



The African Women's
Development and
Communication Network

The Year in Review

2021

Resilience,
Recalibration &
Re-learning:

*Our Shared
Conviction to an Equal
and Just Africa*



Resilience, Recalibration & Re-learning: Our Shared Conviction to an Equal and Just Africa

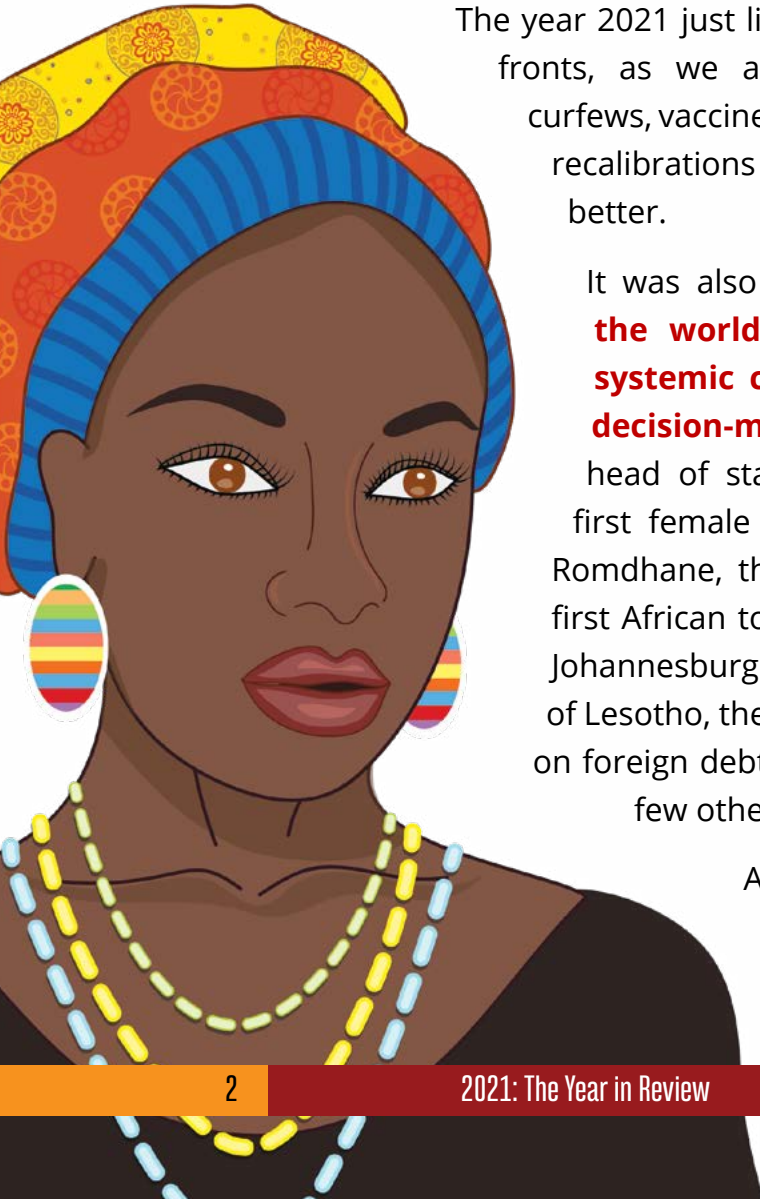
The year 2021 just like 2020 was a difficult year from different fronts, as we all navigated the pandemic's lockdowns, curfews, vaccine inequities, work-from-home dynamics and recalibrations of partial re-openings and building forward better.

It was also the year where **women leaders across the world continued to shatter all manner of systemic ceilings and occupy top leadership and decision-making positions**, including the first female head of state in Tanzania, President Samia Suluhu; first female prime minister in Tunisia, Najla Bouden Romdhane, the first ever chief Justice in Kenya, Chief Justice Martha Koome; the first woman and first African to head the World Trade Organization (WTO), Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala; the first mayor of Johannesburg city in South Africa, Dr Mpho Phalatse, first ever female Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Lesotho, the Reverend Canon Dr. Refiloe Kgabe, first woman appointed as the UN Independent Expert on foreign debt, other international financial obligations and human rights, Prof. Attiya Waris, among a few others.

As we end the year, **our shared conviction to an equal, inclusive, just and sustainable Africa deepens** and we are grateful to the FEMNET Board of Directors, FEMNET

"Women are half the society. You cannot have a revolution without women. You cannot have equality without women. You can't have anything without women."

- Nawal El Saadawi, Egypt



members and partners for consistent and expansive support and commitment. We are honoured to share with you some of the key moments and highlights that shaped our 2021 at the secretariat and our membership- including spaces we engaged, influenced and disrupted.

Re-Kindling Our Pan-African Feminist Spirit



For FEMNET, 2021, was the year we held the tri-annual gathering of our members and partners, bringing together over **185 participants representing 32 countries who joined in-person and on zoom**. The [8th programming conference and general assembly, dubbed, the Pan-African Feminists Retreat](#), was held from the 12th - 14th October 2021, as a brave space to rekindle our pan-African feminist spirit and strategize ways to continue demanding for an inclusive, just, sustainable and transformative society post-COVID-19. With a lot that has been happening with the pandemic - loss of lives, loss of livelihoods, not to mention zoom fatigue, we felt the need

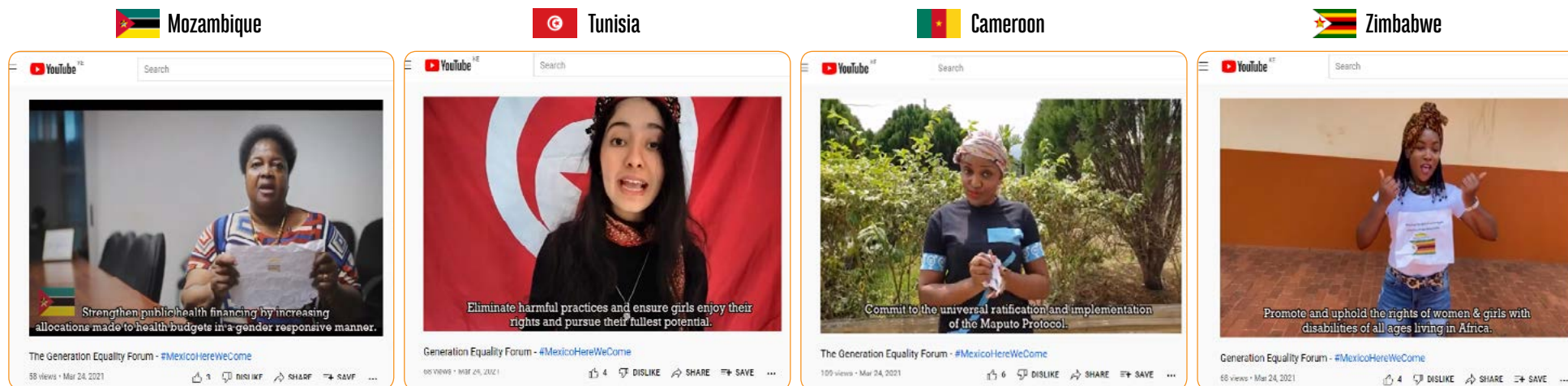
to retreat, to take a moment to breath and exhale! It was also an intersectional space for all those identifying themselves as feminists to reflect and reaffirm our commitment to dismantling patriarchy in all its manifestations in Africa, to remind us of our duty to defend and respect the rights of all women, without qualifications and to protect the legacy of our feminist ancestors who made numerous sacrifices for us to exercise greater autonomy.

Generation Equality Forum Commitments & Accountability, Where Do We Stand as Africa?



From Mexico to Paris

FEMNET members joined the first Generation Equality Forum virtual platform from 29th to 31st March 2021, leveraging on youtube and social media platforms to share their key asks and expectations of the Forum. ***Click here to watch [#MexicoHereWeCome](#) and [here and here.](#)***



The second Generation Equality Forum was held in Paris, France from 30th June to 2nd July 2021. FEMNET **mobilized and facilitated 22 women’s rights and feminist organizations in 14 countries** across Africa (Kenya, Tunisia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Senegal, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mali, Ethiopia, DRC and Mauritius) to **convene watch parties of the GEF opening ceremony**. Over **1,300 people**, including young girls and adolescents under 18, youth, young women under 25, as well as boys, young men and men, those with disabilities, LGBTQI+, and young mothers participated in these watch parties, enabling them access to the opening and other sessions of the GEF. This resulted in the participants noting the commitments being made by their governments and other leaders. It also presented an opportunity to collectively reflect on the actions that their governments were committing and to strategize on how to follow-through and connect with their advocacy and policy influencing actions at national level.

[Click here to download and read the full report, FEMNET @ GEF Paris](#)

According to the UN Women, the [Paris forum culminated in \\$40 billion worth of committed investments](#); with governments and public sector institutions committing USD 21 billion, the private sector USD 13 billion, philanthropy USD 4.5 billion, UN entities, international and regional organizations USD 1.3 billion. In addition to these financial pledges, many institutions made policy and program commitments, including 440 civil society organizations and 94 youth-led organizations. [Click here to read Reflections: Did the Generation Equality Forum Deliver for Africa? Nope!](#) by FEMNET’s Head of Programmes.

Throughout the GEF Mexico and Paris forums, FEMNET sought to firstly **mobilize African women and girls at local and national level to meaningfully engage and influence the GEF processes** and secondly to equip women's rights organizations with policy advocacy capacities and information to **demand action from their leaders on the Action Coalition priorities and commitments made.**

“ This week, I relived the experience of 1995, when I was a young women's rights activist at the Beijing Conference. The COVID-19 context and other barriers are now an even greater inspiration for innovation, solidarity and inclusion. I am grateful for the commitments made this week. Now it's time to invest in girls and young women even more – for resources to reach rural and marginalized communities, for technology for public good and available to all, and for Member States' greater accountability to human rights of women and girls.”

– Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda

“ Stop talking, start funding.
It is possible. It is our audacity to disrupt.”

– Memory Kachambwa, FEMNET

“ We want a world in which women don't use all their time towards unpaid care work. There is a role for policy to address this. Inequalities impacting women are rooted in traditional, religious norms, standards, and practices. It is up to the government to right these, on the basis of the Maputo Protocol. We must address the unequal domestic burden, the unequal economic power of women. We must have greater access to resources and public services.”

– Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson



“ Increased funding for women/youth led organizations especially at the grassroots will ensure that the funds reach the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of women and girls and that the voices and needs of women and girls are at the core of programming for them. This is an important priority because gains made towards achieving gender equality have been rolled back due to the Covid-19 pandemic with women and girls bearing the brunt as existing inequalities deepen.




 with the support of

Listen to our Engaged youth from the region and
 to the representative of the
 Arab region in the CISAG

July 1st Time : 4pm - 5pm Tunis Time



Hafidha Chekir
Women rights activist



Hafidh Ali
Member of Gender
Innovation Agora



Samia Melki
President of Kadirat



Fatma Khafagy
Member of the CSAG



Amani Arouri
member of the Beijing+ 25
Youth Task Force



The GEF launched the [Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality](#) co-created by the **six Action Coalitions to deliver concrete and transformative change for women and girls** around the world in the coming five years. The Action Coalitions focus on six areas critical to realizing gender equality: 1. ending gender-based violence 2. advancing economic justice and rights 3. agitating for women's bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights 4. strengthening feminist action for climate justice 5. technology and innovation for gender equality, and 6. feminist movements and leadership. In addition to these six themes, a compact on women, peace and security and humanitarian action, was launched.

A bold re-think of the care economy is fundamental to building a feminist, sustainable, inclusive and caring future. FEMNET together with the Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition co-leaders (CARE International, Women's Working Group on Financing for Development, ITUC, Feminist Task Force, Equidad and Manki Maroua) launched the [Care Manifesto: Towards a Caring Economy](#), as envisioned by women from Latin America, Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

FEMNET joined WEDO, PACJA and Women's Working Group on Financing for Development, to launch a [feminist agenda for People and Planet](#), with key principles and recommendations for a global feminist economic justice agenda.

The Power of Telling Untold Impactful Stories: The 2021 African Journalists Gender Equality Awards



During the Pan-African Feminists Retreat, and for the first time, **FEMNET awarded 17 journalists who have been leading in advancing gender equality and transforming the world towards a more just, equal, and healthy planet.** Leveraging on their power to tell untold and impactful stories on women's rights, FEMNET continues to work closely with journalists across the continent to inform and influence action from the public and policymakers but also to spark much-needed conversations that raise consciousness and challenge deeply entrenched patriarchal notions and ideologies in the society. For the 2021 African Journalists Gender Equality Awards, a total of 389 applications were received from 18 African countries.

Bodily Autonomy and Integrity Policy Conversations



FEMNET intensified her work on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) with her partners in 6 countries (Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia). FEMNET engaged in key policy influencing spaces including CSW65, CPD54, 3rd AU Girls Summit and ICASA 2021. We continued to amplify our SRHR work using digital tools with the hashtag **#SRHRDialogues** which

allowed us to reach diverse audiences, policymakers, and policy spaces regardless of the challenges and restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

FEMNET partners and members have increasingly taken actions to engage policymakers in advocacy planning and regular advocacy plan reviews for SRHR policy change as well as ensuring that girls, young women and women in all their diversity lead in shaping narratives and advocacy on bodily autonomy. FEMNET worked collaboratively with her members to influence the domestication, implementation, and reporting on existing regional and global SRHR policies and commitments on access to safe abortion, ending child marriage and FGM.

FEMNET has been partnering with the **UNFPA Spotlight Initiative**, working with FGM consortiums and its network partners in 5 African countries (Egypt, Kenya, Somalia, Guinea and Niger) to promote girl activism, solidarity actions, and promoting online campaigns towards ending FGM, Harmful practices, and early child marriages.

FEMNET launched the **We Lead partnership**. Through the project, FEMNET enhances the capacities of her members to claim a more prominent role in broader SRH-R and human rights advocacy spaces, and develop and pursue their own advocacy agenda. The We Lead Program aims to ensure rightsholder groups including LBTIQ are included in gender-responsive laws, policies, societal norms and practices in Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Mozambique, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon and Jordan.

“ *The We Lead Program aims to ensure rightsholder groups including LBTIQ are included in gender-responsive laws, policies, societal norms and practices...* ”


Teenage Girls & Young Women Leading Africa



FEMNET continues to position African teenage girls to engage and influence the regional and international spaces. Throughout the year, we leveraged our connection and relationships with other actors in the sector to advance access to and amplify teenage girls' voices. Some of the spaces girls occupied include Policy Dialogue organized by African Union and UN Women, the Continental Mental Health Campaign launched by UN Women, UNICEF, and IPPF, and the consultation with girls, girl-led organizations, and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls to inform the drafting of the report on girls' activism to be presented to the 50th session of the Human Rights Council in June 2022.

FEMNET partnered with Echidna Giving and women's rights organization and girls' and young women-led organizations and networks to influence and advocate for inclusive access to girls' education including Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) using a feminist approach. In November 2021, FEMNET convened 20 education specialists ranging from tutors, to TVET administrators and government officers in charge of the TVET sector from both Kenya and Uganda for the project inception meeting in Homabay, Kenya.

In November 16th -18th 2021, FEMNET led in mobilizing and supporting 9 African Girls and Young Women (GYW) from Mozambique, Zambia, Kenya, Liberia and Nigeria to attend the **3rd African Girls' Summit in Niamey, Niger**. The girls were part of the Technical Working Group that also drafted the outcome statement document. The 3rd African Girls' Summit was a premier platform that convened stakeholders across Africa on girls' rights and wellbeing. The summit provided an opportunity to mobilize action around the 2021 African Union theme of the year on **"Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want"** resulting in the interrogation of the nexus between culture, human rights and accountability in efforts to eliminate harmful practices in Africa.



"My Name is Lubwama Percy from Uganda and the Africa I Want is one with gender equality strengthening the role of African women in all spheres of life, eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women with increased sustained influence of girls and young women in decision making

#SHELEADSAFRICA



" I want an Africa that is safe for us "the young girls" An Africa where young girls are encouraged to voice out their opinions, an Africa where young girls can acquire education without being not molested by the male teachers"

HABIBA
Sierra Leone

#SHELEADSAFRICA

Click on the links below to check out the She Leads videos and listen to the voices of teenage girls and young women in Africa.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkHlFW3wZx8>

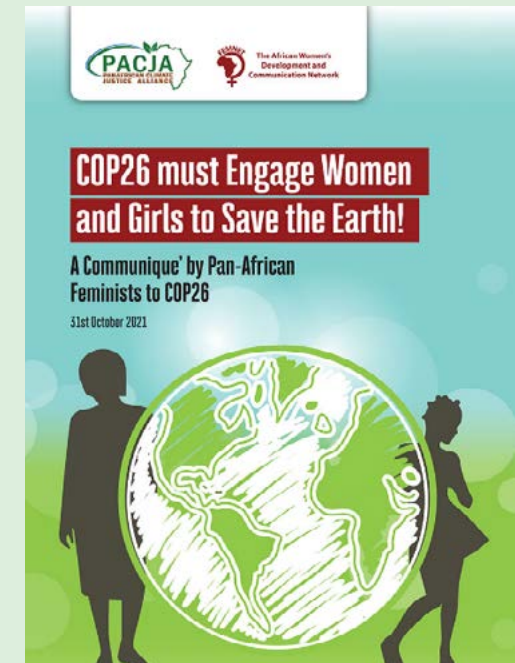
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UTrvzvGmSU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNnK6ndcu5c>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdAxHx6jP3k>

FEMNET @ COP26: #FeministsWantSystemChange

FEMNET joined feminist climate activists at the 26th UN Annual Conference on Climate Justice (COP26) in Glasgow to influence decisions with interest to Africa and women. FEMNET worked closely with PACJA to advance and protect African narrative and interests while working with Gender and Women constituency to advance rights and interests of women and girls in all their diversities in Africa and across the world. [Click here to download and read the Communique' by Pan-African Feminists to COP26.](#)



Ahead of COP26, FEMNET, as a key partner of the AACJ (African Activists for Climate Justice) consortium was part of the coordination team for the launch of one of the largest climate justice projects in Africa. The AACJ consortium is a five-year (2021-2025) strategic partnership between PACJA, (Pan- African Climate Justice Alliance), Oxfam Novib, Natural Justice, African Youth Commission and FEMNET and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. The project will be implemented in 8 countries: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia and South Africa as well as having Africa regional, and international programme components.

Transformative Leadership: Women Must Lead!



In 2021, leveraging on the **#WomenMustLead** campaign, and the WPP (Women in Political Participation) consortium, FEMNET mobilized over 600 women leaders, including young women and women with disability, through dialogues and political leadership academies to re-skill and re-tool women aspirants with requisite knowledge for effective engagement in politics. Through targeted media engagement, #WomenMustLead campaign gained traction in Kenya, DRC and Tanzania, sparking conversations and resolutions by the citizenry to vote and support women aspirants as equal leaders in the society.

enhance knowledge on women's political participation and leadership. In November, FEMNET collaborated with the East Africa Legislative Assembly (EALA) in Arusha to create opportunities for partnership, shared learning, meaningful transformative participation among women leaders while fostering regional political integration in the East Africa region. FEMNET and CRAWN Trust **petitioned the President of Kenya through the EALA parliament** to implement the long-standing two-thirds gender rule on 19th November 2021. FEMNET also partnered with her sister feminist organization **Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMWA)** to co-convene the Regional Women's Political Leadership Convention.

FEMNET worked collaboratively with the women's rights organizations, political parties, women's political caucuses, electoral management bodies and the East Africa Community (EAC) Secretariat to



Data Driven Advocacy: #AreWeThereYet?

In 2021, FEMNET co-hosted Data-Driven Advocacy (DDA) workshops targeting gender advocates who are using evidence-based advocacy in their mobilization and influencing work in Africa. At least **448 women and girls** used the knowledge and skills gained from the DDA workshops to influence women's rights policies in their countries.

In addition, as part of the EM2030 partnership, FEMNET co-published a Fact Sheet on Laws on Workplace Equality in Africa, analyzing laws/ legal frameworks and regulations on workplace equality in 37 out of 55 countries in Africa. The analysis is based on the [EM2030 Bending the Curve report](#), and reviews laws mandating gender equality in the workplace, including laws on anti-discrimination, equal pay for equal value of work, paid leave, treatment of pregnant workers, and laws that put restrictions on the types of jobs women can or cannot do.

[Click here to read more on the Fact Sheet.](#)



Promoting a Feminist Approach to Delivery and Financing of Public Services in Africa


FEMNET hosted the annual **African Feminist Macroeconomic Academy (AFMA)** in Dakar, Senegal from 15th – 19th November 2021. This was the first AFMA to be held in a francophone country. AFMA 2021 marks the fifth academy since inception in 2017. The convening brought together **30 African feminists and activists from 19 African countries**. AFMA facilitated a space for women to gather and reflect, challenge orthodoxy in economics, deepen their thinking and explore alternatives.

AFMA 2021 Academy focused on public service delivery and financing. The importance of public service has become even more apparent with the pandemic, the disproportionate burden of which has been borne by women and girls, and among them, the poorest, most marginalized members. While our governments should have been responsible, the lack of a care economy has meant that women and girls have been subsidizing governments and picking up the slack.






Urgent Actions to End Femicide during The 16 Days of Activism


Throughout the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, FEMNET and Womankind International joined the rest of the world to say [#LetsEndFemicide](https://twitter.com/LetsEndFemicide)! Tune in to the 6-part podcast series to hear from diverse women's rights activists and experts on how we can hold decision makers accountable to ending femicide. Link: <http://bit.ly/3p1xbEN>

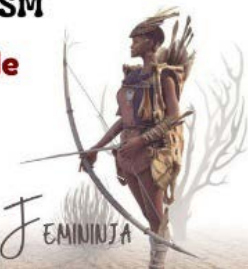
FEMNET AND WOMANKIND PRESENTS:  Womankind Worldwide
EQUAL - RESPECTED - PROUD

A special podcast series throughout the next 16 DAYS to hear from diverse women's rights experts on how we hold decision makers to account and influence them to adopt feminist approaches to end impunity for Femicide.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
#LetsEndFemicide

 Spotify   Listen on Apple Podcasts

 The African Women's Development and Communication Network

 FEMINIJA

16dayscampaign.org

A WORLD
without
VIOLENCE IS
POSSIBLE.

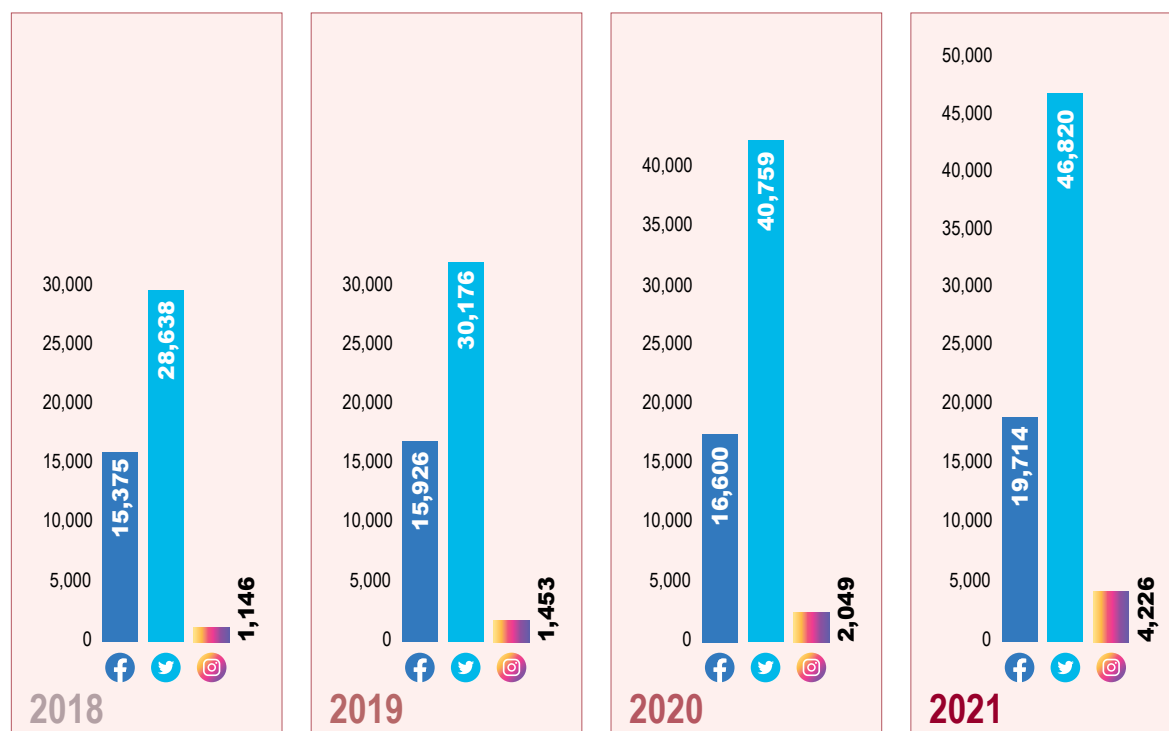
#30YearsOfActivism #LetsEndFemicide

FEMNET hosted the 2nd Regional Exchange, Learning and Experience Sharing on Engaging Religious and Cultural Leaders in promoting SRHR for Women and Girls. The exchange brought together over **100 religious and cultural leaders and FEMNET members from 12 countries** including: Kenya, Zambia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, Guinea, Tunisia, DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo), Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Mauritius to cross-learn and co-share strategies for national, regional, and global SRHR advocacy.

Digital Footprints and Conversations

FEMNET's innovative use of digital and social media platforms has enabled her to effectively mobilize, influence policy, engage, network, follow up and share information more fluidly with her members and coordinate members around key moments. Throughout the year, FEMNET initiated, joined and contributed to online discussions curated in hashtags:- [#GenerationEquality](#), [#GenerationEqualityAfrica](#), [#ActForEqual](#), [#SRHRDialogues](#), [#LetEndFemicide](#), [#Femonomics](#), [RatifyILOc190](#), [#JustRecoveryAfrica](#), [#Beijing25Africa](#), [#CSW65Africa](#), [#MakeCarePublic](#), [#AreWeThereYet](#) etc.

In terms of followers on our social media platforms, the following depicts the steady growth in numbers in the last four years:-



Transitions: FEMNET's Board of Directors (2021-2024)



FEMNET members elected her Board of Directors on the 14th October 2021, during the 8th General Assembly. The Board of Directors are all exceptional and committed pan-African feminists and women's rights advocates representing the diversity of the continent's sub-regions, who will in the next three years contribute to the governance and execution of FEMNET's new Strategy 2020-2029. The team of nine, include the Chairperson, the Treasurer, seven Vice Board Chairs representing North Africa, West Africa, East Africa,

Central Africa, Southern Africa, Diaspora and Young Women and the Executive Director as an ex-officio member. [Click here to download and read full bio profiles of FEMNET's Board of Directors.](#)

Indeed, 2021, with all its uncertainties and challenges, was another full and productive year for FEMNET and indeed for African women and girls, as we continued to reclaim our rights and hold our leaders accountable to honoring the commitments made for women's and girls' rights in all their diversity. Deep appreciation to all FEMNET members, Board of Directors, Staff and our development partners including African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Global Fund for Women, Hewlett Foundation, Christian Aid, Sida, European Union, Gates Foundation, IDEA International, New Venture Fund, Open Society Foundation, Oxfam America, Plan International, Echidna Giving, Tax Justice Network, TIDES, UN Women, UNDP, Wellspring Philanthropic, Womankind Worldwide, Forge, OutRight International, Women Win, Ford Foundation, UNFPA Spotlight, Hivos, EM2030, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), NGO CSW, Women Deliver and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Netherlands. Thank you for journeying with us and looking forward to connecting and collaborating with you in the new year.

Happy Holidays!

In Solidarity & Sisterhood,

Memory Kachambwa

Executive Director, FEMNET





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

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