNET (Kenya), Roselyn Musa**

“the skills obtained at the workshop has made me more confident in approaching corporate donors, improved my proposal writing and made me more creative in exploring new funding opportunities. I was able to secure funding from First Bank of Nigeria and Exxon Mobil.” **Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND, Nigeria), Wynyfred AchuI**

What worked well with AWDF's strategy for capacity building

✓ **AWDF's focus on resource mobilization clearly responded to a pressing need within African women's organizations.** The feedback from participants who attended the various resource mobilization workshops clearly demonstrated the need within African women's organizations to strengthen their fund raising skills. Both the GIMPA and the IWRM workshops seemed to be particularly effective because they did not only provide the participants with skills but it also raised their confidence in resource mobilization and opened their eyes to the numerous sources of funding around them. The sustainability of AWDF's support was also heightened by the focus on resource mobilization because it left organizations in a much stronger position to look for other funding. Finally, partnering with Resource Alliance and GIMPA was very strategic. This is because Resource Alliance has been running the resource mobilization workshops for a number of years, so enabling African women to benefit from this expertise developed over a period of time was critical. Similarly, GIMPA has developed expertise in providing short courses and can offer certificates, something that is highly valued on the continent.

✓ **Capacity building support through grant making enabled AWDF to respond to the unique capacity constraints of grantees.** As noted previously, a significant part of capacity building occurred through institutional support grants. This was used for different forms of institutional strengthening such as strategic planning, board and staff development, programme evaluations and purchasing office equipment. By including it within the organisation's grants, AWDF enabled the organizations to address their specific needs. In this respect, capacity building through grant making was a largely endogenous process led and owned by the organizations themselves.

What did not work so well

✓ **Capacity building was very event driven.** Apart from grant making institutional strengthening, the rest of the capacity building supported by AWDF was very event driven. Even though these events clearly strengthened participants' skills and knowledge, experience has shown that often the most effective capacity building is process driven and takes place over a period of time.

✓ **Missed opportunities for grantees to learn from each other.** Again, while the capacity building training events enabled peer learning, the opportunities for grantees in the same country or working on same issues to learn from each other was limited. Across the board, grantees expressed a desire for increased learning and sharing with other grantees.

Recommendations

AWDF's new strategic plan includes specific actions to strengthen the organisation's capacity building programme including scaling up the Capacity Building Unit and funding and/or organising capacity building activities at a national level. All of this will contribute significantly to strengthening the organization's approach to capacity building. However, based on experiences with the MDG3 Fund, AWDF may also consider:

✓ **Developing a capacity building strategy.** In order to ensure coherence in its capacity building efforts as well as to enable the organization to reflect on and learn from its activities in this regard, AWDF should consider developing a capacity building strategy. The strategy should first and foremost articulate the organisation's theoretical understanding of capacity building from a feminist perspective. This can also be understood as the organisation's theory of change with respect to capacitating African women's organizations.

✓ **Continue to provide organizational development support but more comprehensively to grantees and in a more structured manner.** AWDF held a number of successful trainings for women's organizations in areas such as leadership and corporate governance. These could be rolled out more comprehensively to grantees using the Feminist Organisational Development tool. Given the large numbers of grantees, these trainings need not be managed directly by AWDF but could be contracted out to organizations such as the West African Civil Society Institute (WACSI) which have demonstrated expertise in strengthening the capacity of African civil society organizations, including women's organizations. The OD support, however, should not be limited to training events but should include some level of ongoing accompaniment and support.

✧ Innovative Education and Knowledge Building

As of June 2011, AWDF had expended €380,702 on popular culture, education and knowledge building. In its proposal to the Dutch Ministry, AWDF stated that it would be seeking to use popular culture to challenge negative stereotypes of African women in film and music through engaging key players in the industry to form alternative images. This section of the report assesses the extent to which AWDF was able to achieve these objectives, notes what worked well or not with respect to innovative education and provides recommendations for future action.

Outcomes

✓ **Critical foundation built to influence the image of women viewed by millions of Africans.** AWDF and Lufodo Academy's film festival with Nollywood represented an important foundation

for influencing the manner in which the industry portrays women. As Abena Busia, the key note speaker of the Film Forum stated, women in Nigerian movies have been characterized as either “saints, whores, nags and witches.”⁴ Yet Nigerian movies are a leading source of entertainment for audience in Africa and the Diaspora, watched by millions every day. By the end of the film forum, participants, many of whom were powerful men and women in this industry, stated they were more conscious and aware of the image of women they were portraying. This awareness can now be built on to support the industry to provide a more balanced and empowering image of African women.

✓**Understanding of African women’s philanthropy increased.** AWDF shared with other donors the value of African women’s philanthropy and how funding can be more responsive to African women’s organizations. This includes the provision of core organizational support for capacity building, fundraising, management, research and learning. It also includes long term funding that is flexible and driven by the needs of grantees. In the near future, it will be critical for AWDF to continue to work closely with other women’s grant making organizations in Africa, such as Wheat Trust, Pitseng Trust and the Urgent Action Fund. This collaboration will minimize competition and strengthen the growth of the collective voice of African women grant makers .

What worked well

✓**Working with the Nigerian film industry a powerful tool for influencing how African’s see women.** The fact that Nigerian movies have such an enormous reach amongst Africans means they are a powerful means of influencing how Africans see themselves. The movies also have a powerful role in affecting norms and values. Given that much of the struggle against patriarchy on the continent is a battle that takes place in the minds of Africans, the decision to work with the movie industry was very strategic and will be critical for changing the narrative about African women.

✓**The website and use of new media was an effective means of reaching out to young African women.** With resources from the MDG3 Fund, AWDF was able to improve its website and link it to new media forms such as the Blog, E-newsletter, face book and twitter. The website is informative and attractive and is clearly being accessed by a large number of women, particularly. Their monitoring system reflects 4000 hits on the website per month.

⁴ Busia, Abena (2010):“ *Women and the Dynamics of Representation – Of Cooking, Cars and Gendered Culture*” Key note address at the AWDF and Lufudo Academy Film Festival.

✓**Critical knowledge about the experiences of women generated to influence action and advocacy.** Through grant making, AWDF worked with a number of organizations to generate critical information on the experiences of women which would be useful in developing effective advocacy strategies. For example, together with Civicus in South Africa, AWDF commissioned research on the Challenges Faced by Women in Civil Society in Africa. In Nigeria, AWDF supported the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND) to compile data on the exact numbers of women in political positions in Nigeria. AWDF publications have even been used within Africa and beyond to support women's rights. For example, the Feminist Image Book: "Voice, Power and Soul" has been used by a Professor in the U.S. as resource material in her Women's Studies course. In addition, the Feminist Charter, whose printing the MDG3 project supported, has been used by feminists in South America to discuss and reflect on what their own feminist principles include.

What did not work so well

✓**The process of producing publications was time consuming resulting in delays in meeting deadlines.** A large part of achieving this objective involved the production of a number of publications such as the Women Leading Africa book, the Feminist Ancestors Coffee Table Book and the Baseline Study of Women in 16 African Countries. While much of this work was out-sourced it ultimately required senior management approval before publication. In many instances, the need for significant rewrites and busy management schedules meant that the work got delayed significantly.

Recommendations

As with grant making and capacity building, AWDF has identified a number of actions to strengthen its innovative education and knowledge building in the 3rd strategic plan. This includes recruitment of a 'Writer in Residence' and a comparative analysis of AWDF's unique grant making approach as a contribution to the discourse on philanthropy in Africa. In addition to these actions, AWDF may also consider the following to strengthen its education and knowledge building.

✓**Document best practices, from a feminist perspective, to addressing specific women's rights issues.** This evaluation revealed that some of AWDF's partners are using very innovative and effective strategies for protecting women's rights. These strategies can easily be defined as best practices from a feminist perspective. AWDF may consider documenting some of these practices, not only to promote learning amongst its partners, but also to develop knowledge within the women's movement about what it means to put African feminism in action.

✓**Generate knowledge about growing fundamentalism within Christianity.** One issue that emerged during this evaluation that could benefit from some reflection by AWDF and its partners

is the growing fundamentalism within Christian Pentecostal Churches. While there is significant diversity within these Churches, many of them have been the site of women’s rights violations and their messages have only sought to retrench patriarchy. To date, the women’s movement has become quite adept at engaging with Muslim fundamentalism, but not as much collective thinking and strategizing has occurred with respect to this fundamentalism within Christianity. In this respect, AWDF may consider including this issue within its knowledge generation agenda.

✧ Assessment against Specific Evaluation Criteria

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation specifically asked that the project is evaluated against criteria sometimes used in evaluations; namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Given the type of societal changes that AWDF was seeking to achieve under the MDG3 project, it is not clear to what extent these criteria are entirely appropriate. Experience has shown they are best applied in assessing projects designed to deliver concrete outputs rather than projects designed to achieve deep rooted societal change. That being said, an attempt has been made to assess the project against these criteria as reflected in the subsequent table.

Criteria	Assessment: <i>Excellent, V.Good, Good, Satisfactory, Poor</i>	Justification
Relevance	Excellent	-demand driven approach to grant making ensured that resources went to addressing the priority needs of women -grants addressed both the practical and strategic gender (women) thus making it very relevant to context of poverty faced by many women.
Efficiency	Good	- a relatively small grants team of 7 staff awarded and managed a large number of grants (232) in 25 countries -Grantee organisations described the AWDF application and reporting procedures as simple and easy to fulfil meaning that grantees did not waste time and effort to get what was at times relatively small amounts of money e.g. < \$5,000
Effectiveness	Good	-Grant making found to effective means of supporting women’s organisations to address women’s leadership and violence against women. -Evidence reveals that capacity building events equipped

		participants with relevant skills -Engagement with Nigerian film industry found to be effective strategy to change negative image of African women in the media
Impact	Very Good	-Evidence of specific outcomes described earlier in this chapter likely to result in long term impact
Sustainability	Very Good	-Support to institutional strengthening enabled many organisations to continue with their efforts after AWDF funding ceased -Many organisations gave examples of AWDF support being leveraged for bigger more long term support.

6. Conclusion

As an external evaluator, one can never understand an organisation as well as those who work in it daily. All one can hope to do is to bring a new and objective set of eyes to see that which is seen and experienced every day. As this report has documented, the outcomes of AWDF’s MDG3 programme include significant changes in the lives of women and gradual shifts in the manner in which society respects and upholds women’s rights. For this reason, this evaluation would ultimately rate AWDF’s MDG3 Project as a resounding success. The evaluation also revealed that while there is room for improvement in some areas, on the whole the strategies and approach used by AWDF to implement the programme can be described as nothing less than “Feminism in Action.”

Annex 1: List of AWDF Board and Staff Interviewed

Organisation	Name	Position
AWDF	Dr. Hilda Tadia	Chair of the Board
AWDF	Bisi Fayemi	Founding Board member and former Executive Director
AWDF	Sarah Mukasa	Director of Programs
AWDF	Gertrude Bibi Annoh - Quarshie	Finance Manager
AWDF	Beatrice Boakye-Yiadom	Grants Manager
AWDF	Rose Buabeng	Programme Officer (Anglophone Africa)
AWDF	Rissi Assani-Alabi	Programme Officer (Francophone Africa)
AWDF	Zeytuna Abdella Azasoo	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
AWDF	Nafi Chinery	Capacity Building Officer
AWDF	Hilda deSouza	Grants Department Programs Assistant
AWDF	Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah	Programme Officer (Fundraising and Communication)
AWDF	Joan Vivian Koomson	Programme Officer (Donor Liaison)

Annex II: List of Grantee Organisations Visited

Country	Organizations Visited
Ghana	<p>Gender Studies and Human Rights Basics International Abantu Women's Assistance and Business Association (WABA) West Africa Civil Society Institute (WASCI) Nana Yaa Memorial Trust SPINnet Textile and Garment Cluster GDA concepts ROZEE Foundation Adokpakorfe Women Farmers Association Global Action for Women's Empowerment (GLOWA)</p>
Uganda	<p>ICON Women and Young People's Leadership Academy Mentoring and Empowering Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) National Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (NACWOLA) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) Institute for Social Transformation (IST) FIDA Resource Alliance Buwama Rural Women's Association Soroti Women's Entrepreneurs Association (SWEAR) The Lugi Foundation</p>
South Africa	<p>World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS) Pitseng Trust Topsy Foundation, South Africa Activist Networking Against the Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers (AnexCDW) Women on Farms The Women's Hope Education and training Trust (Wheat trust)</p>
Nigeria	<p>Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND) Project Alert Alliance for Africa Women in Management and Business (WIMBIZ) Ajengunle Community Project (ACP) Lufodo Academy of Performing Arts Irewolu Women's Society Independent Beekeepers Association of Nigeria (IBAN) Moving Minds Another Chance Women's Academy</p>

Annex III: AWDF MDG3 Project List of Grantee Organisations

Ghana
Abeadze Women's Development Organisation
Pro-Link Organisation
Bronkyempem Nyame ne yen Boafo
Gender Studies & Human Rights
Women Peace Building Movementt
NETRIGHT
Women's Caucus
Netright for Documentary on Gambaga Witches Camp
Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT)
BasicNeeds
Basics International Incorporated
LAWA-Ghana
Advocates for Gender & Development Initiative (AGDI - Ghana) - Hon Akua Dansua
Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG)
WILDAF Ghana
West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)
Abantu for Development, Regional Office for Western Africa (ROWA)
FIDA-Ghana Cyl 20 MDG3
Health Workers Association of the Nation (HEWAN)- Women 's Wing
Centre for Development and Intercultural communication (CEDIC)
Nana Yaa Memorial Trust for Good Qaulity Maternity Services
Seek to Save Foundation (STST)
Women Ventures International
SPINnet Textile and Garment Cluster
Ghana National Association for the Deaf (GNAD)
New Skills for Women
Peace and Unity Co-operative Traders Society Limited
Gbii Abansi Nyornunyo Women Society
Unity Women's Group
Women Service Foundation (WSF)
Adom Women's Oil Processing Group
Dzinpa Women's Oil Processing Group
Chayil Foundation
District association of People with Diasabilities
Besolebo Palm/Kernel Oil Extraction Women Group
Save Widows and Orphans Development Centre
Global Action for Women Empowerment (GLOWA)

Hohoe Women Rice Brokers and Marketers Society
 Korye Women's Oil Processing
 Nyame Bekyere Gari Processing Group
 Hope Association
 Korapuo Women's Group
 Abrodi Women Association
 Gando Women's Group
 Lakendongor Worung Haala Group
 Niafajang Women Association
 Nafa Women's Group
 Friends of Life Association
 Best Life for All (BELFA)
 United We Stand Women Association (UWSWA)
 Women Peace and Security Network-Africa (WIPSEN-Africa)
 Third World Network
 GDA Concepts Limited
 ABANTU for Development, Ghana
 FIDA Ghana
 Gender Violence Survivor Support Network (GVSSN)
 Strength for All Association
 Lihop Organization
 Nana Yaa Memorial Trust for Good Quality Maternity Services
 NETRIGHT
 WIPSEN Africa
 Lakendongor Worung Haala Group
 Adom Women Oil Processing
 Dzinpa Women Oil processing
 Besolebo Palm kernel Oil Extraction Women's Group
 Adokpakorfe Women Farmers Association
 Contemporary African Music Promotions
 Creative Storm
 Foundation for Female Photojournalists (FFP)
 Hawa Yakubu Legacy Fund
 Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC)
 Women's Ventures International
 Women's Assistance and Business Association (WABA)
 ROZEE Foundation

Kenya

Gender Violence Recovery Centre
 Kenya Widows & Orphans
 African Development Assistance
 Busia Community Based Service - BUCOSS
 FEMNET
 Kenya Widows and Orphans Support Programme (KWOSP)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
Coast Women in Development (CWID)
Jumuiya Women Group (JWG)
Kenya Network of Women with AIDS (KENWA)
African Grant Makers Network (AGN)
Kenya Community Fund (Legacy for Wanjiro Kihiro)
Nairobi Peace Initiative – Africa

Nigeria

Another Chance Women Academy
Irewolu Women Society
Women Initiative for development and Environmental Protection - WIDEP
Gender Awareness Trust
Abantu for Development - Nigeria
Alliance for Africa
Gender & Human Values Procreative
The civil Res-CIRRDOC
The International Centre for Reproductive Health & Sexual Rights
Connecting Gender for Development (COGEN)
Project Alert
Gender and Development Action
Moving Minds
Ajegunle Community Project (ACP)
Alliances for Africa
Independent Beekeepers Association of Nigeria (IBAN)
Development Initiative Network
Center for Advancement
Abantu for Development - Nigeria
Heal the Land Initiative in Nigeria
Main frame Productions
Nigeria Gender Budget Network (NGBN)
Coalition of Eastern NGOs (CENGOs)
WOCON
Alliances for Africa
Women in Management and Business (WIMBIZ)
Baobab for Women's Human Rights
Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND)
Disabled People of Kwa- Thema (DPKT)
Women and Children of Hope Foundation (WCH)
Womankind Nigeria
Moving Minds
Child Adolescent and Family Survival Organization - Women's Rights Action Group (CAFSO-WRAG)

Liberia
<p>Angie Brooks International Centre of Excellence Colloquium Secretariat Liberia Ellen Sirleaf Market Fund Zorzor District Women Care Inc. (ZODWOCA) Community Empowerment Programme Angie Brooks International Center Foundation for Women Liberia Women Solidarity Inc. (WOSI) Community Humanitarian Advocacy Organization Inc. (COHADO) New Liberian Women Organisation/Skills Training Centre</p>
Uganda
<p>National Coalition of Women with AIDS Soroti Women Entrepreneur - SWEAR Institute for Social Transformation United Peoples Development Association Fida Uganda FIDA-Uganda Eastern African Sub-regional Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) ISIS WICCE Buwama Rural Women's Association Kibate Save Women Group (KSWG) Kahokya Foundation for Rural Women's Development Association (KAFFORWODA) Arise Women Development Group (AWDG) Alive with Purpose Resource Alliance, Uganda Mentoring and Empowering Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) MEMPROW SAIL Uganda The Lugi Foundation Women for Solidarity Uganda (WSU) Icon Women and Young People's Leadership Academy</p>
Regional
<p>Action Aid Africa Regional Office Femme Afrique Solidarite (FAS) WILDAF – West Africa office FAHAMU – Tajudeen postcard GREFELS</p>
South Africa
<p>World Alliance for Citizen Participation – CIVICUS Pitseng Trust</p>

<p>Activist Networking Against the Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers (AnexCDW) Women on Farms The African Gender Institute (Feminist Africa) The International Network of Women Funds (INWF) Phoenix Child and Family Welfare Society Swahombe Dramatic Ensemble T.O.M. PICTURES (Tell me Sweet Something) Topsy Foundation, South Africa The Women's Hope Education and training Trust (Wheat trust)</p>
Swaziland
<p>SWAPOL Swaziland Breast Cancer Network Swaziland Women in Progress</p>
Malawi
<p>National Women's Lobby Group (NAWOLG) Young Women's Leadership Network (Joyce Banda Foundatiion) Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation</p>
Rwanda
<p>Abasa Empowerment Project Ejo NZANERA NTE asbl</p>
Burundi
<p>Solidarite des Femmes Parlementaires du Burundi (SOFEPA)</p>
Tanzania
<p>Service, Health and Development for People Living Positively with HIV&AIDS (SHDEPHA + Kigoma branch) Tanzania Social Mobilization Against Poverty (TASMAPO) Kigurunyembe Women Group for Alleviation of Poverty (KIWOGA) Poverty Fighters and Development Society of Tanzania (POFIDESO)</p>
Zimbabwe
<p>Fynex Family Support Services Creative Centre for Communication and Development (CCCD) 'The Women's Trust 'Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre Women's Land & Water Right Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe</p>
Sierra Leone
<p>Children Associated with the War (CAW) The 50/50 Group of Sierra Leone 'Konima Development Association German Co-operation-Sierra Leone (GEKO-Sierra Leone) 'Campaign for Good Governance (CGG)</p>
Burkina Faso
<p>Association Wendinyalgde</p>

Other

Zenab for Women in Development – Sudan

Cerle d'Aide Femme - Enfant CAFÉ) – Togo

Association Oujougbo – Togo

Pro-Hope International - The Gambia

AGIR Mozambique – Mozambique

Association pour le Renforcement des Capacites des Communes (ARCC) – Mali

WA Africa – Guinee

Women in Action Against Gender Based Violence - Cameroon

Kagisano Society- Women's Shelter Project – Botswana

Centre fr Recherches et d'Actions pour la Promotion du Leadership Feminin – ONG- Benin

Association des Femmes pour le Developpement de la Cuniculture (AFDC) - Benin

FIDA Cameroon