



Our Vision: An African society where gender equality is achieved and women and girls enjoy all their rights and live in dignity.

#CSW62Africa



“ We are not smallholder farmers,
we are **FARMERS**.

We don't want microfinance,
we want **FINANCING**.

We need to move away from being
relegated to "micro" " issues. ”

*Participant at the FEMNET Pre-CSW62 Regional Strategy Meeting in
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (19-20 February 2018)*

“Localized” Solutions by and for women and Girls living in rural areas in Africa

Preparations for the [62nd Session on the UN Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW62\)](#) to be held in New York from 12th to 23rd March 2018 are on top gears. FEMNET and members of the NGO CSW/Africa organized the Pre-CSW62 Regional Strategy Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from the 19th to the 20th February 2017. **Key outcomes** of the meeting were powerful advocacy messages and recommendations that will be used strategically and continuously to lobby policymakers at the national level, regional as well as globally. Click here to read the [African Women's CSW62 Advocacy Position & Policy Recommendations](#). For more on the Pre-CSW62 Regional Strategy Meeting, click/ read/ view: Summarized [Storify](#); Online twitter conversations [#CSW62Africa](#); View [Photos](#) and Media articles: ['Wanjikus' head to New York for UN event](#); [Call to prioritise rural women's issues at UN conference](#); [Women meeting to kick off in Addis Ababa](#).

Using a user-dedicated listserve (titled ngo-csw-africa) FEMNET continues to send out quick updates/ announcements and coordinate collective and strategic engagement at CSW – to be added on the listserve, send an email request to library@femnet.or.ke.



#CSW62Africa



“ We no longer want 50 chickens as "economic empowerment" hand outs!
We want REAL investment! ”

Participant at the FEMNET Pre-CSW62 Regional Strategy Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (19-20 February 2018)

FEMNET @ 30

We continue to receive your thoughts on what you celebrate about **FEMNET @30**. In case you have not yet submitted your thoughts, please send us responses to the following three questions – what do you **MOST** celebrate as a member of FEMNET? What would you like to see **DIFFERENT** as a member/ partner? Individually, what can you offer to **CONTRIBUTE** to FEMNET’s vision and mission? Please send your responses on email to library@femnet.or.ke and communication@femnet.or.ke – by **7th March 2018**.

Rooting out Sexual Abuses in the Aid industry

February continued to witness rising momentum on the [#MeToo](#) and [#TimesUp](#) movements – with international development organizations being on the spotlight for sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. [86 percent](#) of aid workers report knowing a colleague who has experienced sexual violence in the course of their work.

The bold leadership by Oxfam’s Executive Director stands out and is one to watch keenly in the coming months as it gives hope in not only [admitting there is a problem](#), promising in-depth [independent investigations](#) and [justice](#) to the survivors but also embarking on [review](#) of organizational cultures and practices to [root-out](#) sexual abuses and exploitation in the work place – including [building systems](#) that can help prevent sexual violence before it happens.

Clearly, there is **need for practical individual and collective resolve to eradicate discrimination and abuses of women and girls world over**. The reporting of sexual abuses and violations must be supported by gender-responsive organizational and national level policies and processes. We must continue to dismantle patriarchy as we retrospect and analyze underlying questions of power and inequalities and begin to demand and co-create a just world.

#FreedomIsComing? #FreedomIsHere?

From Zimbabwe (in November 2017) to South Africa and Ethiopia (in February 2018), there is growing citizen-led pressures and demands for political and economic reforms and an end to State corruption, repression of political opposition and human rights abuses.

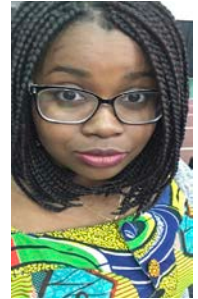
In fact, as opined by Amnesty International's director of Africa research and advocacy, “it is becoming clearer that failing to respect freedoms and fulfill human rights obligations is ultimately self-defeating. This should serve as a wake-up call to all governments that the solution to lasting peace and stability lies in guaranteeing more freedoms, not less. Political shifts mean nothing if they don't result in greater respect for human rights. People who care about freedom and equality are ultimately concerned not with which leader is in power, but whether or not they respect human rights. Only time will tell what these political changes will truly mean for us Africans -- especially for the poor, the young, the marginalized, the repressed and silenced.” >> **Read more on the [new wave of politics going over Africa](#) and [renewal or revolution](#) and [the politics of fear is dying out in Africa](#).**

Young FEMNET Corner!

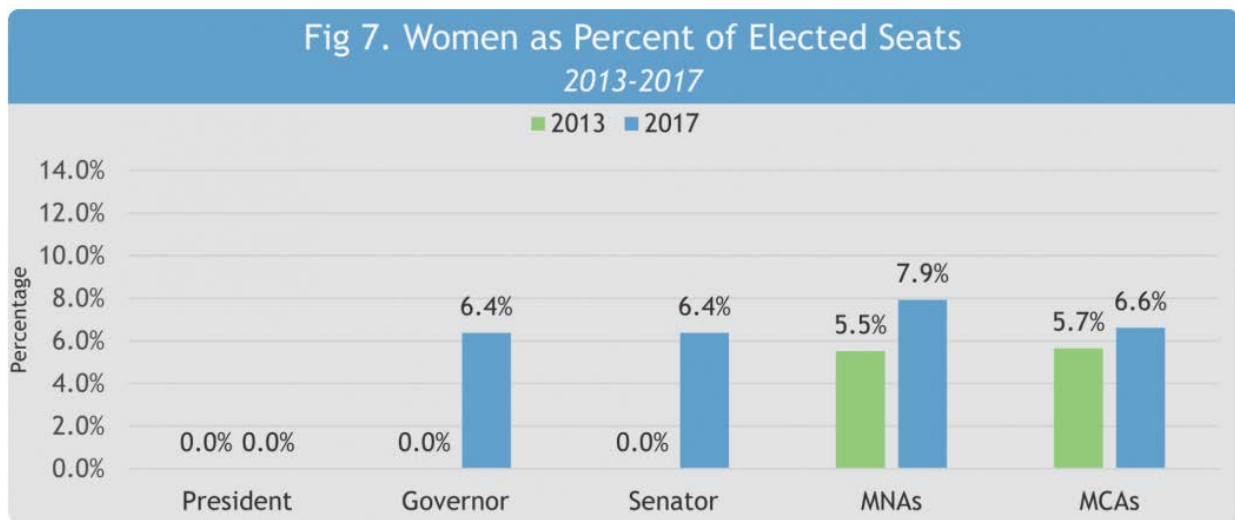
Advancing Gender Equality is Everyone's Agenda

By Akushika Odunton

Imagine a society where men and women are seen as equal, a world where each individual has equal opportunities and the disadvantaged groups are given the same power as men. This is the reality that the feminist ideology seeks to create as it frees both men and women from the bondage of patriarchy. Despite the fact that we may be miles away from creating this completely equal world, significant progress has been made in several countries. As a stand-alone goal on the list of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), achieving gender equality is now a main concern for all countries. This provides a framework to address the issues with gender parity, additionally, governments can now be held accountable to ensure that the rights of women and girls are prioritized.



The issue on the ground however is not with the creation of these laws and obligations but rather with the implementation of the laws. In Kenya for instance, the representation of women in elective positions is rising, albeit slowly. According to a new report published by NDI and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA Kenya), women now hold 172 of the 1,883 elected seats in Kenya, up from 145 after the 2013 elections. Notably, these numbers still fall short of the constitutional two-thirds gender requirement.



Source: <https://www.ndi.org/our-stories/record-number-women-elected-kenya-s-2017-general-elections-women-s-representation>

At a recent consultative workshop on political feminism hosted by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), there was a panel discussion organized to answer the question of whether women representation

in elective positions translates into gender justice. The panel consisted of seasoned women leaders who shared different perspectives and providing vibrant and thought-provoking views that shaped the discussion. On one hand, having women in elective positions can be viewed as a win in the fight against gender inequality because in politics, there is value in numbers. It is common knowledge that majority rules in parliament. In light of this, it is easy to assume that with more women in parliament, more bills that advocate for gender justice are likely to be passed. Additionally, there is solidarity in numbers; women are more likely to speak up and fight for their issues if they see that they have the support of like-minded individuals.

On the other hand, the questioning of the merit and capacity of these women in elective positions cannot be ignored as soldiers in battle must be armed. Women in elective positions need to be armed with knowledge and the feminist ideology to be able to fight effectively for gender justice and to speak on issues that affect women's rights. In the political arena, there are other factors that need to be considered including political party dynamics and the constant trivialization of gender issues in the Kenyan parliament. Women in elective positions want to protect their position when they are in power; hence, they are less likely to speak up on issues of gender justice lest they "antagonize" their male counterparts whose political support they desperately need. Additionally, there are numerous horror stories of women in elective positions facing emotional and physical abuse for refusing to conform to the patriarchal norms which creates a culture of fear, further preventing them from fighting for gender justice. The list of struggles does not end there as these women in elective positions are burdened with a double standard; they have the additional pressure to succeed in effecting change in government even though the odds are stacked against them. This emotional labor puts an undue and unfair amount of stress on these women weakening them internally.

Although there are several issues that need to be addressed in the political realm, the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, affirms national level efforts to advance gender justice in Kenya. The second panel discussion addressed this issue thoroughly and the incredible panelists raised some very interesting points. Firstly, gender equality was an unfinished agenda of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As such, with the spirit of the SDGs engraved with the "leave no one behind" mantra, governments are pushed to be more deliberate with issues affecting women and girls. Important issues such as unpaid care work and the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women are pushed to the forefront and this forces all stakeholders to start having critical political discussions. In Kenya, there are a number of organizations using the SDGs to promote gender justice. An example is GROOTS-Kenya which has developed an SDG gender tracking tool to collect data - which acts as an accountability tool. This community-led initiative will ensure that there is evidence to support all the issues and can be used for the advocacy of women's rights.

As a young woman who grew up in a middle-class family in Ghana, I had a very privileged life. Certain issues such as female genital mutilation, gender-based violence, early child marriages and lack of access to contraceptives were never a part of my reality, however these issues are very

much existent in many parts of my country Ghana – and my continent Africa. As a feminist, I continue to contribute to the fight against gender inequalities by reaching out to my peers and family members and sparking conversations on ways we can be more gender aware. The conclusion drawn at the end of the consultative workshop was without a doubt a clarion call that must be sustained at all times; **the struggle for gender equality must become everyone’s agenda**. All women and men must be united in the fight against patriarchy and in the fight against gender inequality. It is only then that we will eventually create an unbiased, free and fair society. It is only then that women and girls facing harsh realities everyday can have hope for a better future.

Akushika Odunton is currently interning with the Advocacy department at the African Women’s Development & Communications Network, FEMNET

Opportunities

Position Advertised: FEMNET Executive Director (Ref: FNT-ED 2018)

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Deadline: 8th March, 2018

Do you have a genuine passion and commitment to work for the advancement of [#GenderEquality](#) and [#WomensRights](#) and [#GirlsRights](#)? Would you like to join one of the largest and influential pan-African feminist networks in Africa as a Feminist-In-Chief? Interested applicants should send their intent letter accompanied by resume with names and addresses of 3 professional referees (including telephone and e-mail). Applications are by e-mail only, sent to: recruitment@femnet.or.ke. Please indicate the reference on the Subject line for the position you are applying for i.e. *Executive Director – (Ref: FNT-ED 2018)*. [Click this link to Read/ Apply](#)

E-Resources

The Road Towards 2030: How African Women Can Participate in and Influence the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development

FEMNET continues to mobilize and provide leadership for African women to monitor, follow up and advocate for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (SDGs). Following the [Pan-African Women’s Convening on 2030 Agenda](#) held in May 2017, the idea of a [Roadmap towards 2030](#) was conceived by over 190 women’s rights advocates and activists from all the five African sub-regions.



This Road map is not prescriptive, rather it is a range of strategies that are useful and can be adapted by women’s rights organizations across Africa to engage meaningfully in the implementation of Africa Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development processes. The roadmap aims to support WROs to be involved in the implementation of these two development agendas, raise awareness and advocate for the active role of WROs at national, sub-national, regional and global levels. Uniquely, the roadmap can be used for policy influencing and making sure that the gains made and gender equality commitments are upheld. This roadmap provides the link with other documents on the African continent such as Africa Agenda 2063 and the Maputo Protocol. [Download Roadmap here](#)

The 2030 Agenda from a feminist perspective: No meaningful gains without greater accountability for Africa’s women

Read this insightful article that outlines the feminist perspective of the 2030 Agenda and its implementation, highlighting its gains and missed opportunities. It further offers recommendations on how the highlighted limitations can be addressed to advance the achievement of gender equality, women’s and girls’ human rights and empowerment of girls and women in Africa. It draws from the author’s experience of African women’s engagement in various processes, both regionally and globally, leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the follow up mechanisms after adoption.



[Download abstract here](#) (Full article purchasable on the Taylor & Francis Online)

Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

This [report](#) provides a comprehensive and authoritative assessment of progress, gaps and challenges in the implementation of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) from a gender perspective. The report monitors global and regional trends in achieving the SDGs for women and girls based on available data, and provides practical guidance for the implementation of gender-responsive policies and accountability processes. Persistent and significant challenges and barriers including unequal inheritance rights, physical and/or sexual violence, high female genital mutilation (FGM) prevalence rates, unpaid care and domestic work, lower representation of women in parliaments – continue to hinder the realization of the 2030 Agenda promises to put an end to barriers that prevent women and girls from realizing their full potential. This Report [#PromisesToAction](#) identifies 4 Key areas for action:- (1) Harnessing **policy synergies**: the demands for implementation are huge—there are 17 goals and gender equality matters for all of them. Integrated approaches to implementation are pivotal to harnessing these synergies. (2) Improving **gender data**,



statistics and analysis to effectively monitor progress for women and girls across all goals and targets. (3) Prioritizing **gender-responsive investments, policies and programmes** to align action with the principles, values and aspirations of the 2030 Agenda. (4) Strengthening **accountability** through gender-responsive processes and institutions to ensure an integrated approach to implementation, follow-up and review with gender equality at its core. [Download Report here.](#)

We would love to hear from you! Please send your contributions, comments and suggestions to: library@femnet.or.ke and/or communication@femnet.or.ke

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