



**The African Women's
Development and
Communication Network**

**25 YEARS STRONG:
COLLECTIVELY
SHAPING THE AFRICA
WE WANT**

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

**“Our vision is that we the African women
will reclaim, reconstruct, and transform Africa,
on the basis of gender equality,
giving credence to the principles of democracy and human rights;
mobilising and utilising human and other resources;
and take our rightful place in the global arena,
on the basis of equality with other nations,
from now into the future,
in partnership with our men, girls and boys.”**

-A [statement read by FEMNET](#) at the Beijing Conference in 1995

[@femnetprog](#)
[www.femnet.co](#)
[admin@femnet.or.ke](#)
+254725766932

ABBREVIATIONS

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALF	Africa Life Foundation
ARCPD	Africa Regional Committee on Population and Development
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AWC	African Women's Caucus
AWD	African Women's Decade
CPDE	Civil Society Partnership for Development Effectiveness
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSW	Committee on the Status of Women
FCI	Family Care International
FELITAMO	Female Literacy in Angola and Mozambique
FOI	Freedom of Information
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HLF	High Level Forum
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communication Network
FK	Fredskorpset
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
ICGLR	International Conference on Great Lakes Region
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex individuals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MNCH	Maternal, New-born and Child Health
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAP	Pan African Parliament
PAPST	Public Affairs and Parliamentary Support Trust
PMNCH	Partnership for Maternal, New-born and Child Health
RMNCH	Reproductive, Maternal, New-born and Child Health
RFSU	Riksförbundet för Sexuell Upplysning
SRH (R)	Sexual and Reproductive Health (and Rights)
SOAWR	Solidarity for African Women's Rights
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls

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25 Years and Going Strong

Word from the Executive Director

2013 was a landmark year for us as it marked the 25th anniversary of our founding. Over the past 25 years, FEMNET has been able to **inform** and **mobilize** its members and partners of and around key issues of concern to our core agenda of realizing gender equality and the rights and empowerment of women and girls in Africa. This has enabled and facilitated collective **participation** in and **influence** of key decisions, policies and practices from local to global levels.

FEMNET is, as ever committed to improving the economic, social and political status of women and girls as a strategic priority. While it is recognised that the African continent is going through unprecedented transformation, old prejudices against women have tended to narrow women's ability to participate in many of the transformative developments taking place across the continent. There are cases where the very structure of democracy that should guarantee equality and freedom to all, has been used to further marginalise women. The work of FEMNET is to counter this and inform the development of appropriate policy and legislative changes to deal with discrimination against women and girls and to enable them to live lives of dignity, respect and justice.

In 2013, we were able to bring our members from across the continent together for the Extraordinary General Assembly as well as our 6th Programming Conference and General Assembly where our new strategic plan (2014-2018) was adopted and a new board was elected for the next three years.

Other notable landmarks of 2013 included 50 years anniversary of the African Union, 10 years since the adoption of the Maputo Protocol, and the regional review to mark 20 years of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, – all of which we were able to meaningfully participate in.

Notwithstanding the global financial crisis since 2008, and our own institutional difficulties, we have continued to maintain a high level of performance in both programming and projects. Our work as a Network would not have been possible without the support and enriching partnership that we continue to receive from our partners and friends. I extend appreciation to all our partners who partnered with FEMNET in 2013, among them Embassy of Sweden, Oxfam Novib, Oxfam GB, UNDP, UN Women, Urgent Action Fund-Africa, Heinrich Böll Stiftung (HBS), African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), Fredskorpset (FK) exchange programme partners, CARE International, UNFPA, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), KULU Denmark, IBON Foundation and Family Care International (FCI). We expanded our partnership and resource base to include the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU) in a new project working with cultural and religious leaders, the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) to support our advocacy initiatives in Post-2015 at regional and global levels and Fahamu and Ipas Africa Alliance to support SOAWR activities. Notwithstanding our internal prudence, funding continues to be a major challenge for the continuation of some activities.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize the individual and collective efforts of our exceptional staff, members, Board and partners for their contributions to the successes recorded in 2013. We do not take your support for granted. Thank you for your unwavering faith in what we stand for and who we represent. For seeing us through our difficult times, for celebrating with us, and for continuing on this journey with us – we say Thank You!

In Sisterhood and Solidarity,



Dinah Musindarwezo
Executive Director

Moving to Greater Heights

Overview of 2013

Women in Leadership and Governance

FEMNET enhanced the regional and generational diversity and collective strength of her membership; strengthened African women's exchange of ideas on, and collective participation in, relevant sub-regional, regional and global decision making forums; promoted the universal ratification and implementation of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and supported African women in leadership and decision making.

Women's Economic Empowerment and Rights

FEMNET facilitated activities towards the promotion of African women's economic empowerment including increasing access to information and productive resources; ensuring African women's effective participation in changing macroeconomic policy frameworks to be more gender responsive; and contributing meaningfully to the discourse on development cooperation and development effectiveness.

Women's Bodily Integrity & Dignity

FEMNET promoted the realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights, as a prerequisite for empowering women and the generations of young people on whom our future depends. This simply means granting every one the freedom – and the means – to make informed decisions about very basic aspects of one's life – one's sexuality, health, and if, when and with whom to have relationships, marry or have children – without any form of discrimination, coercion or violence. This also implies convenient, affordable access to quality information and services and to comprehensive sexuality education. Fighting sexual and gender based violence, and the power and patriarchy that underlies it was a key focus area for FEMNET in 2013 exemplified in the Justice For Liz Campaign amongst others.

Women, Media, Freedom of Information and ICTs

Communication is essential for collective organizing, transfer of skills and knowledge, movement building and mobilizing a large constituency to speak out on issues affecting women in Africa. FEMNET facilitated processes to strengthen the role of African women in the media, promote their participation in the lobbies for freedom of information and the use of ICTs for the advancement of women's rights and empowerment in Africa.

As a communications network, FEMNET has been instrumental in facilitating the exchange of information on women's human rights and opportunities for women across Africa, through several channels including the African Women's Journal, website, social media sites, the monthly electronic bulletin, listservs and managing a specialized Resource Centre on gender, human rights and development issues.

Institutional Strengthening

FEMNET plays a facilitative and catalytic role and focuses on movement building as a strategy for increasing the number of women organisations working towards the realization of women and girls rights. Enhancing the institutional and organizational capacities of women organizations and networks in Africa to effectively engage in the development processes in the region; and strengthening the sustainability of the Network and its programmes is a key area.

Linking the Local to the Global

Justice For Liz Campaign



FEMNET coordinated the [Justice For Liz Campaign](#) and [initiated a petition](#) calling for justice for the 16 year old who was gang-raped by six men on her way home from her grandfather's funeral in Busia, Kenya. She sustained obstetric fistula and serious psychological and physical injuries including a slipped disk in her back which at that time restricted her to a wheelchair. The petition garnered over 1.8 million signatures from across the globe and the campaign got [coverage in major international media](#) outlets including [Al Jazeera](#), [CNN](#), [BBC](#), [Reuters](#) and also got a lot of attention on social media with [#JusticeForLiz](#) trending on twitter. FEMNET mobilized its members from more than 25 nations across Africa who were in Nairobi at the time to take the demands of justice, dignity and respect [to the streets](#) where the petition was delivered to the office of the Inspector General of Police along with a list of key demands, including short and long term measures to quell the surge of gender-based violence in Kenya. Some money was raised to allow Liz to undergo surgery to correct the injury in her back as well as to repair the fistula she had developed. As of December 2013, fresh investigations had been launched by the Director of Public Prosecutions and the case was referred to the National Committee on Administration of Justice by the Chief Justice. FEMNET continues to stand by Liz and will continue our advocacy efforts until Liz gets the justice she deserves.

57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

Held annually in March in New York, the [CSW](#) is a platform for monitoring the implementation of the [Beijing Platform for Action](#) and other global commitments on the rights of women. It provides diverse opportunities for lobbying governments on key priority areas for gender equality and women's rights and also a platform for knowledge sharing and networking by women's organizations and activists from across the globe.

UNiTE.STOP.ACT.

To End Violence Against Women and Girls

The theme of the [57th Session of the CSW](#) was '**Elimination and Prevention of all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls**'. As co-chair of the NGO CSW-Africa, FEMNET successfully co-organized five sessions of the [African Women's Caucus \(AWC\)](#) during CSW 57 which was attended by about 500 women from Africa and the diaspora. The Caucus is a platform for African women to convene, strategize, articulate and develop their position in relation to the theme of CSW. FEMNET also co-organized [Creative Energies UNiTE](#), a well-attended side event with the Africa UNiTE Campaign to showcase innovative initiatives to address violence.

Involvement of FEMNET members and secretariat staff in official government delegations from Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon and Malawi opened up spaces for enhanced advocacy. As a result, CSO's had a stronger influence on the government negotiators. In addition, the [outcome document](#) for the 57th CSW reflected strong FEMNET input including views gathered through a questionnaire from 50 women's rights organizations and the regional consultative meeting organized by FEMNET.

At the national level, FEMNET joined the Government of Kenya in pre, during and post-CSW activities. These included strategies on the implementation of the outcomes at county level, contributing to the drafting of the national position paper for CSW 58, and the development of the National Policy on Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Kenya.

Engendering the Development Effectiveness Agenda

FEMNET has continued to advocate for the implementation of a gender responsive global mechanism on Aid and Development Effectiveness building on the results achieved in Accra at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-3). FEMNET was elected to coordinate the Feminist group in the unified CSO Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (CPDE) to contribute to projecting women's voice in the development agenda through the implementation of the Busan Outcome Document.

Progress after Busan has remained modest as time was spent in restructuring and planning on the side of CSOs, development partners and governments. Report on progress does not fulfil the stated expected result of having outcomes of HLF-4 entrench development effectiveness

as the measure of commitment to peace, human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability, though structures are being developed to ensure that this happens in the longer term. Despite the noted unimpressive and unbalanced dynamics, the CSO Partnership continued to assert CSOs rightful place in the negotiation table.

Advancing Entrepreneurship

FEMNET cultivated partnership with the Cherie Blair Foundation on [Mentoring Women in Business](#). The programme matches women who are aspiring to set-up and run their own businesses as mentees with women who are experienced businesswomen as mentors. FEMNET has a ceiling to mentor 120 women through this partnership in a period of two years using ICT as a medium for the mentorship and training. FEMNET was able to coordinate the participation of 40 women from Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania who registered and participated in the programme in 2013.

Mobilizing for the Africa We Want & Need

Shaping the Africa We Want: Post-2015 & Agenda 2063



With the expiration of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, the world is mobilizing to shape the next development paradigm that will follow Post-2015. FEMNET has been at the forefront of conversations and convenings at the national, regional and global levels since 2012. FEMNET organized the [Gender Roundtable](#) during the [3rd UN High Level Panel \(HLP\)](#) of eminent people on post-2015 meeting in Monrovia, Liberia. Due to the success of the gender roundtable, the same was requested by the High Level Panel during the 4th HLP meeting in Bali, with FEMNET requested to assist in the process. The final HLP report to the UN Secretary General featured many [recommendations from FEMNET](#) and its constituency. Some of the contents of our advocacy document were used to feed into the [Common Africa Position \(CAP\)](#) as we consolidated the key demands from women's organizations across the region and the globe into an [outcome brief](#) and presented it to HLP Members.

FEMNET coordinated the development of a [matrix of gender targets and indicators](#) which emphasized the importance of gender equality and the rights and empowerment of women and girls as a stand-alone goal as well as a cross-cutting priority across the entire Post-2015 development framework. The framework has been distributed and used widely amongst policy makers and key institutions including the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) African Union, UNDP, UNFPA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), and many other policy makers. The matrix highlighted key gender considerations and non-negotiables including the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care; elimination of all forms of violence, including harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and early, child and forced marriage; and gender parity in decision making processes. As a result contributions by African women were documented and recognised in various decision making forums.

FEMNET continues to mobilize and facilitate around the Post-2015 framework, evidenced further by a regional strategic meeting convened in November 2013 to strengthen African women's advocacy in defining the Africa We Want within the context of the Post-2015 process. The meeting was a follow up to previous consultations and brought together a diverse group of feminist organizations across Africa. The meeting was an opportunity for collectively defining priorities, strengthening the sense of community and developing common strategies for engagement and influencing.

FEMNET further engaged with the [Open Working Group](#) on Sustainable Development Goals by mobilizing African women to participate; making [valuable contributions](#) through [interventions](#) addressed to UN member states; and lobbying.

At the national level, FEMNET also played a key role in mobilizing Kenyan CSOs to engage in the post-2015 development agenda and influence the Kenya position. As we ensure that we capture women's voices in the Post-2015 negotiations at the regional and global level, FEMNET aims to continue shining a spotlight on the process until there is evidence of integration of women's recommendations in the final framework that will be adopted by the UN General Assembly.

Throughout the year FEMNET mobilised African women to engage and influence the [Agenda 2063](#), an agenda which was mandated during the celebration of the 50 years of the African Union. Agenda 2063 aims to articulate an African specific vision, for and by African citizens that will inform Africa's position on global development agendas including the Post-2015 agenda. FEMNET has provided inputs to this process and will continue to do so until the Agenda is adopted in the 2014 AU Summit.



Advocating for the African Women's Protocol



The [AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa](#) popularly known as Maputo Protocol is one of the most progressive instruments on the rights of women and girls. It is an African instrument that has been used from the local to global levels. As a steering committee and founder member of the [Solidarity for African Women Rights \(SOAWR\)](#) coalition, FEMNET continues to advocate for the universal and accelerated ratification and implementation of the Protocol. The ten year anniversary of the Protocol commemorated on July 11, 2013 provided an opportunity for reflection, celebration, strategizing and further lobbying with Member States, AUC and UN agencies.

The [Crossroads drama](#) which brings the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women to life has been reproduced in English, French, Portuguese and Swahili and continues to be strategically disseminated to popularize the provisions enshrined in the Protocol for the advancement of African Women. *Crossroads* is a six-episode drama play that was first produced in 2008 as part of SOAWR's strategy to invoke debates on critical women's rights issues and popularize the Protocol provisions.

As a result of our combined efforts, the status and significance of the Maputo Protocol on questions of women's empowerment and gender equality have been elevated at national, regional and global levels. Many member organisations quote the Protocol in advocacy and standard setting and national legislation has been measured in Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique and other countries against the standards set in the Protocol. This makes the Protocol one of the most frequently referred to standard setting instruments on human rights questions in Africa.

Women in Leadership



As part of FEMNET's work on Women in Leadership and Governance, FEMNET in partnership with UNDP produced a documentary titled ['Women Rising: Political Leadership in Africa'](#), which was launched in May 2013 in the margins of the AU summit and 50 Year Celebrations. The documentary features President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, President Joyce Banda of Malawi and Honorable Rabiaa Nejlaoui, youngest Member of Parliament in Tunisia, among others. These women leaders share their experiences and challenges running for office, their ambitions, their role models and their vision for a future of Africa with equal representation. *Women Rising* recorded over 4,000 views on YouTube in 2013 alone and has been widely screened and disseminated in various and multiple forums in Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Senegal, Tunisia and Iraq amongst others. The film was also screened during the [London Feminist Film Festival](#), and has been used as teaching material on [TED Education](#), an online platform for sharing information and videos.

FEMNET also partnered with Urgent Action Fund-Africa to co-organise a regional conference on women and leadership with the theme ["Powering the African Dream"](#). The conference intended to contribute towards the identification and development of visionary, feminist, transformative and gender sensitive women leaders who are able to engage comfortably in and influence issues of national, regional and international nature. The conference addressed the obstacles to women's integration into leadership, contributed to the process of bringing gender equality issues to the centre of national priorities, and helped to build the expertise of African women leaders to impact on significant socio-political, economic and environmental issues impacting communities and nations.

Addressing Violence

Engaging Men in Addressing Violence

Through getting major influential male opinion leaders on board and working with the whole community through participatory approaches, FEMNET has led to progressive change catalyzed by the Men to Men programme. The programme has reached out to 400, 238 people (including 212,940 women).

FEMNET was able to increase the number of male gender advocates in three countries through campaigns and training. In Tanzania, men contributed to the drafting of a new constitution and undertook awareness raising activities to support women's rights proposals in the new Constitution Review process. In Mali and DRC, the Men to Men focal point organizations have partnered with ACORD to raise awareness on the role of men and promoting women's access to land for agriculture.

After the general elections of March 2013 in Kenya, two change makers were elected as County representative for Kisumu and a Member of Parliament for Garsen. The two leaders have been at the fore in championing for the rights of women working in collaboration with FEMNET. The Kisumu county representative is a member of the national Reproductive, Maternal, New-born and Child Health (RMNCH) steering committee while the MP is a member of the Appointments Committee in the National Assembly of Kenya. They have committed to speaking up to ensure the 2/3 gender rule is adhered to in state appointments.

A [*'Training manual on masculinities and engaging men to end gender based violence'*](#) was produced to contribute to the body of knowledge on male engagement as well as increase interest in working with men outside the target countries including Cameroon and Sierra Leone.

16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence

Every year, FEMNET organizes activities to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence which is observed between 25th November and 10th December. In this period, women's and human rights organizations globally take stock on the status of women's human rights as guaranteed in the Universal Human Rights Declaration of the United Nations. Symbolically the days bring to fore prevailing cases of violence against women, HIV infection and other human rights issues for action. The global theme for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign in 2013 was *"From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!"*. FEMNET marked the campaign in Meru, Kenya with a group of traditional and religious leaders through awareness creation using the media and social networking sites.

Advancing SRHR

Engaging Religious & Traditional Leaders

FEMNET piloted a project to engage religious and cultural leaders in eradicating Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Meru and Tharaka counties of Kenya. After sensitization and capacity building, religious leaders across denominations established a joint committee to champion the elimination of FGM and promote alternative rites of passage. The project set out to achieve modest objectives of getting the religious and traditional leaders to better understand the issues. One year down the line they have moved from the cognitive domain to become allies and join FEMNET and partners in campaigning for the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls in their respective communities.

Organizing around SRHR

FEMNET renewed the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) with Family Care International (FCI) to support country and regional level advocacy for the implementation of the commitments contained in the [Global Strategy on Women's and Children's Health](#).

FEMNET also joined and is chairing a newly formed network called [Reproductive Health Advocacy Network in Africa \(RHANA\)](#) hosted by IPPF. The purpose of the network is to bring together African Organisations working on issues of reproductive health and rights to advocate for sexual and reproductive health and rights at different levels.

FEMNET engaged in the Africa Regional Conference on Population and Development (ARCPD) that was meant to articulate Africa's position on Population and Development Beyond 2014 and preparation for the ICPD+20 review which will be concluded in 2014. Prior to the main conference, FEMNET organized a strategy meeting to enhance capacity and enable African women's civil society organizations to consolidate their demands and formulate key messages. The review also provided the opportunity to identify strategic priorities for population and development on the African continent. It is intended that the outcome of the process will guide the ongoing dialogue to define the ICPD agenda post-2014, and to contribute to the development agenda post-2015 on the continent.

The outcomes of the ARCPD included many of FEMNET's asks, including provisions for access to safe, legal abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, prevention of child marriage, ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAW/G) while some of the serious setbacks included discussions and disagreements over principles of human rights for all and non-discrimination as these were often seen as 'hidden attempts to introduce language on LGBTI'.

Strengthening our Movement

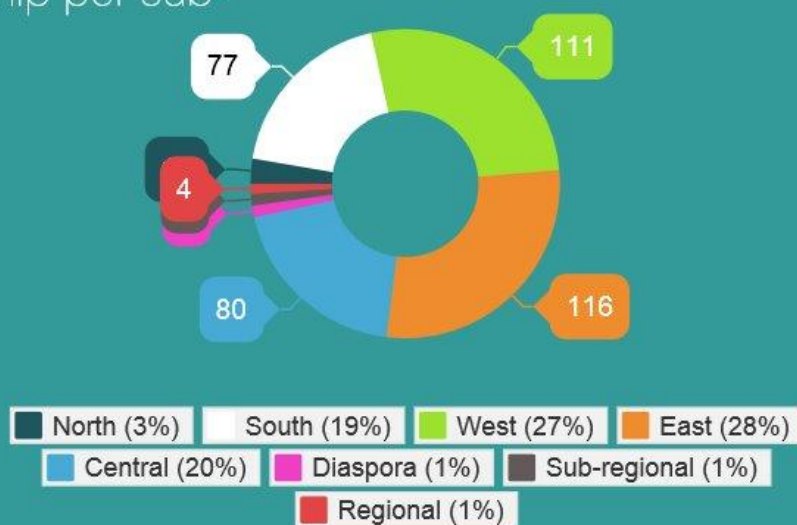
FEMNET 2013 Membership at a Glance

The Movement

FEMNET is a 25 Year Strong Network and Movement due to our membership - over 400 hundred across over 40 African countries and the Diaspora coming together to advance the rights of women and girls.

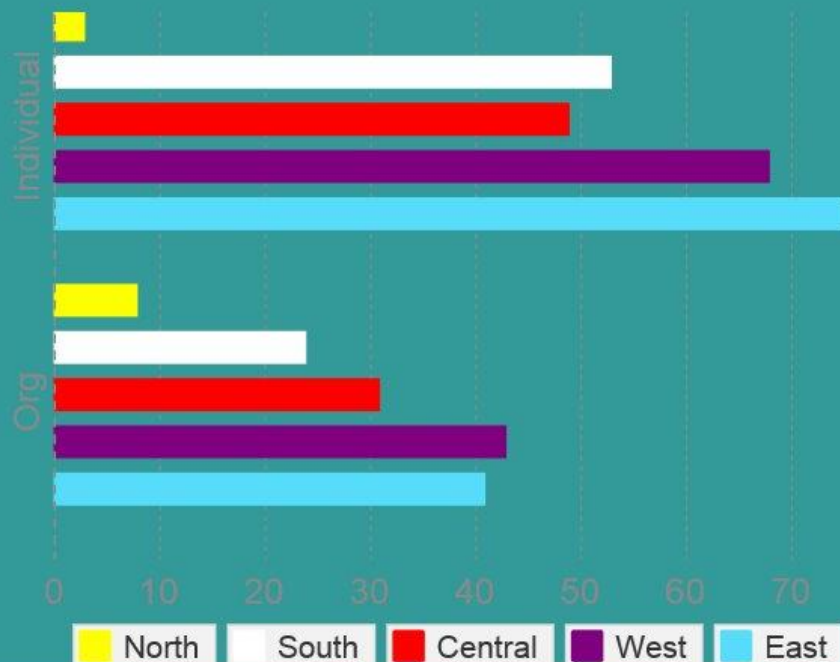


Membership per sub-region



Individual vs. Organizational Membership

We have the most individual members in East Africa whereas our biggest organizational presence is felt in West Africa



From 2012 to 2013

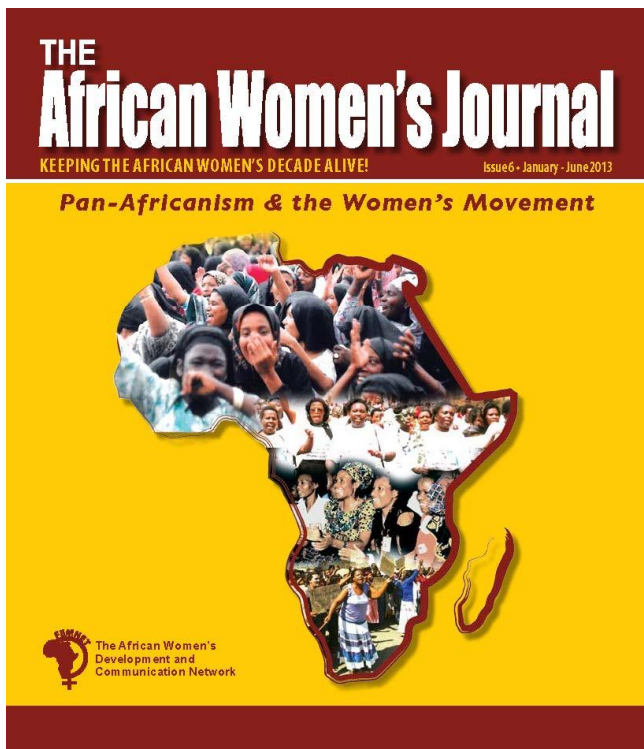
Our Membership has grown from 360 members in 2012 (132 organizations and 228 individuals) to 409 members in 2013 (156 organizations and 253 individuals).



Our Strength lies in the rich diversity of our membership - thematically, religiously, culturally, geographically, linguistically. It's the beauty of this tapestry that we take forward with us as we move from celebrating 25 years to looking forward to many many more!

www.femnet.co
[@FEMNETprog](https://twitter.com/FEMNETprog)
 To become a member, contact admin@femnet.or.ke

Documenting African Women's Journeys



The [African Women's Journal](#) is an analytical publication produced twice a year by FEMNET. The bilingual (English and French) Journal is used as an information sharing resource in commemoration of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020). The Journal continues to provide inspiring articles on the actual situation with regards to diverse issues on women's rights and development. Our publications provided a compass for those seeking ideas on pathways to improved governance, sustainable development and the role of women. The 2013 edition [Pan-Africanism & the Women's Movement](#) took stock of what Pan-Africanism means for the African Women's Movement, and likewise what has the Women's Movement meant for Pan-Africanism. The articles point to the fact that Pan-Africanism and the African Women's movements work hand in hand and

are in fact, inseparable, one cannot move without the other. Both are a necessity for the triumph of the revolution.

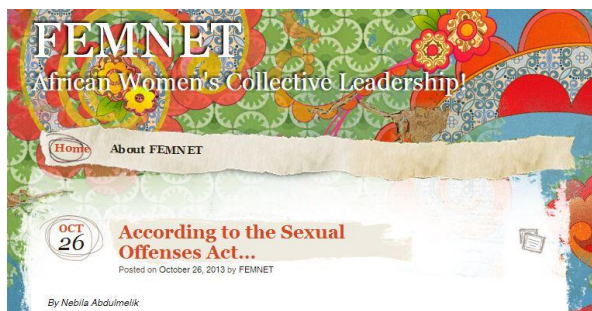
The [Herstory](#) book, which documents the journey of FEMNET from inception, was first published in October 2012. It is hoped that the *Herstory* will also be used to assist others in documenting their own journeys and stories.

Keeping the Network in the Know

FEMNET has consistently produced [monthly electronic bulletins](#) aimed at keeping members abreast with current happenings and opportunities (fellowships, vacancies, events etc). It also includes information on activities that are being undertaken by the Secretariat and FEMNET members on monthly basis.

FEMNET became compliant with 'going green' initiatives to save the environment and produced CD copies of some of her publications. The publications are also [available on our website](#). This has helped reduce the physical weight of the books as well as reduced financial resources that would have otherwise been used for postage to all members and partners across the continent. Soft copies make it easier for greater outreach as members can easily access them online as well as disseminate them to local partners in their countries.

Our Online Presence



We have employed a deliberate strategy to enhance FEMNET's online presence – through our revamped [website](#) and through social media platforms: [Facebook](#), [blog](#), [twitter](#), [youtube](#) and flickr. Our enhanced online presence has enabled us to connect with new partners, a young audience and reach out to policy makers with our key asks. We have used our online platforms to share and exchange viewpoints, information and resources.

Engaging Media

Engagement with the media was immensely enhanced in 2013. FEMNET's Media database was updated and used frequently to share relevant information such as press releases with national, regional and international media houses and professionals. FEMNET was featured on a wide number of [local, national and international media houses](#) in 2013.

FEMNET also employed a different strategy with media personnel in 2013 – rather than invite them for the opening or closing of her convenings, for example we invited media as participants for the duration of FEMNET's Addis Strategy Meeting which deliberated on the various development processes; ICPD, Agenda 2063 and Post 2015. Following that, media informed us that they had a deeper understanding of the issues and felt much more confident in reporting on them. It was an opportunity to live the story and thereby develop passion for what they are reporting on, which is a step ahead of reporting out of a sense of duty.



Nurturing Young Leadership

Resource Centre & Dialogues with Young People

The Gender & Development Resource Centre continues to offer information and reference services on diverse gender and women's rights issues. Many of the publications are obtained from actors in and outside Africa who are involved in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Users of the Centre include staff, university students and lecturers, local NGOs and CBOs. Publications are obtained from actors in and outside Africa that are involved in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Dialogues were held with University students to mark special days on women's rights, including International Women's Day (8th March) and International Day of Democracy (15th September), International Day of Peace (21st September) and Right to Know Day (28th September). This

platform provided an opportunity to intellectually engage in debate and discussion and bring theory to practice. The dialogues are also an opportunity for FEMNET to inspire and be inspired.

FEMNET worked in partnership with university students in Nairobi to raise awareness on the different components of the Maputo Protocol. The event culminated in a call to establish an inter-gender student's dialogue forum on SGBV in institutions of higher learning that will be used to champion women's rights.

FK Exchange of Young Professionals

For four years running FEMNET has hosted and sent fellows under the Fredskorpset (FK) Exchange programme. The programme seeks to facilitate the exchange of personnel (ages 22-35 years) for a period of ten months with an aim to transfer expertise/skills and promote networking in Africa. FEMNET has been partnering with Public Affairs and Parliamentary Support Trust PAPST (PAPST) based in Zimbabwe and Development Research & Social Policy Analysis Centre (DRASPAC) based in Uganda.



"FEMNET has exposed me to numerous opportunities and opened my eyes to a whole new dimension of different development issues at local, regional and global arenas. I have also honed and nurtured my leadership skills as a young African woman and am now ready to bring a change in my own personal and professional spheres."

Natsai Mhsova, FK Fellow (2013/2014)

The exchange programme has enhanced fellows' personal and professional/career growth as well as sharpening their assertiveness, self-confidence and leadership skills. Fellows have also been exposed to a wide range of development issues at regional and global levels e.g. pan-Africanism, leadership and governance, sexual and gender based

violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, media and social media.

Internships – Opportunities for Growth

Three Interns were engaged to support tasks under the Communication programme and the Resource Centre. Throughout the reporting period they were exposed to a variety of communication and information management tasks. The programme has contributed to building a constituency of young leaders who acknowledge and can articulate women's rights issues and advocate for their accomplishment.

"FEMNET has a very good internship programme that aims on giving young professionals a chance to learn and develop their skills outside class, it builds one's self esteem and you come out a better person."



Felister M. Gitonga, Resource Centre Intern

“Being in the communication department has opened my eyes by showing me the real challenges that African women and girls face daily, and how FEMNET intervenes by empowering them in different ways. As an African female, FEMNET amazed me by its ability to bring together women from almost the whole continent in order to empower, develop and train them in diverse issues around women’s rights.”

- Muco Aurore, Communication Intern

Engaging in External Meetings

Engaging in external meetings, workshops and conferences in different countries both regionally and globally has provided FEMNET with opportunities for exposure, networking, sharing and learning. The lessons learned are being used to strengthen the ways of working of FEMNET and its members to ensure they are effective and embody the principles of equity, equality, integrity, inclusivity and non-discrimination that the organisation stands for.



“A great experience and I learnt so much... one experience that has stayed with me is that feminist leadership is transformational and is leading differently with feminist values & ideologies (of equality, inclusion, sisterhood)...it is being fearless, results-oriented and it is a journey!”

– Rachel Kagoiya, Information Manager, FEMNET about the African Women Leaders Initiative hosted by Akina Mama wa Afrika

Housekeeping Matters

Extra- Ordinary General Assembly

One of FEMNET’s greatest challenges in 2013 was the internal governance crisis that rocked the Network and threatened to affect members’ interests in the Network, its reputation, and the smooth operations. But through the commitment and resilience of her dedicated staff, members, and partners, FEMNET was able to emerge out of it stronger. The Extra Ordinary General Assembly (EOGA) held in February 2013 was critical for this and reiterated the importance of working in sisterhood across borders. Additionally, it was an opportunity for FEMNET to live its feminist values of respecting diversity. Moving forward, we guarantee our members and partners, a high level of professionalism and strong leadership to realize our mandate. FEMNET is on track, armed with a series of lessons learned, which will be documented and shared with other national, sub-regional or regional women’s rights organizations that could be experiencing similar governance challenges.

6th Programming Conference

Over 100 individual and organisational members of the Network came together to take part in the Sixth Tri-Annual [Programming Conference](#) with the theme of [“Driving the Development Agenda: Realizing the Future We All Want”](#) in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting also brought together agencies and partners in the movement, policy makers, practitioners and researchers as well as board members and staff of FEMNET. The main objective of the triennial conference was to review and deliberate on the future of the organisation, see if her vision and mission are still

relevant and establish where she should be in the next five years. It was timely because the strategic plan 2011- 2013 was coming to an end and there was need to get the input of members as the new one was being developed. The conference ended with recommitment and resolve by FEMNET members and partners that women and girl's rights - and human rights for all - must be advanced in each of our communities and countries which was articulated in FEMNET's new strategic plan from 2014- 2018.

General Assembly and celebration of FEMNET Silver Jubilee

FEMNET organised her 6th General Assembly in October which culminated with the election of a new Board to steer the Network for the next three years. The new Board committed to supporting the members and the Secretariat.



The new Board members and the constituencies they represent are as follows:

Chairperson	Ms. Emma Kaliya (Malawi)
Treasurer	Ms. Nancy Gitonga (Kenya)
East Africa	Ms. Patricia Munabi Babiiha (Uganda)
Central Africa	Ms. Anatolie Ndayishimiye (Burundi)
West Africa	Ms. Charity Binka (Ghana)
North Africa	Ms. Hassania Chalbi-Drissi (Tunisia)

Systems based Audit

2013 was also spent in auditing the entire system of the Network. The systems based audit contributed guidance and a sense of direction on some of the things that FEMNET needed to learn and unlearn in order to continue playing the role that has been bestowed on her as a critical pan-African, feminist force. The main task was to audit FEMNET at policy and operations levels, identify weaknesses and give recommendations for improvement.

Our long-term partner Sida (now Embassy of Sweden) supported a System-Based Audit of FEMNET – and the auditors noted, among others, that:

FEMNET has an effective organizational structure, a generally sound system of internal controls for operational management, and an efficient administrative Secretariat...staff members are competent and the management team is highly experienced.

Evaluation of Strategic Plan 2011- 2013

FEMNET also carried out an evaluation of the Strategic plan 2011- 2013. One of the observations was that the strategic plan was too broad and packed with activities, but FEMNET still scored highly in implementing them, though at the expense of work/ life balance of staff. The recommendations and lessons learnt from the last strategic plan were used to improve the new Strategic plan 2014-2018.

New Strategic Plan (2014-2018)

The process of developing a new Strategic plan (2014- 2018) started in early 2013 and was finalised at the staff retreat in December 2013. The process was reflexive, consultative and participatory, involving staff, members, partners and board members. The process started with a review of previous Strategic plan to ensure that lessons learned thereof were taken into account in the new plan. For the first time the life span of the strategic plan for the organization was extended to five, rather than three years to give ample time for implementation and evaluation. The plan enabled FEMNET to review her continued relevance and niche, as well as her ways of working and the value addition.

As a Network, communication is essential for collective organizing, transfer of skills and knowledge, movement building and mobilizing a large constituency to speak out on issues affecting women in Africa. FEMNET's niche is catalytic – to inform and mobilize African women to enable them to participate and influence policies and practises effectively

In 2014 – 2018, our key objectives as stipulated in the strategic plan include:-

- Advocate for African women's rights to be recognized in key policy and development frameworks.
- Facilitate FEMNET's member organizations to have improved capacities on organizational development, economic empowerment, policy advocacy and political participation.
- Facilitate women in Africa to be better informed and be able to meaningfully engage in and influence processes at all levels and contribute to the body of knowledge on women's rights issues using cutting edge communication tools.
- Strengthen governance and management for organizational effectiveness.

Moving Forward

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The year presented some challenging moments for FEMNET. Below are some of them and the lessons we have derived from them, which we will plough into our operations in 2014.

- The **backlash of women's rights and gender equality** and the fact that women's rights movement gains seem to be renegotiated in the current policy negotiation forums. The most controversial issues that are being renegotiated include sexual rights and women's rights over their bodies, women's equal right to own and control property, women and the care economy (unpaid care work) and issues around early, child and forced marriage. These are the same issues that were not captured in the MDGs and have left a gap in achieving gender equality. FEMNET is working to highlight these issues as priorities identified by African women in different consultations, including suggested indicators and targets.
- **Shrinking space** for CSO engagement in different policy forums, including AU summits and other policy negotiations spaces. FEMNET organizes pre-meetings where women's rights activists and organizations can strategize and have their capacities built.
- **Reduced funding** for women's rights and gender equality work. Most funding organizations have moved away from having specific programs, departments that cater for women rights and gender equality work to mainstreaming gender across other departments. Unfortunately this approach has led to reduction in funds allocated to facilitate women's rights work and specifically women's rights organization but also it has led to reduced specific attention to the issues affecting women and girls. FEMNET has developed a resource mobilization policy that seeks to diversify the organization's income.
- The lack of engagement of women's rights organizations in the **Access to Information** movement – which is critical to our work and advocacy. In 2014, we will explore this further with partners working in this field.
- While an overall increase in membership was recorded in 2013, especially towards the General Assembly this in itself is not an indicator of high level **engagement of members**. The membership management strategy will be reviewed with a focus on innovative ways of ensuring that members are actively engaged both in programming and in contributing to FEMNET's publications and information sharing.
- Making our building project (**African Women Power Centre**) a dream come true became a challenge considering that not many donors are interested in supporting core support as well as projects of that nature. In addition, immediate resource mobilization needs took priority over the year. In the new strategic plan this will be prioritized.
- Finally, the **institutional governance crisis** which heightened between January and March 2013 affected not only programme implementation but also staff morale. Fortunately, the Extra-Ordinary General Assembly in February 2013 and the 6th General Assembly brought some resolutions that restored confidence re-building amongst staff, members and partners. In addition, the Annual Staff retreat provided a forum for staff to reflect on the year's challenges and successes.
- **Intensive work load**. While we have achieved much, internally, this led to staff burn out due to poor work life balance. The new strategic plan was designed to address this challenge and give staff some time for wellness.

Commemorating 25 Years – Your Voice

FEMNET **raised the bar** for us as activists not to be divided along language divides that we have inherited. FEMNET helped me to **work consciously** at Pan African level with a belief that AFRICA must rise to contend and take its space in the global arena.

-Fatma Alloo, TAMWA, Tanzania

I very much appreciate FEMNET playing a key role in coordinating advocacy so that the **voices of African women are heard in global spaces**. I particularly appreciate your efforts in **disseminating information** and the **professionalism** with which you carry out your work.

-Massan d'Almeida, Réseau des Organisations Féminines d'Afrique Francophone (ROFAF) TOGO

We heartily congratulate FEMNET for attaining this wonderful quarter of a century. May you **grow from strength to strength** as you march on gallantly to address women's issues globally particularly those that affect the African woman. You are indeed **an apex organization, courageously bringing together and providing vital information to all other African women network for the same purpose**. Once more, FEMNET, we at OOSAI, rejoice with you as you celebrate 25 years. Surely, the years ahead, with God on our side, shall be more glorious. Félicité. *Lady Justina Okogun, JP (OOSAI)*

I work as an editor with the Standard newspaper in Nairobi. In 2008, FEMNET supported me to cover the 3rd High Level Forum on Aid effectiveness in Accra, Ghana. The opportunity exposed me to the world of women, civil society and their work; **fighting for equal rights** for women in education, leadership, land rights among other things. Since then, I have been a member and would like to see it grow in leaps and bounds and fulfil its core mission of advancing women's development, equality and other human rights. **Long live FEMNET** - *Linda Bach, Kenya*

FEMNET **kept me informed** of the women's movement. Long live FEMNET
Veronica Lucy, South Sudan

At a time in my life when I needed to reaffirm myself and rebuild my confidence and belief in myself, FEMNET found me. My year as an FK Research Fellow **rebuilt my confidence**, and bought me back to myself. It also allowed me to stretch myself and **grow in ways that I cannot even begin to explain**. My profile will never be the same again. I think that the **opportunities and networks** that the organization avails to young women are something that I do not take for granted. *- Tsitsi Mhlanga, Zimbabwe*

FEMNET has touched me in many ways. I was **exposed to new and innovative ways** of programming for women driven development. I was informed and further capacity developed and the work that I am doing back home is **enriched** because of the interactions I have had in East Africa and elsewhere. - *Dorothy Kadzikano, Zimbabwe*

Bravo guys, **keep the fire burning.** *Ruth Wanyonyi*

Another 25 Years!

As it is often said, promoting women's rights and equal opportunity is not only the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do for social justice and cohesion, political stability, inclusive economic growth, and lasting peace and sustainability. We can safely say that we reached not less than 441, 782 people in 2013 through our programmes and social networking and communication media. These include our members and partners, students, lecturers, friends on Facebook, followers on Twitter, visitors to our website and religious and cultural leaders. With a presence in over 40 countries, our membership remains our greatest asset and backbone. We count on them to continue to work hard with us and to support us in our joint mandate for strong advocacy, programmes and partnership building as we implement the Strategic Plan 2014- 2018. We count on our partners to convey our messages, raise visibility of the impact we are making, and increase support and resources for gender equality and women's empowerment. We look forward to continued partnership and encourage you all to amplify your voices for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

"Alone, we go fast. Together we go far."

Let us walk collectively on this path for freedom, dignity, respect and justice for all.

In Solidarity and Sisterhood.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial Position as of December 31st, 2013 and 2012

ASSETS	2013 Kshs	2013 USD	2012 KShs
Current Assets:			
Receivables	1,779,073	20,687	1,134,506
Investments at Market Value	-	-	10,072,315
Cash and Cash Equivalents	74,208,104	862,885	50,208,375
	<u>75,987,177</u>	<u>883,572</u>	<u>61,415,196</u>
Long Term Assets:			
Property and equipment-net of accumulated depreciation	13,936,070	162,047	14,057,128
Total Assets	<u>89,923,247</u>	<u>1,045,619</u>	<u>75,472,324</u>
LIABILITIES AND RESERVES			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	3,160,616	36,751	5,563,039
Restricted / Deferred income	47,205,203	548,898	34,978,723
	<u>50,365,819</u>	<u>585,649</u>	<u>40,541,762</u>
Reserves			
General reserve	38,982,172	453,281	34,355,306
Capital reserve	575,256	6,689	575,256
	<u>39,557,428</u>	<u>459,970</u>	<u>34,930,562</u>
Total Liabilities and Reserves	<u>89,923,247</u>	<u>1,045,619</u>	<u>75,472,324</u>
SUPPORT AND REVENUES			
Grant received	162,194,699	1,885,985	154,792,368
Finance income	1,707,879	19,859	2,676,162
Other income	857,617	9,972	2,528,882
	164,760,195	1,915,816	159,997,412
		(502,386)	
Less: Restricted/deferred income	(43,205,203))	(30,978,723)
Total Support and Revenue	<u>121,554,992</u>	<u>1,413,430</u>	<u>129,018,689</u>
EXPENSES			
Programme expenses	100,653,395	1,170,388	108,210,632
Establishment expenses	3,411,759	39,672	3,539,780
Administration expenses	12,862,972	149,569	12,487,255
Total expenses	<u>116,928,126</u>	<u>1,359,629</u>	<u>124,237,667</u>
Surplus for the year	4,626,866	53,801	4,781,022
General reserves at beginning of year	34,355,306	399,480	29,574,284
General reserves at end of year	<u>38,982,172</u>	<u>453,281</u>	<u>34,355,306</u>

The financial position of FEMNET has continued to improve with a net assets balance of US\$ 453,281 at 2013 fiscal year end.

FEMNET recorded US\$ 1,885,985 in support and revenue in fiscal year 2013, of which US\$ 502,386 is deferred (restricted) for use in the following periods. The organisation continuing to have very strong expense ratios with programme expenses representing 86% of the total expenses.

The Assets include a 2 acre land in the outskirts of Nairobi.

* The figures have been translated at rate of USD 1 = KSh 86; Euro 1=114.20
(2012: USD 1 = KSh 84; Euro 1 = 111)

* FEMNET's financial statements have been independently audited by accounting firm of Otieno Oboge & Co (Certified Public Accountants) and received an unqualified audit opinion as to their fair presentation in conformity with International Financial reporting Standards and the Kenyan Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Act. A complete set of audited financial statements is available upon request.