



# Women's Rights & Macroeconomic Engagement in Africa: A MAPPING



The African Women's  
Development and  
Communication Network



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	4
Acronyms	5
1. Introduction	6
A. Objectives	6
B. Approach	6
C. Limitations	6
2. Findings	7
A. Primary actors involved on women's rights and the macroeconomy	7
I. Women's rights organisations	7
II. Mainstream organisations/think tanks	19
III. Donors	23
IV. Individuals	26
B. Overview analysis of the emerging landscape	32
I. Thematic areas/sectors	32
II. Geographies	33
III. Arenas of engagement	34
IV. Gaps	35
C. Key challenges	36
D. Future opportunities	39
I. The current moment	39
II. Spaces	41
III. Thematic areas/sectors	42
3. Recommendations	43



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In solidarity,  
FEMNET and the Nawi Collective

## **WRITERS AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS**

Chitra Nagarajan, Fatimah Kelleher

## **FEMNET TEAM**

Memory Kachambwa, Nicole Maloba, Maureen Olyaro

## **NAWI TEAM**

Crystal Simeoni

## **STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED AND CONSULTED**

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## **TECHNICAL REVIEWERS**

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# ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Agreement
AFMA	African Feminist Macroeconomic Academy
AMwA	Akina Mama wa Afrika
AWID	Association of Women's Rights and Development
AWDF	African Women's Development Fund
C190	ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment 2019
EBWA	Egypt Business Women's Association
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EVA	Education as a Vaccine
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communication Network
FoLT	Friends of Lake Turkana
FOWODE	Forum for Women in Development
GADN	Gender and Development Network
IEJ	Institute for Economic Justice
IFF	illicit financial flows
IFI	international financial institution
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and intersex
MNC	multinational corporations
OSIWA	Open Society Foundation for West Africa
PPP	public private partnership
SME	small and medium enterprises
SRHR	sexual and reproductive health and rights
TRIPS	Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
WRO	women's rights organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation



# 1. INTRODUCTION

Although women's economic empowerment has garnered increasing attention in recent years, this focus has tended to be limited to micro level economic analysis and interventions and macro level policies on employment and livelihoods. At the same time, macroeconomic policies have distinctive consequences that affect people of different genders differently and can either reinforce the extent of women's socio-economic disadvantage or, potentially, promote a redistribution of resources towards women. Yet, macroeconomic policy continues not to sufficiently integrate gender analysis, let alone to do so in intersectional ways. Interventions for women and girls most often aim to support them to compete equally in existing markets rather than engendering transformational shifts in access to and control over economic resources, access to decent work, control over their own time, and meaningful participation in economic decision-making at all levels from the household to international institutions and policy spaces. Furthermore, the approach to mainstream economics remains excessively narrow and continues to reinforce gender inequalities rather than try to address the challenges at hand – for example with “production” definitions and analysis not including care work and instead systematically undervaluing and most times erasing it from contributions to national GDP and thus “invisibilising” women's gendered roles in society.

## A. OBJECTIVES


It is against this background that the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), a pan-Africa membership-based organisation working to advance women's rights, and the Nawi-Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective, which pushes for viable pan-African feminsit macroeconomic alternatives, commissioned this baseline study which:

- Identifies and maps out relevant and critical decision-making spaces, processes, and instruments at African and global levels to inform feminist analyses of macroeconomic policy and advocacy
- Analyses and maps out think tanks, mainstream organisations, women's rights and/or feminist groups, networks and initiatives, individuals, and donors working on the intersection of women's rights and macroeconomic policy
- Outlines gaps missing in current feminist macroeconomic analysis and influencing
- Presents challenges faced by actors working in these areas
- Identifies opportunities and makes recommendations on ways forward

Available as a public open access document, FEMNET and Nawi hope it will provide a useful reference for others to shape their interventions and inform their work going forward.

## B. APPROACH

This baseline study is underpinned by pan-African feminist and wider global southern feminist positioning and attempts to ensure the mapping, review, and analysis is intersectional at all stages. As far as possible, we spoke with as diverse a range of people as possible, drawn from different types of organisations and spaces, knowledgeable about and working in different countries on the continent, and coming from a variety of positionalities and of different ages and generations of feminist activism and thought.



We reached those working across different movements e.g. the feminist and disability rights movements or the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) and feminist movements to uncover their intersectional analysis and work. It uses a primarily qualitative methods approach drawing on a desk review of documents and frameworks, a survey of graduates of the African Feminist Macroeconomics Academy, and interviews with key actors working on questions of trade, debt and tax (including links with unpaid care work and financialisation) working in global, African, and women's rights spaces and for relevant think tanks, civil society organisations, women's rights/feminist organisations, initiatives, and networks, individuals, and donors. Data gathered was analysed, triangulated, and interpreted to develop preliminary findings presented for validation, after which this report was finalised.

## C. LIMITATIONS

Key limitations included the limited information available via desk research as much of the work individuals and organisations do is not documented/updated, the finite limit of people we could interview, and challenge in linkages and connections across certain regions, most notably northern, Francophone, and Lusophone Africa.

# 2. FINDINGS

## A. PRIMARY ACTORS INVOLVED IN WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THE MACROECONOMY

This section outlines a broad spectrum of organisations and individuals identified as part of this mapping. The information below is mostly based on interviews conducted with the organisations themselves in addition to a wider desk review.

### I. Women's Rights Organisations (WROs)



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

*The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)* is a membership network which is anchored on pan-African feminist principles and values. FEMNET is intentional in ensuring that diverse voices, perspectives and priorities of African women and

girls in all their diversity are heard in key decision-making policy processes, platforms, and strategic spaces. As a feminist, pan-African women's rights organization with over 800 individual and institutional members in 50 countries in Africa and in the diaspora, FEMNET continues to amplify African women's voices and advance women's rights in policy and in practice. FEMNET is one of the leaders of Action Coalition selected by the Generation Equality Forum Core Group to co-lead and co-convene the Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition to spark conversations across generation and catalyse collective action that will deliver concrete results for women and girls in all their diversity in the next five years.

FEMNET has been deepening knowledge and enhancing capacities and skills for a cohort of women, leading and driving initiatives around economic justice advocacy. This has resulted in having a movement of passionate feminists and gender advocates engaging and influencing macroeconomic policies and frameworks from a feminist perspective. This has also seen a number of women's rights organisations prioritising advocacy for women's economic justice and empowerment. FEMNET, through the annual feminist academies continues to advance transformative approaches that challenge the structural causes and remove the barriers through creating structured learning platforms for selected key activists, movement leaders, academics, journalists, and diverse networks working towards achieving women's rights, economic justice, and gender equality.



*Akina Mama wa Afrika* is a feminist Pan African organization with headquarters in Uganda but operating regionally across the continent with current running country programmes in Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Zambia, and Tunisia. The current thematic areas include:

economic justice and climate action, women's political participation, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). and we ensure all thematic areas are interlinked, seeing that SRHR and political participation are heavily reliant on economic justice.

AMwA works with the thesis that the current economic world order is heavily anchored in neoliberal-capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy, neo-colonialism, and other isms which have contributed greatly to the climate crisis. These institutionalized and systemic influences include the historically unequal power dynamics between people from the Global North and South, complex cultural and social dynamics that influence gender norms, legislation, among others. Mitigating/undoing the crisis cannot therefore be fully effective without addressing the extractive and exploitative nature of powerful neoliberal capitalists who are driven by profit, and convey little regard to the need to protect, preserve and conserve the natural ecosystem.

AMwA believes that addressing the climate crisis requires identifying and acknowledging the root causes and effects of the climate crisis. AMwA's approach to climate justice centres the most marginalized and calls for the re-imagination of usual gender mainstreaming strategies in climate action by integrating feminist intersectional approaches, theories, and principles to address existing climate problems and advance just and inclusive solutions. This is because what counts as climate risks is ultimately shaped by the realities and power structures that exist at various levels. While constrained by donor agendas, AMwA continues to push conversations of this nature within feminists' and climate activists' circles to start a ripple effect.

Although work on climate action is new, AMwA's economic justice work has focused on specific macroeconomic issues, including tax justice, and decent work for women. As part of the Global Alliance for Tax Justice, they have developed a Feminist Taxation Framework Guide with Uganda as a case study. The guide was developed for feminists across the continent to appreciate how taxes work and why it is important for feminists to engage in tax processes. While AMwA also supports feminist organisations with gender mainstreaming and budgeting, this is not the core of their work. They have also worked on advancing the decent work agenda particularly for women in the informal sector (labour rights and employment policies such as minimum wage and the ratification of key conventions such as ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment, 2019 - C190).

As members of the Tax Justice Network – Africa, AMwA has been part of the "Stop the Bleeding Campaign" and "Make Taxes work for Women Campaign" which highlight key concerns about the tax system and how it largely burdens women, particularly in Africa, as their governments tend to heavily rely on consumptive taxes like VAT. Such taxes are regressive – largely borne by low income earners like women whose income is majorly used for consumption owing to their central role in the care economy. In these campaigns, AMwA calls for more progressive tax systems that



target corporations, commitment, and actions towards ending Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and unfair tax incentives/exemptions, and the need for the tax system to be more gender responsive.

AMwA is currently discussing whether to start looking at trade and it is expected that they will support feminist organizations that do this work even if they do not work on trade themselves. They are particularly interested in countering the mushrooming number of Bilateral Free Trade Agreements particularly by the United States and the United Kingdom and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) which has had minimal feminist engagement so far. AMwA aims to engage in raising political consciousness through feminist education, policy influence and movement building, counter some of the colonial relics in some of the trade agreements and mobilise and organize towards a decolonial trade architecture.



### *African Women's Development Fund*

**(AWDF)** is a feminist grant-making organisation that funds women's rights across the continent. AWDF has economic security and justice as one of its three thematic areas. In this

area, AWDF's work has focused on strengthening economic justice and rights for women through grant making to women-led organisations that promote labour rights, champion national economic policy engagement or work in the areas of climate justice and food security among others. The organisation is also interested in advancing decolonial and inclusive knowledges on the economic front, an area that remains largely left for Western and male dominance. Here, AWDF has invested in deepening research and analysis that is led by individual African women and African women-led organisations, creating opportunities and spaces for women researchers and practitioners working on economic security and justice to convene and generate experiential knowledge, and directly contribute to debate through documentation of their insights.

Existing work in this area by the organisation is primarily a futures trend analysis that included a projection of economic futures of African women in the areas of technology, land rights and inequalities and is foundation to AWDF's 2017-2021 strategic plan. One critical initiative of the economic futures work of AWDF is the Bread and Butter series, a knowledge collection of seven articles written by African women and African women-led organisations on various issues such as macroeconomic policies and the implications on women, ecofeminism, the need for inclusive growth and land rights. They have used that knowledge and evidence to shape grant-making to organise African women organisations. There has been some work on the politics of exclusion from a labour rights perspective. For example, the Anti-Racism Movement in Lebanon advocates against the kafala system which perpetrates discrimination of migrant workers, particularly domestic workers who are largely women. Similarly, the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa works on public order and law in Sudan, focusing on women in the informal sector (local traders, vendors) who are often victims of state discrimination in terms of being rounded up and chased off the streets while the men continue to work.

Yet, AWDF grantee partners have engaged in policy influencing, even in economic areas such as women in agricultural value chains or on economic development or growth, primarily at the micro level. AWDF acknowledges that more macroeconomic policy influencing and how to influence conversations around growth on the continent is needed. It wants to link research and evidence that represent the needs of African women with funders and influence organising and redistribution of resources that position women and women-led organisations to influence policies in trade, agriculture, information and technology, and other sectors. As a grant making organisation, they participate in different macro level platforms so there is an opportunity to link more macro-level issues e.g. on regional blocs and how they impact women. Although AWDF has supported several organisations involved in economic policy issues, a major challenge observed by the organisation was the limited capacity of WROs to engage on macroeconomic issues. As a result, they are looking to build the capacity of more WROs to engage at the macro level.

### **Egypt Business Women's Association (EBWA),**

established in 1995, focuses on three areas:

1. Personal empowerment and capacity building of women through the Hatshepsut Business Development and Business Incubation Centre
2. Advocating for policies that empower women such as quotas in government procurement for women and around financial inclusion
3. Product development
4. While EBWA focuses on Egypt, it engages in policy influencing work across the continent. It has several programmes on women and trade focusing on the AfCFTA (see the biography of Amany Asfour, the founder of EBWA, below for more details).



### **Education as a Vaccine**

**Education as a Vaccine (EVA)**, founded in 2000, uses child and youth friendly approaches to facilitate and sustain social change in the areas of health, protection, and education in Nigeria. In addition to its focus on integrating women's economic empowerment and skills into its sexual and reproductive health and rights programming, EVA focuses on tracking and

influencing conversations around budgeting for education, health, and gender-based violence as well as financialisation around health, particularly around universal health coverage and access to funds. EVA has been running a research and analysis programme on the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and is currently working on a paper examining the macroeconomic impacts of the pandemic in the present day and on Nigeria's economic trajectory.

**Feminist Macroeconomic Alliance Malawi** is a new alliance of feminist organisations in Malawi that focus on macroeconomics. Started in mid 2020 by 6 NGOs (MHub, Youth Activista, For Equality, Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre, NGO Gender Coordination Network and ActionAid Malawi), it has since garnered interest from other NGOs and



is growing. Its genesis came from feminists who attended the African Feminist Macroeconomic Academy (AFMA), FEMNET and AWDF support to the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre to work on macroeconomic issues from a feminist perspective, and ActionAid work on macroeconomics. When those involved realised they were working on similar issues, they decided to form an alliance to build and grow this area of work independent of project funding cycles.

Although the alliance is just over a year old, it is already starting to make networks and links, most notably among young feminists, government officials, and international NGOs and organisations such as United Nations agencies. It organised a AFMA in Malawi in September 2020 which engaged in knowledge and skills transfer to young women feminists who have subsequently gone on to train peers in their communities and engage in tax justice campaigns. It conducted a series of dialogues called She Talks across tertiary institutions nationwide on macroeconomics to explain the linkages with issues such as access to healthcare and make the political personal. It has also been engaging with government actors such as the Ministry of Finance on issues such as illicit financial flows (IFFs), to understand how economic decisions are made, and with a view of working on IMF and World Bank debt accumulation and conditionalities and implications on social protection programmes. It has called for unconditional cancellation of debt to enable Malawi to respond to the health, economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Alliance also provides a model for organising at the national level and how this can link with and be facilitated by regional and continental work such as AFMA.

**Friends of Lake Turkana (FoLT)** is a grassroots organisation in the Lake Turkana region,



Kenya, that was started in 2011 to stop the Hydrodam in the region. FoLT works with and on behalf of the communities within the greater Lake Turkana basin to demand their collective social, environmental, economic, cultural, and territorial rights. Recognizing the anti-patriarchal struggle is a vision expressed in all areas of work, FoLT works with the indigenous pastoralist community with women's rights at its core. While not focused on women but rather taking the community as a unit initially, FoLT has since come to integrate women and gender, realising that FoLT's activism needs to be led by women, especially in a sector where most civil society groups are male led. Critical work has included participation of communities within budget processes, and on environmental justice. There is also now a strong focus on the oil sector due to recent oil discoveries in the area, with oil extraction examined from different angles including

links with IFFs. Current work on IFFs tend to focus on tax but ignore how global value chains appropriate land so FoLT is currently examining how and with whom to work in the IFF space.

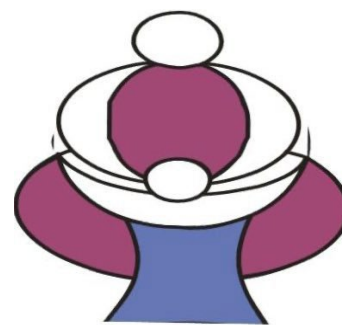
FoLT views its macroeconomic engagement as "piecemeal" at present but yet works on the premise that it is not possible to remove the natural resource debate from the financialisation and commodification of infrastructure. Land and natural resources are part of the political macroeconomy. Although FoLT does not engage in trade or debt aspects as much, they recognise that infrastructural development, trade, and debt go hand in hand and wish to consider relevant synergies and make room for cross thematic work. Although FoLT engages with FEMNET on economic justice, there is a gap in how to engage and make sure that issues discussed further on pastoralist platforms and their voices and those of other marginalised people are part of the narrative.

Other organisations who also work from an environmental perspective include Samburu women and Save Lamu. By working collaboratively, FoLT have found policy engagement through nodes of connection and in larger numbers to be more effective. However, pushing beyond the first two meetings can be difficult because the numbers will drop therefore maintaining and sustaining momentum remains difficult. Also, FoLT finds that working through the system in general is challenging as gender is often either deprioritised and blocked or tokenised by legislators and other power holders. While grassroots mobilisation has nonetheless worked and getting women to lead their own agenda has been effective, taking their work to the national level remains a challenge. While the political space has improved in terms of participation with a few elected women, there is still a question mark over their role in elevating the issues being pushed for.

**Forum for Women in Development (FOWODE)** is a women's rights organisation based

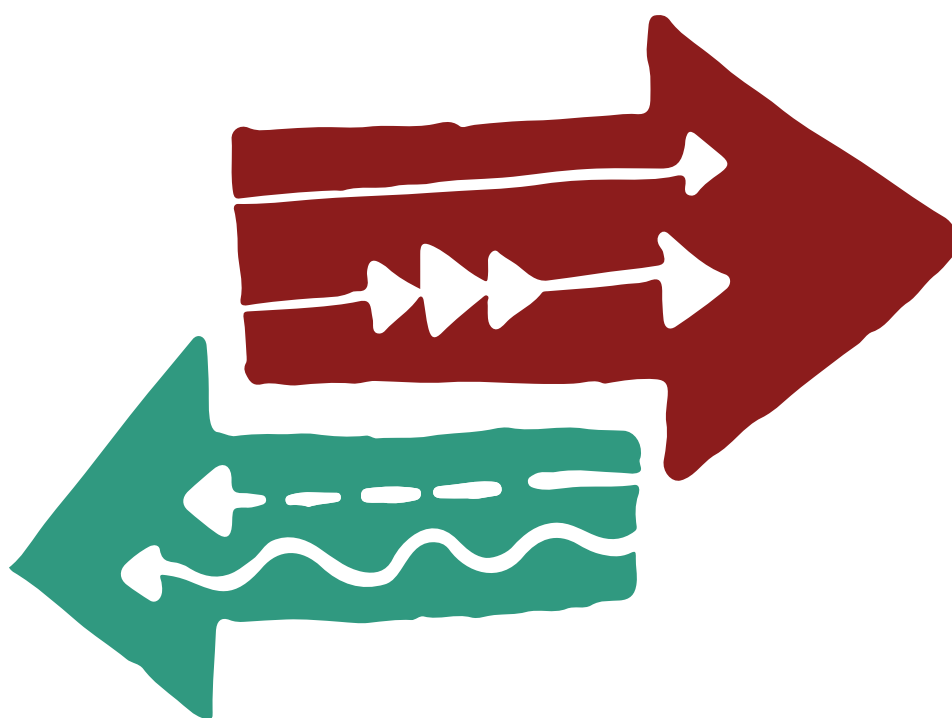


in Uganda. Its macroeconomic focus is mainly on fiscal policy and ensuring gender equitable resource allocation. FOWODE looks at expenditure and taxation, has worked on gender responsive budgeting since 1997/98, and is internationally recognised as a pioneer in this field. It was instrumental in bringing about the Public Finance Act, providing for the first gender equity certification process.



On taxation, they have built networks, been part of taxation coalitions and alliances such as the Global Alliance on Tax Justice; Civil Society on Budgeting and Accountability; and Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and are often part of advocacy on fair taxes and feminist taxation. The organisation is a part of SEATINI (see below) which involves looking at laws that will be passed, taxation bills and amendments, and contributing to position papers to relevant entities such as the Ministry of Finance.

FOWODE also does budget and expenditure tracking and monitoring to see how much money is allocated and spent and if commitments made were fulfilled. These sectors include education, health, agriculture, and some parts of trade, with mineral development an area which the organisation plans to expand into soon. FOWODE works more broadly on social and gender accountability. One example of this is the village budget club model where groups train on gender responsive budgeting and engage in monitoring and tracking. They can then take this information and present before duty bearers at local government level. Community dialogues followed by interface meetings with district leadership where findings from their work are part of this process. While FOWODE is aware of the critical issue of national debt, its primary focus remains on budget, expenditure, and taxation and there is still work to be done on the relationship between gender responsive budgeting and national debt.





### *Gender and Development Network (GADN)*

is a network of UK-based NGOs and leading experts working with feminist organizations worldwide to tackle the structural causes of gender equality and promote women's rights. The network has been working on macroeconomic issues since 2015, with a particular focus on Africa, and works closely with FEMNET and Nawi as main partners. In self-awareness of its position in the Global North, GADN constantly tries to improve the way in which it works with feminists from the Global South.

## GENDER & DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

GADN seeks to challenge and transform orthodox macroeconomic policies that perpetuate inequality. Thematic areas include the care economy, social protection, public services, and public private partnership (PPPs). Specific to the African continent, they have worked with FEMNET and others to produce an introductory guide to feminist macro-level economics. They have also worked to highlight the perspectives of African feminists on areas such as public debt and austerity in Africa, as well as to profile African feminist proposals on Covid economic recovery. This work sits alongside promoting feminist proposals from across the Global South within Covid economic recovery processes. In early 2020, they delivered a webinar in collaboration with FEMNET, Akina Mama Wa Afrika and Diva for Equality on Feminist Responses to Covid-19. This was a discussion to better understand how the pandemic was playing out for Women's Rights Organisations in the Global South. They are currently undertaking research in five countries, including Uganda in Africa, working with women's rights organisations looking at specific macroeconomic responses to Covid.

#### GADN works in three ways

1. Using their access to decision makers in the UK to expose the negative impact of orthodox policies and promote macroeconomic alternatives in international development and international finance policy.
2. Sharing their access to power, and publicising the analysis and proposals of feminists in the Global South to decision makers
3. Being part of capacity strengthening initiatives with allies in both the Global North and South by demystifying macroeconomics and its impact, building alternatives with allies, and promoting the work of Southern feminists with Northern INGOs.





*International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP Asia Pacific)*

came out of the Third World Conference on Women held in Nairobi in 1985 with the purpose of promoting recognition of women's human rights under CEDAW. The political intent of IWRAP --Asia Pacific is to disrupt right-wing populism and extremism, corporate and state capture by organising, mobilising, and building political knowledge and analysis with women's groups to demand accountability from State and non-State actors in respect of

gender equality and women's human rights. It facilitates NGO participation in CEDAW reporting processes undertaken by their states. Its Global to Local training programme trains groups on advocacy during their state's review. It also creates alternative spaces for different movement-based groups working on issues relating to women's human rights to engage in advocacy, cross-movement building, and making connections between national, regional, and global advocacy.

IWRAP Asia Pacific started working on issues relating to economic justice around 2012 out of the need to counter the instrumentalisation of women's human rights, particularly as it related to labour force participation, and how this approach was mobilised by various actors to maintain systemic forms of discrimination and inequality. Starting by working with migrant and domestic workers in South East Asia, IWRAP Asia Pacific built on this work to include women workers across multiple sectors and addressing the impact of global economic structures on women's human rights. IWRAP Asia Pacific focuses in particular on rights of marginalised groups of women and those who are multiply burdened by intersecting forms of discrimination. Through its facilitative role with OHCHR and the CEDAW Committee, IWRAP Asia Pacific supports these groups and other NGOs in raising issues relating to gender equality and macroeconomics during their state's reviews. It is currently mapping CEDAW concluding observations and NGO shadow reports from 2016 to date to analyse how macroeconomic issues are raised within CEDAW reporting processes and engaging with the CEDAW Committee on the ideological underpinnings of how economies are designed and implemented in a manner that worsens gender inequality and how economic tools can be used to bring about gender equality and eliminate discrimination against women.



The *Nawi – Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective (Nawi Collective)*

is a Pan-African Feminist initiative launched in 2020. The Nawi Collective is building a community in Africa of individuals and organisations working on influencing, analysing, deconstructing, and reconstructing macroeconomic policies, narratives and understanding of the same through an intersectional Pan African feminist lens.



**PaKasipiti** is a feminist organisation in Zimbabwe working on women's rights and visibility with particular focus on queer women and queer bodies. Its work involves organising around advocating for rights, voice, and visibility of queer women within certain spaces and how to create links with broader women's movements. They locate themselves within the broader women's movement and are part of feminist and LGBTQI movements, with minority groups e.g. sex worker organisations and women with disabilities, and in various consortiums that work with other marginalised women, e.g. women in prison.

PaKasipiti started looking at economic justice as a result of examining the context in Zimbabwe and how an overwhelming majority of women are in the informal sector and have alternate work not considered work or labour. They focus on issues of non-discrimination, initially looking at current labour laws. PaKasipiti discussions on economic justice continued through the need to speak about discrimination and inequality in the economy, for example in the areas of mining, access to land, and access to finance. They are now engaged in conversations linked to the Generation Equality Forum and Beijing +25 conversations and are interested in understanding how economic justice affects LGBTQ women and to link with different coalitions. They see this as an opportunity to take global conversations to a national level and hold national level conversations on what the linkages are, such as analysis of some of the global conversations in CSW to see where they can place themselves. The organisation sees it as important to continue to pursue this area and want to push issues around gender equality and non-discrimination including through an economic justice lens, both at micro and macroeconomic level. The organisation believes that understanding what the macroeconomic effects of gender through a holistic frame that includes the queer community is important.



**SADC Gender Protocol Alliance**, which has Gender Links as its secretariat, brings together civil society organisations in all SADC countries except Comoros. The Alliance comprises women's rights networks across SADC who campaigned for the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development adopted in 2008. It produces an annual Barometer to track progress against its provisions. It comprises 15

countries and 9 regional networks each with a representative on the steering committee that meets annually in the wings of the SADC Heads of State Summit. The Alliance advocates for gender transformation, social justice, women empowerment and safety, poverty eradication, and gender equity and equality. Its economic justice and education thematic cluster focuses on engaging SADC on specific macroeconomic policies.



**SPECTRA** is a young feminist space in Rwanda, founded in 2016, that works to advance the interlinkage of women and girls' bodies with social, economic, and political agendas. SPECTRA's work on economic justice includes analysing and doing advocacy on various macroeconomic topics, their policies and impact on women and girls' rights. SPECTRA integrates macroeconomics and economic justice across its portfolio, for example by examining the impact of financing, neoliberalism, and geopolitical power dynamics on SRHR including access to abortion. It focuses on feminist movement building around the

interconnectedness of women's rights and aims to encourage feminists and their organizations in Rwanda to increase their knowledge of macroeconomics through knowledge production, capacity building, and consciousness raising. It is currently working with other members of the Rwanda Feminist Platform to find ways of building members' capacities on macroeconomic issues to address the lack of women's rights organizations working on macroeconomic policy influencing in the country and at regional and global levels, to ensure that feminists voices can meaningfully lead and engage in macroeconomic political spaces and processes.

**This Ability** is a women-led non-profit organisation based in Kenya working to advance the rights and inclusion of women with disabilities. It understands the importance of engaging with the government on economic injustice work and has done so with limited successes at the national level. It has previously used various international treaty bodies such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the International Conference on Population and Development and Beijing+25 to push the Kenyan government on disability inclusion, but lessons learned indicate that it will always take much longer for national level engagement.



While the Kenyan legal framework is good, it is often difficult to implement even existing laws. The process is slow but overall steps forward can still be seen. For example, advocacy workshops with women with disabilities in 8 counties have invested in building disabled women leaders that continue to push back on government processes that infringe on the rights of women with disabilities. In Kisumu, the training of healthcare workers on women with disabilities' rights, an investment made so that disability services can be improved. The organisation does not do direct advocacy at the national level simply because the community level yields better results and this is where the effort is best utilised. State institutions are viewed as being slightly weak, but also the community level is where the women are. While the organisation recognizes the importance of having conversations at the national level, the push to implement and demand budgets is still at community level, and therefore invests more resources there.

Another area of advocacy at the national level where more efforts are directed, is the creation of a national agenda on anti-corruption (based on research into impacts of corruption on women with disabilities). This is a two year programme which involves building storytelling skills among women with disabilities, in order to increase awareness on the effects of corruption on the lives of disabled women. This is an innovative approach that will compliment already existing economic injustice research. This Ability is also creating a citizen observatory which will build a case for increased investments based on impactful testimonies from the community to the national government. The desired result is to build evidence at national and international levels that corruption has a big impact on the lives of women with disabilities and denounce agendas that are not taking any measures to create more transparency. Corruption affects budgets across all government agencies, as a result, people are affected by budgetary gaps - including the most vulnerable populations, many of whom are women with disabilities.






**WoMIN** started as a research project at a pan-African meeting of organisations working on extractives and women's rights. They attempted to build bridges between extractives, fishing and other related areas and were very clear from the outset that if the organisation was to be saying "no" to these things, there was also a need to be clear on what the "yes" would be. The work of the organisation places social reproduction and care at its centre and its positioning is openly anti-capitalist. The organisation is based in South Africa.

Much of the work of the organisation focuses on the mining sector. Although it is not explicitly anti-mining, it is unequivocally against the corporate extractivist model that currently dominates the continent. WoMIN works on the premise that the state is "absolutely compromised" and is aligned with corporations and their needs, and that all the systems put into place around mining and extractives are there to support those needs. They work with artisanal mining communities and orient programming towards working class and peasant women rather than women trying to get into the mining sector as it is. More broadly, they work with communities challenging the impact of dams, with a focus on mega-dams and coal-fire deforestation. In this regard, the alternative conceptualisation that WoMIN offers would be "an imagination of infrastructure that is not just there to facilitate extractivism". They work on several fronts in their research and activism, including consent and the right to say "no" by communities, challenges to large scale mining, coal and resource extraction, and an ecofeminist just transition (just development alternatives). Their feminist underpinning includes having dialogues with women in communities, nationally, and regionally, looking at what has been destroyed by colonialism and neo-colonialism, and what is needed for a process of recovery. This involves national level work also. They have been using an ecofeminist approach in Senegal looking at coal fire work for example, and artisanal mining in Burkina Faso. This involved working with specialists including undertaking agrarian and public health cost analysis, and advocacy with Canada, US, and the IFIs to contest the compensation given to families. Although the organisation does not necessarily want to financialise these impacts, it is still considered important to log what the intergenerational costs are that families carry over time.

The organisation also works around climate justice and climate debt. This involves building a climate justice convergence that builds a perspective on the climate crisis and the linkages with other intersecting issues. Through this they work periodically with the Pan African Justice Alliance by assisting them with planning their national policy positions. Fundamentally WoMIN believes in growing movements from below and see this is the premise of climate justice convergence. They are looking towards building campaigns against oil and gas extraction.

Another area of the organisation's work is a focus on the links between militarism and control of resources and the extractivist agenda. This includes challenging the existing narratives that justify increased militarisation. For example, the conflict in Mozambique is also centred around oil extraction but is currently simply presented as Islamist insurgency. Everywhere the organisation works, the linkages between militarisation and corporatisation of mining projects are increasingly apparent, with clear increases in militarisation as protection for corporate investments.

WoMIN also launched a platform last year (Rise Against Oppression) and are increasingly aware of the need to intersect with the LGBTIQ+ movement which has become a major emerging theme, but currently has very little cross-analysis on what is happening in the extractives sector, despite the fact hundreds of women experiencing violence around these issues. Another new area is development alternatives which two staff members focus on. COVID-19 has yet to be a major focus within this, although they are looking at IFIs in relation to COVID work, asking



questions around the conditionalities that flow from IFI dominance on the continent, such as the expansion of public private partnerships. The relationship between COVID-19 and mining expansion is also needed - during COVID period there has been an expansion of existing projects.

Finally, WoMIN run a feminist school as part of an ecofeminist cadre building project. They use feminist participatory action research, and feminist political economy research. Much of their work is solidarity focused; for example they are also working closely on the abolition of legitimate debt and work with groups across different countries on the continent. WoMIN also facilitated the writing of an African Women's Charter on a different Africa - written by women in the communities - and represents women's imaginations of a different Africa.



## II. Mainstream Organisations/Think Tanks



*Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ)* is a progressive economics think tank based in South Africa that works at the intersection of research, policy, and advocacy. It works with a number of social partners, most of whom are based in South Africa and some of whom are immersed in the trade union space. The Institute pushes for progressive economics at all levels with a focus on rethinking mainstream economics and challenging the way economics is taught in Africa. They connect with universities and run an annual festival - Rethinking Economics for Africa - that hosts students, academics and civil society organisations working to transform the economics discipline and the

economy. They also work on a number of other thematic areas including budget policy (anti-austerity), feminist economics, and climate justice. They are working towards finding coherence between these thematic areas, and in particular are keen to ensure that they do not fall into the habit of many think tanks that see gender as an “add-on”. IEJ also runs a Feminist Economics Programme which has grown since the first Summer School was held in 2020, their first foray into the feminist economic space. They are trying to strengthen the feminist knowledge in South Africa in particular, as not a lot of people are conceptually familiar with feminist economics. They are also interested in exploring what a feminist COVID-19 recovery looks like in South Africa and at the pan-African level. In June 2021, they published a policy brief titled “Feminist Proposals on Macroeconomic Policies needed for a COVID-19 Economic Recovery”. The Head of the Feminist Economics Team is Lyn Ossome who brings a strong feminist lens alongside a strong human rights lens. They also have Basani Baloyi who heads the climate justice team, who has extensive experience in feminist praxis in South Africa.

One area of increasingly strong engagement within IEJ is on feminist budget work. In South Africa at least, the view is that not much has been done since the initial heydays of gender responsive budgeting spearheaded by the academic Debbie Budlender over two decades ago so there is a significant need to reappraise and update. Currently IEJ is a member (and for the present co-chair) of the Budget Justice Coalition, a body of 16 member and affiliate organisations. Its work includes responding to the budget process through media engagement, response to the budget being tabled, and training where needed. The Coalition has adopted a feminist framework and understanding, although one challenge identified is that different organisations within the Coalition have different sectoral foci. What has been difficult is the practical application of a feminist framework and the tools available (or unavailable) for that, especially when not everyone engaged is an economist, or indeed, a feminist. Yet, IEJ feel more people are interested in feminist budgeting which has led to the development of feminist assessment and advocacy tool (in progress) that is context-specific and addresses the inequalities produced at the intersection of gender and social conditions, such as climate change, and make budgeting processes more responsive to them. They note that the lack of disaggregated data, prevents effective advocacy.

IEJ is currently in an exploratory phase of how to transform gender responsive budgeting into a feminist budgeting movement, going beyond the co-opting and mainstreaming that has occurred, understanding that ultimately mainstreaming has not been able to question power and does not sufficiently address critical issues such as unpaid work. The broader question of capitalism and what kind of an economy people want and need to be part of that framing. Other areas of work that IEJ are engaged in include research on social protection (Universal Basic Income Grant), tax, the crisis of social reproduction and a just transition amongst other topics.



### *Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)*

Uganda is an indigenous Non-Governmental Organization working on trade, investment, fiscal and other related issues to make sure they work for people especially the most marginalized. SEATINI Uganda works at all levels; local, national, regional, continental, and global, recognizing that policies at global level such as World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements impact what happens at local and household level and should be

informed by them. This disaggregated approach to their analysis has always been important and has led the organization to deliberately include a gender lens, looking at women as different types of actors within the economy. So, while SEATINI's analysis of Trade Policy may not be strictly feminist, it does look at a broad cross-section of people. SEATINI has also worked on how tax impacts women differently and is part of the FEMNET project to ensure fiscal justice for women. Currently, SEATINI is working on vaccines and Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) together with other organizations working on health rights. They are exploring how a waiver can help Low-income countries afford to access medicines, especially vaccines. SEATINI also works to influence investment policies and agreements that prioritize the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of communities at all levels.



### *The Southern Africa Trust*

was established in 2005 with the mandate to support civil society organisations in Southern Africa in effective and credible engagement in policy dialogue to ensure that the voices of the poor are heard and able to impact the development of policies affecting them to reduce poverty and inequality. The Trust's regional scope aims to ensure that these voices are also strengthened through building regional networks and promoting interconnection to ensure that the fight

against poverty and inequality is guided by a regional agenda. The Trust's gender justice and sovereignty programming is responding to the needs and concerns of the women's rights constituencies we are seeking to support as the world moves to the 'post-COVID context'.

The Trust's four programmes include Climate Justice and Natural Resource Management; Economic Recovery and Social Protection; Gender Justice and Sovereignty and Youth Empowerment. They have invested and prioritised in the empowerment of women in their organisational strategy. The approach used in working with women's organisations and women's groups in social movements in Southern Africa included supporting them to establish regional platforms or strengthening existing platforms, research on gender dimensions of various issues (agriculture, cross border trade, climate change), dialogues and policy advocacy towards regional institutions.

They have partnered with the Southern Africa Cross Borders Traders Association to establish the Regional Women Cross Border Traders Forum. Several research pieces were presented at the Forum addressing some of the key challenges they face during their cross-border transaction to relevant policymakers. The Forum provided the opportunity for women to present issues affecting them and the importance of gender mainstreaming in regional and national trade policies. Communiqués were presented to SADC and COMESA on the following trade policy frameworks; simplified trade regimes (STR), Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) and SADC Trade Protocol. Women cross border traders have been able to interact with government officials and discuss their needs and explore how governments can further assist them.

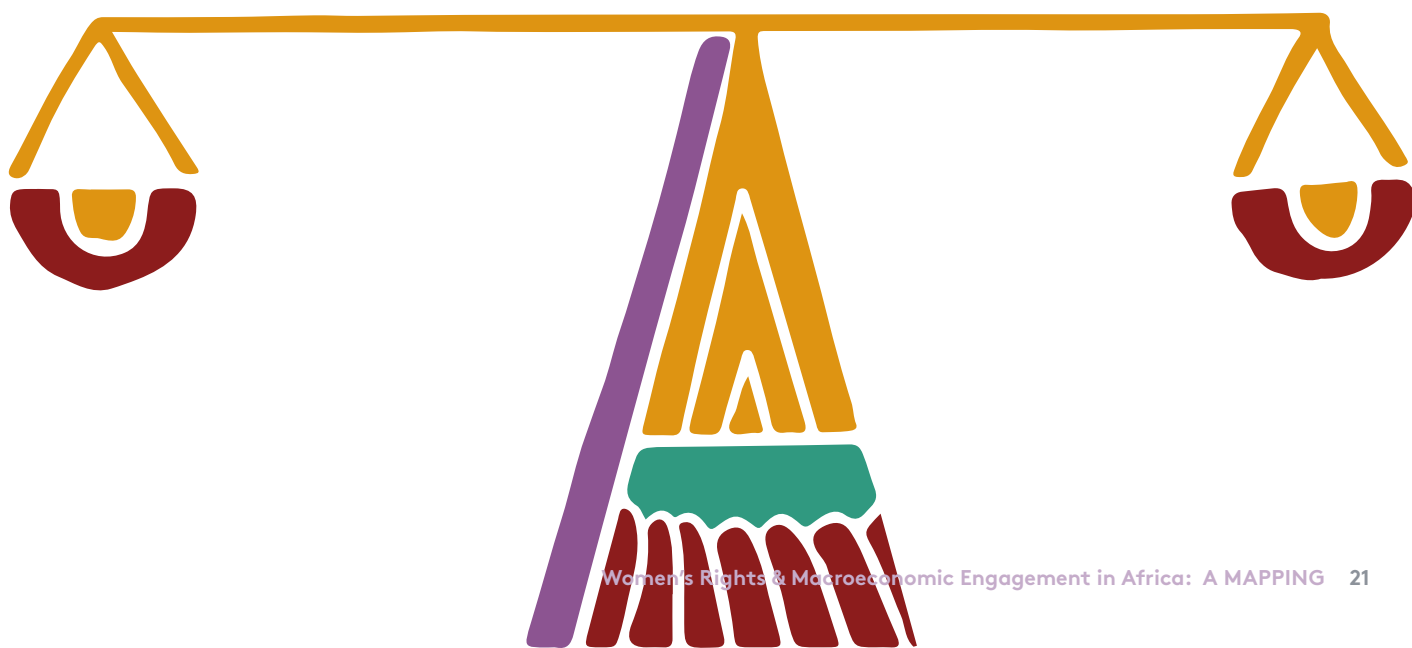
They have also made similar interventions with Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and to establish similar platforms for women in farming as well as the Southern Africa Miners Association (SAMA) with the SAMA Widow's Forum. The Regional Widows' Forum

in the Mining Industry was also established in partnership with SAMA to review the challenges experienced by widows of ex-miners across the region in accessing their spouses unclaimed social security benefits from their employment in South African mines. The Forum facilitated engagement with the South African Pension and Provident Funds i.e. Mineworkers Provident Fund, Sentinel Retirement Fund. The Women Farmer Forum focused on creating awareness among farmers on the existing agricultural policy frameworks that would benefit at the regional level including the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy and national agricultural policy.




**Tax Justice Network Africa** was established to be a network of organisations that see the value of taxation for resource mobilisation to support Africa's growth and development. The organisation then realised tax goes beyond national level with cross border, regional and global components and so supports domestic organisations in issues relating to resource mobilisation. They work globally, in continental processes, and in programmes that support member organisations in different ways.

Gender and taxation came into the organisation's consciousness over time and they have tried to be aware of it in terms of focus of work. For example, in the area of domestic taxation this looks at what the impact of regressive policies on different economic groups looks like, especially women. Largely, there has been a growth of dependency on VAT on the continent as a result of conditionalities from IFIs, who have posited this approach as an easy way to collect tax and therefore a good way of targeting low lying fruit - but, as research indicates, this approach hurts women far more. TJNA works with a fair tax monitor tool carried out jointly with Oxfam and other organisations that looks at the fairness of tax policies and tax burden, and this has a gender component. They are also moving beyond the situation of having to address a problem after it has arisen by pushing for reflections on the impact of policy on different economic groups including women in the development of taxes.







**Trade Collective** draws on the work of different economists and activists. It is an Africa based organisation with alliances beyond the continent that was initially envisaged as a social movement of loose allies who would come together around key issues. It is funded by members of the collective itself and has never received external funding as a body, instead doing work through the consultancies of members. This has become a “habit of self-sufficiency” for the organisation and an important factor in remaining independent in terms of positioning and choice of work undertaken.

The Collective, around for 15 years, has always tried to be linked to campaigns through its work. For example, right now they are focused on the WTO Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver to ensure COVID-19 vaccine justice. However, much of the last 15 years has seen the Collective looking at migration and trade by examining the movement of people around the world through labour and the extractive model that currently defines labour within orthodox macroeconomics. The Collective has also been closely observing unfolding developments within AfCFTA whilst also observing and engaging, where possible, with global trade movements as they occur. This included the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and its eventual collapse, to more current agreements still in negotiation such as the EU-Mercosur discussions and ongoing dynamics in Southeast Asia. The collective is also interested in how Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) offers an alternative south-looking focus, although without being naïve to the fact that this BRICS grouping still had divisions and issues with genuine solidarity.

Throughout its work the Collective tries to maintain a decolonial feminist perspective, drawing on the legacies of those who have come before such as Patricia McFaden and Amina Mama in the 1980s and see decolonising international trade as critical within African decolonial feminism. Ultimately this work is trans-disciplinarian, intersecting closely with the focus on migration in terms of not just the movement of assets but also ideas of belonging, citizenship, of geographic boundaries, and expansiveness and the different ways black and brown women experience transactional issues and varied discourses on political and feminist geographies. The work of the Collective sees the macroeconomic space as important because that is where the major decisions are taken, creating disturbances in other forms of the economy. They also see the importance of a discourse on precarity, with the migrant labourer as the classic example, inherently linked to the way “the world views a black woman’s skill or dishonours it”.

The network aims “at best, to offer something for this time and context”. For example, they are interested in a feminist AfCFTA, and view it as important to delink the AfCFTA from the international trade architecture. It should play a role in regionalism, but currently it doesn’t do this and doesn’t understand the intra-country rivalries that could come into play within the current model, with its much harder tariff binding than the norm in other FTAs.

The Trade Collective engages with the Gender and Trade Coalition (GTC) through member participation. The GTC is now a quasi-form of what used to be the International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN, initially formed in 2002), which had different regional nodes. Extensive work was done in Africa delivering gender and trade training and other events. Each regional node took leadership. The Africa node was strong on advocacy and linking vigorous analytical work and grassroots movement struggles. From the start the Africa node was always strong on this within the IGTN, and with some its founding members today making-up the membership of the Trade Collective, this legacy has continued to frame the work on feminist trade within the continent.

### III. Donors

**Hewlett Foundation** is a private charitable foundation that has a gender equity and governance program with a strong focus on women's reproductive and economic choices. Via their women's economic empowerment strategy, Hewlett funds organisations that pursue a more women's economic rights framed body of work that goes beyond the more conventional focus of engagement found within many donor portfolios in this area. The Foundation has also launched a line of grant making aimed specifically at going "beyond neoliberalism" and rethinking the political economy. As one of the few donors explicitly funding more women's economic rights and justice framed work, the Foundation has already engaged with organisations on the continent that are leading this work such as FEMNET and Nawi.



They will be launching a new strategy focused on strengthening organizations currently working on, or interested in working on, macro-level policy change in East and West Africa, including researchers, advocates, women's rights organizations, and feminist movements. Areas they are particularly interested in - highlighted by the current pandemic - are unpaid care and social protection. Taxation has also been prominent over the years and continues to be so. Based on observations within the portfolio there are opportunities in cross movement building from communities to work more concretely on tax and gender justice. But they remain open to exploring other areas in service of their goal of supporting gender-responsive macro-level economic policy.

The foundation is interested in how to close the macro/micro gap that exists within women's rights engagement with the economy, with a focus on shifting power, but acknowledges this will be a longer transition over time. As part of this they are keen to engage with more organisations working as close to women and communities as possible. Over the last five years they have supported the more visible organisations working on these issues to engage at global levels, and now going forward they are also looking to ensure they take a strong sectoral approach and can support groups with direct policy influencing in the arenas that offer the most opportunities.





## OPEN SOCIETY Initiative for West Africa

The work of the *Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)*<sup>1</sup> on economic justice is anchored around building equitable power between people, institutions, decision makers, governments and in the corporate space to ensure accountability, inclusion and greater widespread opportunity, protection,

safety, and rights for people. OSIWA focuses on three areas of work:

1. Ensuring equitable fair and just access to quality public goods education and health as part of rebuilding the social contract. This looks at rights, governance, and financing.
2. Natural resources on the continent as many countries have government revenue predicated on natural resources but the real economy is in other sectors such as services. OSIWA is looking at how increased government injustice in natural resources can be a precursor to moving away from extractives. They are looking at questions of rights and communities affected by mining as well as accountability, corruption, fiscal resources, the future – what are transformative ways to open fairer, locally owned, and redistributive systems?
3. Future and new economic realities where changing systems allow people and communities to participate to build African voices in ways beneficial to them. This looks at energy, infrastructure and the role local governance plays in financing development for debt. A major part of this third strand is to ensure new economic realities are anchored in feminist economic analysis and thinking as opposed to classical capitalist orthodoxy. They take a multi-layered perspective: theory, policy alternatives (challenge and deconstruct system), cultural debate, and understanding the economy as orthodoxies cemented by the necessity for competition, and a side lining of history and culture in decision making. To take this work forward they want greater presence of younger, feminist voices.

When it comes to scaling their work on supporting feminist alternatives, unfortunately, this work has not grown as fast and steadily as they would have hoped. OSIWA has already engaged with AWDF, NAWI, FEMNET and a few others, but identifying, working with, and building trusted relationships with newer, nascent, and locally grounded feminist organisations has been challenging for several reasons. OSIWA wants to be very careful about a “band wagoning” effect in supporting feminist organizations. It wants to engage genuinely and meaningfully, recognizing the complexity of the field of feminist economics, thinking an activism. It recognizes that the band wagon effect could, and probably has been unhelpful, with many feminist organisations now wary of how they are approached by funders as a result.

Overall, very few proposals coming into OSIWA are from WROs or feminist organisations.

Thematically tax justice has been strong and with a long history. OSIWA started looking at tax justice and IFFs but it has been difficult to get this issue seen as human rights and social violation rather than only an economic problem. Its portfolio on IFFs evolved to look at concrete questions such as unitary taxation and building regional and continental tax administration support, progressive taxation models, supporting governments with tax reform to public goods and services and building accountability and mechanisms, then at fiscal leakages undermining societal progress in general. OSF supports global bodies with direct or tangential impact on fiscal losses e.g. OECD, and support CSOs like tax justice networks and local organisations looking at oversight of governance of tax incentives, for example the mining sector in Sierra Leone.

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<sup>1</sup> The Open Society Foundation (OSF) has several offices on the continent, including OSIWA, OSISA, OSEA and the OSF Africa Office. The data provided here was gathered from an interview with a staff member working with OSIWA specifically. The follow up donor mapping suggested in the recommendations below should include all offices on the continent.



Trade is a sector that started being looked at from a West Africa perspective with the emergence of a plan for AfCFTA. OSIWA (and other parts of OSF) then worked with SEATINI and others to see what involvement of civil society and others in the negotiation process leading up to AfCFTA could be but there were no formal mechanisms that enabled public consultation including with domestic private sector which in many cases were delegated to be represented by chambers of commerce and so not very representative. OSIWA also looked at the question of adequate human rights and the gendered impacts of AfCFTA in its early years and how to support those negatively affected. It wants to look more closely at preserving policy space as a key consideration within the AfCFTA as the multiplicity of trade deals signed (e.g. Kenya and Ghana) and bilateral trade deals could potentially undermine whatever benefits the AfCFTA does offer. So far, not much has been done on protecting policy spaces following the AfCFTA with effects on the domestic private sector especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) already seen. The organisation acknowledges that, although the underlying arguments for AfCFTA are compelling, trade for itself may lead to an increase in wealth but not necessarily in broad based and redistributive economics and the continent does not want to go in the direction of replicating previous agreements known to increase inequality. The organisation does acknowledge that AfCFTA is a huge political achievement given attacks on international trade at the time of signing, but there must be more – inclusion of civil society, coherence of trade with other parts of economic transformation around infrastructure, integration of climate, migration, and labour laws, and generally ensuring people are heard in the process while solidifying Africa's bargaining power internally and globally.



Although unable to conduct interviews within the scope of this mapping, respondents indicated both the **Ford Foundation** and **Wellspring Philanthropic Fund** as donor organisations with an interest in or are already funding work within the women's rights and macroeconomics in Africa.



## iv. Individuals

The following list is by no means complete or exhaustive. It comprises a small selection of African feminist economists and African feminists working on the economy to showcase the scope of individuals engaged on the issues across spaces and themes. A more expansive list can be found at the Nawi Afrifem Macroeconomics Knowledge Portal.

**Amany Asfour** is the President of the Egypt Business Women Association which she established in 1995 to promote young women entrepreneurs, give guidance to women business owners in the small and medium entrepreneurs, and mainstream women in the global market. She used to be President of the COMESA Business Council which encouraged corporate actors to source from local vendors while training SMEs to meet the criteria and standards required. She is the current President of the African Business Council, a grouping of all chambers of commerce, business councils, manufacturer association, and other corporate bodies, established to be the voice of the African private sector in the implementation of AfCFTA. She is working to popularise the AfCFTA particularly among women and young people. In the last African Finance Ministers meeting, the African Business Council released a recommendation for 30 percent of all government procurement to go to African SMEs.



**Âurea Mouzinho** is a feminist political economy scholar and organiser from Luanda, Angola. Her work lies at the intersection of research, movement-building, and advocacy to challenge the root-causes of economic inequalities and explore potential pathways to change. She has written on the labour relations in the Angolan urban informal economy, the impact of militarisation and extractivism on violence against women in Mozambique, the challenges to feminist organising in Angola and on the liberatory economic practices of African, Afrodescendant and Black communities around the world. Âurea is a co-founder and co-coordinator of the Ondjango Feminista, a collective of Angolan women defending women's rights from a transformative African feminist perspective that centres justice, freedom, and solidarity. In her contribution's to the collective's work Âurea has reflected on the importance of feminist budget-analysis and the adverse gender-impacts of the structural adjustment programme Angola has been undergoing since 2017 under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund. Âurea was trained in Economics at Monash University (BBusSci, 2012) and the University of Cape Town (BCom Honours, 2013). She holds a Masters in Development Studies from SOAS, University of London (2019).



**Basani Baloyi** is a feminist development economist and activist from South Africa. Currently the Climate Energy and Infrastructure Programme Manager at IEJ, she has extensive research, policy advocacy, communications and alliance building experience. Prior to joining IEJ she was the Oxfam South Africa Inequality Lead in its Economic Justice Unit. She sits on the Advisory Board of the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies at Wits University, a multi-partner research and policy project focusing on understanding and addressing inequality in the global South and building a collaborative southern institution to strengthen and sustain this work.





**Busi Sibeko** is an economist and researcher at the Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ). Busi's research focus is macroeconomic policy, including tax justice, fiscal and monetary policy, and participatory feminist budgeting to advance socio-economic rights. She has been engaged in budget advocacy work in various capacities from training other activists to media engagements. She authored *The Cost Austerity: Lessons for South Africa* and is a co-author of *A Fiscal Stimulus for South Africa*. She considers herself a feminist political economist in training and is determined to be a part of unwinding structural injustice.



**Crystal Simeoni** serves as the Director of the Nawi Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective. She has over 10 years' experience working on macro level inequalities. She currently works on women's rights and macroeconomic policy at regional and global policy spaces - curating spaces and processes and work. This means advocacy work within policy spaces and processes to ensure there is a Pan African feminist analysis influencing policy at continental and global levels. She champions for women at all levels to be able to influence macroeconomic policy decision making and therefore giving balance of power within these platforms and processes.



**Coumba Toure** is a Malian-Senegalese writer, storyteller and public speaker based in Dakar, Senegal where she is the coordinator of Africans Rising for Peace, Justice and Dignity. Her areas of focus are women's human rights, peace, and justice. Through Falia Artist Collective and Production House, she designs and produces educational material such as books, clothes, and games for children and young people. She is a board member of the TrustAfrica Foundation, an organisation that works to strengthen African initiatives that address the most challenging difficulties confronting the continent. She has served on the board of Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights and is an advisor to the Global Fund for Women and the International Development Exchange.



**Dzodzi Tsikata** is a research professor of development sociology and the Director of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, a position she has held since 2016. She has conducted extensive research on gender and development policies and practices, women's movements and gender equality activism, the politics and livelihood effects of land tenure reforms, large scale land acquisitions and agricultural commercialisation, and informal labour relations and conditions of work. She has led research projects on these subjects over the years. Most recently, from 2016 to 2020 she led the Ghana team of DEMETER, a research and development project implemented in Cambodia, Ghana, and Switzerland. The project focused on gender, land, agricultural commercialisation, and the right to food.



**Eunice Musiime** is a Ugandan feminist lawyer and development specialist. She is the Executive Director of Akina Mama wa Afrika, a pan African feminist organisation based in Kampala. She is also the chairperson of FIDA Uganda. Eunice has extensive women's rights and social justice advocacy experience at the national, regional, and international levels. Her primary areas of expertise include feminist transformational leadership, strategic planning, research, advocacy, and movement building. She has actively engaged in influencing regional and international policy processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the annual Commission on the Status of Women, the campaign for the ratification of the Maputo Protocol, the aid effectiveness agenda, and the financing for development agenda.



**Felogene Anumo** is a passionate Kenyan feminist activist with experience in advancing gender and economic justice through grassroots and online activism, research and capacity strengthening of young feminist led organising. Her roots in feminist movement building were planted at the University of Nairobi where she served as the Women Students' Chairperson across 7 campuses. Felogene is currently working for the Association of Women's Rights and Development (AWID) as the Building Feminist Economies Interim Co-Manager. She was formerly Manager of the Young Feminist Activism Program at AWID. Prior to joining AWID, she worked with Women in Law and Development in Africa – Kenya Chapter and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET).



**Ikal Angelie** is the Founder and Programmes Director of Friends of Lake Turkana (FoLT). She founded FoLT while working at the Turkana Basin Institute, an anthropology research centre, to bring together Lake Turkana's divided and marginalised indigenous communities to fight the environmental and social implications of the Gibe 3 dam. As described above, the work of FoLT has since expanded.



**Leah Eryenyu** is the Head of Programmes at Akina Mama wa Afrika where she provides strategic leadership to the team across several African countries in SRHR, Women's Economic Justice, and Women's Political Leadership. Her work looks at the intersection of economic exploitation and gender oppression and its implication for the achievement of broader women's rights. She was previously the Research Advocacy and Movement Building Manager helping steer the organisation's feminist research and knowledge building work, and its women's economic justice portfolio. Her research and writing interests include economic governance focusing on tax justice and illicit financial flows, corporate accountability, and decent work for women, particularly those in global value chains.





**Lebohang Pheko** is a senior research fellow and political economist at Trade Collective and has over 25 years' experience in cross sector leadership. She is well regarded as an activist scholar, public intellectual, international movement builder, and Afrikan feminist theoretician. She is passionate about promoting the use of systems thinking and innovative tools to find Africa-centred and feminist aligned solutions to generate global impact. Lebohang has lived and worked across 42 countries including South Africa, Zambia, Lesotho, Ethiopia, the United Kingdom, Senegal, Switzerland, Brazil, and China giving political and technical solidarity to various institutions, social movements, and organisations.



**Lyn Ossome** is Senior Research Specialist and Feminist Economics Lead at the Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ). Prior to that she was Senior Research Fellow at the Makerere Institute of Social Research, Makerere University. Her specializations are in the fields of feminist political economy and feminist political theory, with research interests in gendered labour, land and agrarian studies, the modern state, and the political economy of gendered violence. She is editorial board member and associate editor of *Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy*, co-editor of the *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, editor of the *Agrarian South Network's Research Bulletin*, and advisory board member of *Feminist Africa*. She is a Senior Research Associate at the University of Johannesburg and serves on several boards including the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa, the International Association for Feminist Economics, and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa.



**Masego Madzwamuse** is Chief Executive Officer of the Southern Africa Trust which has the mandate to strengthen the agency of the poor in regional policy processes. Over the course of her career, she has worked on the rights of communities in conservation and has supported social movements advocating for social and economic justice. Masego was the youngest person and the first female person of colour, to be appointed to lead the Botswana office of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.



**Nancy Kachingwe** is a Malawian-Zimbabwean feminist policy and advocacy strategy advisor based in Harare. Her support to non-governmental organisations includes training, facilitation, analysis, and programme formulation with a feminist political economy lens. Nancy focuses on a wide range of development issues including trade and globalisation, women's rights, and land rights. She is currently an advisor to South Feminist Alternatives. She has previously worked for ActionAid International, Third World Network and MWENGO.



**Samantha Hargreaves** is an African ecofeminist activist with three decades of experience on the land, agrarian and extractives terrain. She has worked as a field worker, researcher, campaigner, strategist, and programme manager in local, South African, African, and international organisations and has consistently volunteered her time and skills to movements, solidarity efforts, campaigns and support organisations working on violence against women and girls. She is the founder of WoMin and currently serves as Director, Head of Programmes and Fundraising lead.



**Sonia Phalatse** is a feminist South African researcher. She is currently a researcher with IEJ where she focuses on the role of the developmental state and state-owned enterprises in South Africa, with a particular focus on the electricity utility company Eskom. Her other research areas include feminist economics and private financing for development objectives. Sonia holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Finance from the University of Cape Town and a Master's degree in Economics from Wits University. Before joining IEJ she worked for CIVICUS and the World Bank in her capacity as an economic consultant.



**Sophie Efange** is a Black feminist of Ethiopian and Cameroonian heritage based in London, UK. She works as the Head of Policy at the Gender and Development Network (GADN) where manages its Feminist Reframing of Macro-level Economics (REFRAME) project. The project seeks to challenge high-level economic decision-making that negatively affects gender equality and women's rights while also working to demystify macro-level economics and build policy alternatives with allies, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Sophie's particular area of expertise is on tax and gender. Currently, she is working to introduce and build GADN's analysis on reparations as part of its feminist macro-level economics work.



**Yassine Fall** is an economist from Senegal. She held the position of Executive Director of the Association of African Women for Research and Development for five years and played an important role in facilitating policy dialogue between African governments, international financial institutions, and women's groups before working in the United Nations system for 15 years. She is a founding member of organisations and networks including the African Women Millennium Initiative on Poverty and Human Rights, the Gender and Economic Reforms in Africa, the International Gender and Trade Network, and the Network of African Women Economists. During this time, she has worked on macroeconomic policy assessments, international trade policies and agreements, debt relief and poverty reduction strategies, emergency relief operations, food security, natural resources management, and land tenure and advised governments in Africa, Latin America and South Asia on economics and poverty eradication strategies.





**Wangari Kinoti** is a Pan Africanist feminist activist currently engaged in global policy advocacy on women's economic justice and structural gender based violence. Over the last 16 years, she has campaigned and implemented programmes through civil society and social justice organizations covering women's political participation, women's land and natural resource rights, corporate accountability, women's paid and unpaid labour and violence against women. She is currently working with other African feminists to document the histories of African feminist organising.



**Dinah Musindarwezo** is an African feminist and Gender and Development expert who is passionate about creating an environment, systems and structures that work favourably for all women and girls without any form of discrimination. For over 13 years, Dinah has dedicated her time to work towards achieving Gender Equality, Women and Girls Human Rights and Empowerment of women and girls through working with national, regional and international NGOs and movements. Dinah is currently the Director of Policy and Communications at Womankind Worldwide where she leads on designing and implementation of influencing strategy and oversees communication strategies.



**Alice D. Kanengoni** is a feminist development practitioner with over 20 years of experience advocating for gender justice and women's rights on the African continent. She has served in regional organisations in roles providing leadership on strategy and programme design, programme management, grant-making and impact assessment. In the last 2 decades, Alice has successfully led the design and implementation of a number of interventions on women's economic justice, including strategies to effectively support self-organizing movements of domestic workers, women cross-border traders, rural women farmers and young women – among other economically marginalized groups in Africa. Her work has contributed towards shaping Afro-centric discourses on feminist macroeconomics – having co-conceptualised and supported the rolling out of an African feminist macroeconomics annual school intervention.



**Memory Zonde-Kachambwa** is the Executive Director at the African Women's Development and Communication Network (known as FEMNET). Memory is a pan African feminist, gender and women's rights activist, with over 18 years' experience developing, managing and implementing programs promoting women and girls rights regionally and globally. A seasoned cross cultural thought leader and strategist bridging national, regional, global women's rights networks with policy leaders. She is a board member of the award-winning UNESCO Female Students Support Network Trust in Zimbabwe, which assists young women in tertiary institutions in fighting gender based violence. She was named by apolitical among the top 100 women in gender policy in 2019 and is a SheDecides champion.



## B. ANALYSIS OF THE EMERGING LANDSCAPE


This section offers a preliminary overview analysis of the mapping of above actors in terms of dominant thematic sectors, geographic scope, arenas of engagement, and the gaps observed.

### I. Thematic Areas / Sectors

*Budget tracking/ gender responsive budgeting* came through the most consistently within the data as an area of engagement for organisations looking at women and the economy. FOWODE are the known pioneers of gender responsive budgeting on the continent and within the Uganda context in particular, but other organisations spoke to the importance of this area in one capacity or another, including Akina Mama wa Afrika, EVA, IEJ, and Friends of Lake Turkana. For FOWODE, it has proven to be an entry point for engagement with the macroeconomy, although also arguably seen as “baby steps” towards macroeconomic influencing. Foundational on the one hand due to its direct engagement with fiscal policy, on its own it still remains beholden to issues of non-gender responsive governance overall and the need for reforms in other critical areas such as taxation, and debt. In the latter for example, even if substantial influence within gender responsive budgeting has been achieved, the increase in debt means that fundamentally the fiscal pot is already heavily squeezed - there is no money left. For women’s rights organisations looking at how to make an initial move into macroeconomic landscape when pre-existing work has followed more known areas of gender work such as SHRH and VAWG, GRBs and education, budget tracking and how to influence conversations around developing budgets around these sectors and issues provides that entry point. This is particularly important given that many organisations are engaged with SDG processes. For EVA in Nigeria and following training by FEMNET’s AFMA in 2019, this was one of the spaces of initial exploration, looking specifically at how to push the government to fund GBV services, for example through legislating the creation of a fund that will allow continuity regardless of government changes. For a broader focused organisation like IEJ that is attempting to bring gender and feminist economic frameworks into its engagement, budget justice is already a part of their broader macroeconomics work, and they are currently working bringing a more consistent feminist lens to this.

*Natural resources, extractivism, climate justice and ecology* are areas that have strong engagement with women’s rights activism on the continent over decades, and these play a critical role in challenging the overarching orthodox macroeconomic policy frameworks that perpetuate the exploitative nature of capitalist growth dominating trajectories on the continent. Within this mapping two organisations in particular have a clear focus in this area: WoMIN and Friends of Lake Turkana, both of which were founded either as part of broad based mobilisation on the issues and in response to corporate extractivist incursions at community levels. The work and engagement have natural synergy with climate justice and ecological considerations. The linkages between these issues and macroeconomic decision-making dominating the continent are strong given the continued dominance of growth-led economic models and reliance on primary resources as major contributors to national outputs. As a result, donors interested in feminist engagement with macro processes such as OSIWA have also highlighted this as one of the areas of strategic focus within their own grant-making. However, there remain question marks over how to move the inherently localised activist underpinnings of organisational work on these issues into wider policy spaces, and whether that process in itself will lead to compromises that undermine their premise.





**Tax justice, IFFs, and debt**, as with budgets, came through in the work of several WROs such as Akina Mama wa Afrika and FOWODE, looking specifically at the issue through a gender lens. However, there is still a prevailing view that the WROs working on this on the continent are “thinly spread”. As the primary area of work for TJNA, attempts have been made to bring in a gender lens into the work, and this has involved working collaboratively where possible. Other organisations like Friends of Lake Turkana have also started to look at how tax justice and illicit financial flows intersect with their own work and activism although the work there needs further development. In their strategic approaches, donor organisations also highlighted tax justice, and to a certain extent debt particularly on the back of the COVID-19 economic fallout, as core areas of engagement that they are keen to expand within portfolios of work. The momentum around the intersection of feminist economics and tax justice has been growing in recent years. It is also seen as an area of increased opportunity for engagement by feminists and women’s rights organisations, as national governments have started to focus on the messaging around IFFs in particular and the role this plays in the continent’s developmental challenges. but significant work is still needed at national levels for meaningful engagement by women’s rights actors to own the positions and arguments pertaining to it.


**Trade** is the area that WROs had the least direct engagement with, with some – like Akina Mama wa Afrika and AWDF looking at possible opportunities in the future and how this can be realised as support for other organisations wishing to engage with the work. However, the most prominent work is based within SEATINI, who have been attempting to bring-in a gender lens into their work for some time now. The Southern Africa Trust is also engaged with trade work, albeit primarily with a focus on cross-border trade issues. The challenge of scarcity in organisations that successfully intersect trade with feminist framing is nonetheless a persistent one, although stakeholders do recognise the importance of this in areas of engagement going forward, as noted by Friends of Lake Turkana. Donor focus on trade as a feminist area of engagement is mixed, coming through strongly with OSIWA – who are looking to engage more deeply in the space within West Africa if possible and more especially through the AfCFTA – but less so with Hewlett.

**Labour / work, care and social protection** has yet to come through consistently and clearly through a macroeconomic frame across the organisations reviewed, with the exception perhaps of PaKasipiti and to a certain extent This Ability. It is possible that with the landscape of women’s work dominated by women’s economic empowerment approaches, this continues to be an area neglected by the spectrum of organisations across the continent. Similarly, care work and social protection has also not come through as strongly across the different organisations reviewed beyond within the broader framing of gender responsive budgeting and budget tracking.

## II. Geographies

Based on the data so far, this mapping has shown a greater number of organisations from the Eastern and Southern regions of Africa. Only business women’s associations (such as EBWA) have been identified in North Africa while there is also a deficit in West Africa. The extent to which the low turn-out for both these regions is as a result of lack of presence or the inherent challenge of anglophone/ francophone/ lusophone disconnect that sometimes exists when attempting to make linkages across that divide is still unclear.

However, despite the above, there is still some pan-African focus to the work being deployed. For example, despite being a South Africa based organisation, WoMIN is working effectively across other regions including within several countries in West Africa and maintains pan-



African alliances with partner organisations. TJNA works in similar ways. AWDF also has grant-making across the continent, although as indicated in their interview the macroeconomic focus of their work remains minimal at present. For the most part however, the organisations reviewed tend to work within their own national contexts and, while they are part of coalition building across national borders, these joint efforts tend to focus on other sectors (such as sexual and reproductive health and rights) rather than macroeconomic policy influencing.

### III. Arenas of Engagement

The primary arena of engagement for the majority of WROs reviewed is at the national level. The notable exception to this is WoMIN. There is also a strong focus to the work at sub-national level, with the review indicating that for many WROs the most effective areas of engagement are at the local levels where people, knowledge, and activism can more readily coalesce. Local processes also, whether community based or through devolved municipal institutions (state, district etc), offer greater entry points for meaningful engagement, with several respondents indicating that attempting to work at the national level on macroeconomic framing remains a challenge. This issue of the micro/macro divide will be revisited later within this report.

For the broader think tanks and organisations reviewed, engagement at both national, continental and in multilateral spaces is happening, with organisations like SEATINI and TJNA involved in discussions and advocacy at AU and in global fora, while also engagement in national level issues and opportunities within the countries they are based in (Uganda and Kenya respectively in this case).

For the donors reviewed, a clear call is the need to find and have deeper engagements with WROs on the continent that are interested in pursuing macroeconomic work but also have solid representative voices at community, national, and regional levels.

### IV. Gaps

Several key areas emerged as thematic gaps to varying degrees. For example, several interviews identified **unpaid care** as a gap when it comes to consistent focus for African feminists compared to what you might find in other regions. As a result, there is not as much analysis coming from this area in comparison to a region like Latin America whereby contrast where this is a huge area of focus. However, a critical factor in this issue may also be that the discourse of unpaid care has been so heavily framed by global northern and white feminist realities, the space for African feminist engagement with the issue has been available. One respondent also pointed out that unpaid care work in global north is framed within contexts where basic services are provided, and this does change the narrative of engagement right at entry point based on the lived point of departure. In many African contexts there is simply the need for basic services. This is “the African call”. Care work currently looks a particular way because these remain consistently absent.

**Financialisation** is also a major gap in terms of amounts of analysis and levels of engagements. However, conversations within this mapping also indicated that feminist groups have been wanting to talk more about this recently. Pre-pandemic and leading up to 2020, financialisation was an area that many wanted to engage with further, but COVID-19 has stalled that momentum somewhat as analysis has moved towards pandemic impacts, recovery, and post-COVID futures (despite the fact that understanding and challenging financialisation is critical for post-COVID realities). One of the challenges

around this area is that its analysis is far too technical and out of reach of non-academics and specialists working on the area. But definitely more work needed here.

Some interviewees also noted that *social protection and decent work* are not being pushed within Africa as much as you might find in other regions, although a few countries - like South Africa - offer some exception to this.

As noted in the sections above, some of the more dominant areas of feminist and women's rights engagement have been around tax and debt, which align with the major issues of macroeconomic focus on the continent. Also, some areas are conceived narrowly, for example when discussing natural resources, there is a tendency to focus on extraction rather than also include other relevant areas such as agriculture and carbon credits. Some interviewees saw this as partially as a result of the need to meet decision makers in their national and regional contexts and to "meet them where the energy is". Another respondent spoke of how much of what is done remains framed by the narrow construction of what macroeconomics means in the dominant neoliberal discourse, where the language of growth, inflation, currency controls and employment continue to use a language that doesn't actually describe what feminists want, such as the growth of shared wealth. One respondent saw this as the first overarching challenge for feminists and women's rights activists going forward within this space, where the lack of creativity within the language of macroeconomics as used by policy makers and others simply doesn't describe what many are trying to do. Another respondent indicated that prioritising issues also need to be a collective decision so that areas of focus alongside gaps at least have some cohesion and can lead to clear sequencing of how to address what and all that is needed over time.





## C. KEY CHALLENGES

Actors discussed their challenges in working on the intersection of women's rights and macroeconomic policy:

### ***1. Women's rights and macroeconomics are both technically specialist areas and there are fewer people with the confidence and knowledge to work at this intersection.***

Macroeconomics is often presented as a complex topic needing high levels of education and expertise prior to engagement which, combined with the gendered ways many women are socialised and the lack of women working in this arena, means there is lack of critical mass of people, groups, and platforms taking feminist approaches to macroeconomics. As one AFMA graduate said when asked about main challenges to engaging in this work: "The language and self doubt. I sometimes feel that I am not grounded enough to be writing and speaking about macroeconomics. This is something I am working towards getting over." Conversely, most organisations with strong macroeconomic analyses do not integrate feminist perspectives into this work or prioritise moving towards becoming more gender transformational. Alternatively, male-led organisations are reluctant to claim space that they believe should be afforded to women's rights organisations. While questions of representations are importation, this defence can sometimes cover for lack of interest in gender or commitment to feminist perspectives among progressive economic justice organisations. Notwithstanding this reality, many feminists working for and with these organisations engage in influencing them in this regard and are seeing impact. There are opportunities for cross movement collaboration (more below) but often the time, resources, and strategising required for this is missing.

### ***2. Donor pressures and funding opportunities lead women's rights organisations away from developing macroeconomic expertise.***

Many feminists interviewed for this baseline said they are unable to reflect, be strategic, and engage collectively with others on the macroeconomy and develop this area of work despite wishing to do so due to lack of long-term, flexible funding, few resources for macroeconomic work, and pressure to raise funds and undertake subsequent project work to keep their organisations afloat. These reflections were made against a context whereby the increased attention and funding for women's rights continues to not result in increased budgets for women's rights organisations as much of the funds are disbursed via international NGOs. Most mainstream donors not only shore up economic orthodox in their development programming but are only interested in 'traditional' women's rights projects, for example on violence against women and girls or micro level women's economic empowerment. As one feminist from West Africa said, "We would like to do this work but who will give us money for it plus our bandwidth is already occupied. Donors like nice and tidy logframes and results frameworks [and will fund domestication of laws without thinking] what implementation looks like: what are the macroeconomic implications of [violence against women and girls legislation]?" Another feminist from Southern Africa working on LGBTQI rights spoke about how funding focuses on issues of violence, rights, and protection from and by the state such as health, HIV, sexual and reproductive rights, and strategic litigation but does not support macroeconomic work. At the same time, the small number of donors who fund economic justice work and want to support feminist analysis and mobilisation in this space not only receive very proposals from women's rights organisations but also see few such organisations with track records working on macroeconomics that they can support. Another respondent from Southern Africa also indicated that there is a real danger of northern donors now utilising the language of inclusivity and even decolonisation as a shallow exercise that will simply "throw in a few bones" without addressing the inherent problems at play.



### **3. Many activists see a futility in engaging patriarchal and extractive governments where mainstream economic orthodoxy has become entrenched.**

The strength and resources of mainstream orthodox actors and their entrenchment in corridors of power as well as public narratives in most African countries creates few incentives for feminists to build capacity and programmes of work in macroeconomics. Respondents spoke of already struggling against backlash and seeing entering the macroeconomic space as another heavy lift in societies with very capitalist notions of economic success, where not even doctors believe in universal healthcare, and where decision makers benefit from the current system. They spoke of the ineffectuality of gender budgeting and budget tracking work given the small size of government budgets, the scale of national debt, and the impossibility of convincing key actors to move towards alternative development trajectories. Further, respondents spoke of encountering dilemmas around instrumentalization when engaging governments and having to think through how incentives are aligned for decision makers without instrumentalising women's rights. As a result, some feminists refrain from engaging in policy influencing: "Our governments are so heavily aligned with neoliberalism, and because of this [our organisation] has stayed clear of "internal" work - the work of trying to reform institutional thinking from within" (feminist from Southern Africa).

### **4. Given the strength of mainstream orthodox thinking and the likelihood and timeframes of influencing success, many feminists choose to concentrate on work with more immediate impact**

**on women's lives.** With limited financial and human resources, activists and their organisations need to make decisions of where to focus time. As a result, they often choose areas where impact is more immediate rather than macroeconomic policy influencing work, which is longer term, full of vested interests, and where demands are against the interests of those in power. As one feminist working on disability rights in East Africa said, "If you ask me to choose between working on macroeconomics or access to safe abortion, I will say safe abortion every time even though I know there is a link between SRHR and macroeconomics." Particularly for groups working on the intersection of patriarchy and other forms of marginalisation and social exclusion in hostile environments such as feminist LGBTQI rights organisations, it has been difficult to expand focus away from a sole concentration against violence and for the right to exist and be safe. Where organisations have started to work on economic justice, it has often been the result of having to make hard decisions to drop other crucial work.

### **5. Feminists find it difficult to engage in collective strategic approaches to combat their absence from key spaces where decisions are taken behind closed doors without transparency.**

The lack of funding and small numbers of people working on women's rights and macroeconomics discussed above means feminists are unable to jointly strategise how to insert themselves and their analyses and build allies in important decision-making spaces and processes. The attrition of intellectuals from the continent and close links between civil society and the state are other factors hindering this collective approach. Respondents who work in these areas spoke of the amount of work required to do this influencing work, the impossibility of doing so for all relevant spaces, and the need for more numbers and joint working of actors with feminist perspectives to plug gaps in capacity to engage, coordinate, and follow up.



## **6. While feminist approaches to macroeconomic policy is a growing body of work, there is a lack of intersectional analysis and action.**

Current analysis does not sufficiently disaggregate along intersectional lines beyond saying that certain groups are marginalised or most affected, for example examining the concrete impacts of policies on women and girls with disabilities, how the withdrawal of the state from basic services and other regressive macroeconomic shifts has contributed to anti LGBTQI discourse and violence, or how African governments form anti- or pro-rights alliances based on bilateral trade agreements and other areas of economic interest. This gap is partly as a result of the relatively small numbers of people working on macroeconomics in a feminist and intersectional way but also as few people who experience discrimination, exclusion, and marginalisation in intersectional ways are able to engage in macroeconomic analysis, thought leadership, and policy development.

## **7. Lack of data and evidence constrains feminist and intersectional analysis.**

A lack of 'rigorous' data and analysis, often seen as being predominantly quantitative in nature, can be used as an excuse to constrain action. Not disaggregating data and making it available are conscious political and gendered decisions. While feminists engage in data and evidence collection to give useful insights, respondents said that the lack of data collected and disaggregated by the government, is a major roadblock to conducting analysis to inform policy influencing work.

## **8. A focus on representation and tokenism gives the illusion of progress without shifting underlying power dynamics and mainstream orthodoxy.**

Having African women in positions of power in the World Bank, IMF and WTO has meant little for women on the continent as these women often do not hold feminist positions or seek to critically disrupt these mainstream spaces. Likewise, the push to have separate chapters on women or gender within trade agreements rather than ensure entire documents are gender sensitive means these agreements continue to have negative impacts on women. Respondents expressed their frustration with those, including women's rights organisations, who see such developments as wins with a respondent working in Eastern and Southern Africa saying, "The energy people are putting in to get a gender chapter is very diversional. They are fighting for that chapter and leave out the entire agreement then congratulate themselves for getting the chapter when the whole agreement is flawed." This overall issue is arguably heavily driven by global northern organisations and not necessarily the narrative of African women's rights groups, but without the funding and space to determine priorities and analysis this issue remains a challenge based on more dominant global agendas.

## **9. Shrinking civic space and attacks against human rights defenders on the continent divert energy from macroeconomic policy influencing work and also disincentive engaging in it.**

Civic space has deteriorated across the continent with governments seeking to control NGOs through increasingly restrictive legislation and regulation, the rise of new means of digital surveillance, crackdown on protests and demonstrations and arrests, intimidation, and other attacks against activists and journalists. While those working on economic justice do not seem to be particularly targeted yet, potentially because they are not seen as a threat to the status quo, a number of AFMA graduates mentioned shrinking civic space and reduced space to hold governments accountable as a challenge when it comes to macroeconomic policy influencing and these trends divert attention and can deter challenging power.






## D. FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

### I. The Current Moment

**1. Catalysing on a growing unhappiness with the status quo and increased interest in feminist macroeconomic analysis to socialise, analyse, and action economic alternatives.** There is growing critique of neoliberalism and realisation that significant shifts are needed in national and global economies, interest in alternative, people-centred, pro-poor, and feminist models of development, and disruption of the idea that macroeconomics can be left to those with 'expertise'. Concurrently, feminist analysis of macroeconomic policy is a growing area where more actors are engaging and prioritising. Some areas of this analysis, for example childcare, have started to enter mainstream political discourse and decision-making spaces. Particularly given the demographics of many countries on the continent and the numbers of young people who have received little from the government but who will be left to bear the brunt of national debt, respondents spoke of the need to continue to push feminist critiques of current economic orthodoxy and economic alternatives into the mainstream. The increasing numbers of people trained in feminist macroeconomics through AFMA and the Institute for Economic Justice Summer School provide a database of people who can be supported and mentored to carry out this work. A number of AFMA graduates stressed the need to invest in passing on and making macroeconomic knowledge more accessible and the importance of mentors to enable them to do this work. Some graduates, most notably in Rwanda and Malawi (see above), are already starting to engage in consciousness raising and knowledge transfer within feminist movements at the national level.

**2. The African Continental Free Trade Agreement has garnered more attention and interest in trade which can be utilised to push for feminist engagement in how this process develops.** There is disquiet about the speed of implementation of the AfCFTA and resulting economic shocks, difficulties of the indigenous private sector to compete, and the impacts on women's lives and livelihoods. This provides an entry point for engagement with African governments on how to ensure a more just and equitable trade agreement and good prospect for funding for this work. AfCFTA presents an opportunity for engagement on feminist trade issues that speaks directly to the continent's needs and can be a huge opportunity for organised feminist engagement. This would require engagement at national, sub-regional and regional levels, firstly by working where possible with the national processes involved in the AfCFTA, and then moving out more broadly to the regional configurations where issues such as harmonised regional value chains are being debated, and then to the African level including bodies such as UNECA and the AU, as well as the newly inaugurated AfCFTA Secretariat based in Accra. The prospects for alliances with the African Business Council, which aims to serve as the voice of the African private sector, should be explored. More broadly, if feminist engagement with the AfCFTA can be harnessed to challenge the current multilateral trading system more globally, this can provide a further entry point for more targeted feminist engagement at the WTO and UNCTAD.

**3. Current crises offer the chance to imagine post COVID-19 and climate just economic recovery. There is great interest among women's rights, economic justice, and environmental movements** alike in imagining alternative futures, particularly given the disproportionate gendered impacts of both the pandemic and climate change. According to a feminist working at



the pan-African level, “COVID-19 has shaken up what the world sees as priorities including a lot of issues feminists have highlighted for years. We can build off this and push for things we have wanted for so long and argue for why current policies are limited and not working. We can influence future macroeconomic policies by highlighting disparities even more evident due to COVID, for example argue that privatisation of healthcare does not work and can you see the effects of this.” Similarly, many respondents saw a need to think through what climate just macroeconomic transitions look like from African perspectives.

#### **4. Specific entry points exist in different national contexts.**

For example, a respondent from Nigeria spoke about inserting feminist analysis into the discussion around illicit financial flows and what money returned will be used to finance while a respondent in Uganda raised the need to engage in current growth of the natural resources sector and influence discussions around taxation and budgets. In South Africa, one respondent spoke of building on the work being done on fiscal multipliers, such as social grants. A deeper look into what fiscal multipliers can be used is needed, but without falling into an instrumentalist narrative.

**5. Strategising to seed opportunities for moments of political change is difficult yet critical.** Given opportunities to influence policy making can be non-linear, unexpected, and difficult to predict, some respondents emphasised the need to think through trajectories and scenarios, develop preparedness, and proactively create opportunities by building policy connections outside specific agendas.

## **II. Spaces**

**1. Improved collective action across sectors and movements is needed to infiltrate decision-making spaces.** Areas of increased collaboration identified include between feminist, economic justice, and environmental/climate change activists and movements to build joint analysis and action. Activists who do not currently engage in macroeconomic policy influencing work but would like to start doing so spoke of a need for knowledge transfer, information sharing, technical support, and mentoring so they are able to conduct analysis and engage in advocacy work themselves. Conversely, feminist who work on macroeconomics highlighted the need to have spaces to come together to think through alternatives, jointly strategise and engage in solidarity actions, particularly as macroeconomic shifts that occur in one country can soon appear in its neighbours. According to one such respondent, “We should notice trends as what happens in Kenya will trickle down to Uganda and vice versa in a few months so when Uganda proposes ridiculous things, Kenyan activists should keep watch as Kenya government may pick this up. We should be deliberate about solidarity actions with early warning translating into pre-emptive action.”

**2. There is still a small cluster of spaces where decisions are being made that affect everybody where more feminist engagement is needed.** These are the IMF and World Bank spaces, but also the G7, G20, and Financing for Development Forum. It is critical that African feminists engaging with the economy start to work more actively in “non-gendered” spaces, or spaces where gender is not the focus. Potential allies in this regard may be Feminists for a Binding Treaty which is





advocating for accountability of international financial institutions within a draft treaty on business and human rights and working with those engaged in SDG review processes particularly evaluating the impacts of private financing for development. Further, recent creative uses of the Human Rights Council for special sessions on Palestine and anti-Black racism may open options to build alliances with States using the more democratic nature of the Human Rights Council where every State has an equal voice which can then be used to push for change with international financial institutions and others.

**3. There are entry points to inject African feminist macroeconomic perspectives into women's right spaces.**

One area ripe with potential is sensitising CEDAW Committee members on macroeconomics and injecting this analysis in NGO shadow reporting and influencing that accompany state party reporting to CEDAW. IWRAP, which facilitates NGO engagement in CEDAW processes, has expressed interest in working with African feminists focused on macroeconomics to introduce these perspectives with a view to clarifying CEDAW's relevance to macroeconomics. Areas where there are entry points include feminist analysis of the care economy, austerity, trade policies, tax justice, and the impact of debt on delivery of public services.

**4. Regional economic fora are also increasingly opening up to the idea of engagement on women's rights issues, and the opportunity for African feminists to own that engagement on macroeconomic issues (rather than have the narrative co-opted) is critical.**

This includes spaces like convenings around the AU Vision 2063, the African Union Finance Ministers Meeting, the Tana Forum, and the various meetings of the African Development Bank, among others.

**5. From a strategic perspective, African feminists may also want to look more closely at direct engagement with the Black Lives Matter movement, which has an affinity with the push towards decolonisation of aid and development more broadly.**

Conversations have moved rapidly on the BLM and decolonial fronts, and although BLM may not have picked-up as much in Africa, it can be used effectively as a partner in the decolonising movement. For example, this can be linked to issues on global wealth transfers and on debt and its conditionalities. When placed within the context of bigger broader movements such as BLM, a conversation around reparations for example can also begin. The BLM movement are also supportive allies on questions around care.





## III. Thematic Areas/Sectors

### ***1. There is an important opening for influencing with regards unpaid care work, brought to the fore by the pandemic.***

Related to this, a southern African feminist respondent indicated that there is a definite opportunity to escalate focus around the crisis of social reproduction right now from a feminist position, as this has hit home in a very meaningful way during the COVID-19 pandemic. She called for African feminist economist to quantify the experience wherever possible. Most importantly, ensuring that care work analysis and influencing is led driven by African feminist positions in response to the continent's contexts, as opposed to simply retrofitting into global northern frameworks, is key.

### ***2. Interest in violence against women and girls can be leveraged to consider how macroeconomic policies can contribute to***

***change.*** Integrating feminist perspective into macroeconomic policy influencing means addressing issues of security, violence and precarity that affect the lives of many women, girls and trans and non-binary people. At the same time, thinking through the macroeconomic implications of anti VAWG legislation and policies is an area in which feminists may be able to engage both governments and donors.

***3. Closing the macro/micro chasm.*** There is increasing focus on enabling livelihoods and financial independence even among organisations which do not have a women's economic empowerment mandate as it is seen as key to other aspects of women's rights ranging from bodily autonomy to participation in decision making. While this work tends to be currently concentrated at the micro level, there are possibilities of encouraging organisations to also engage at the macro level. For example, in conversation as part of this review with a Nigerian feminist respondent working in the VAWG space, it became clear that an analysis of what would be needed at the macroeconomic level if Nigeria's VAPP Bill was to be successfully implemented could be a clear and targeted piece of research that would provide feminists and WROs working on the Bill additional leverage in economic spaces whilst creating wider coalitions with those - including feminist economists - working in the economic justice space.



## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

### **1. Conduct a regional-level mapping of organisations and individuals to get a fuller and more nuanced picture of other organisations and individuals.**

This mapping has allowed a preliminary overview based on the more visible actors engaged in the work. However, it is apparent that there are many others engaged in this work at various levels who could not be captured. Regional level mappings would allow for a more complete picture, possibly closing the geographic gaps identified above. Engagement with respondents for this report helped to hone the framework presented above and can be used as a starting point for any further mapping.

### **2. Support AFMA graduates, through collaboration between FEMNET and Nawi, to do macroeconomic policy influencing going forwards with resourcing and mentoring.**

The survey showed AFMA graduates are motivated towards macroeconomic policy influencing but do not have support to engage in this work. In order to sustain this interest, support from FEMNET and Nawi would allow for them to action and build on what they have learned, creating a growing cohort of macroeconomic feminist activists that remain part of collective and avoiding the isolation that may develop once they have completed the course. This support should include both resourcing (with potentially the final session of AFMA geared towards developing concept notes to be submitted for funding) and mentoring to deliver the intervention identified. Donor support could also be solicited to fund a certain number of programmes proposed by AFMA graduates through this process.

### **3. Establish a periodic gathering on feminist macroeconomics in Africa.**

This will provide space for the community to get to know each other, share work, explore themes, note gaps, and collectively plan action around key issues at national, regional, and continental level. This will also allow the community to build on the foundations of this mapping by keeping sight of each other and drawing others working on the issues into the space. The format and nature of these gatherings can be explored further, with various options to engage with (e.g., annual conference / think-in / workshops, bi-annual or quarterly targeted and themed meetings, or even regionally focused meetings to complement the larger continental events).

### **4. Undertake a more comprehensive and targeted mapping of potential funders interested in feminist / women's rights macroeconomic work.**

As the primary focus of this work was on African organisations working on the issues, it was not possible to provide a full funder mapping. One of the key findings of this mapping however has been the challenge that women's rights organisations face in relation to donor expectations around their work, constraining their thematic space, time, and budgets to engage with macroeconomic issues. Similarly, indications from this mapping suggest that donors are also keen to find WROs who are interested in proposing feminist macroeconomic work. A targeted donor mapping would be a useful exercise and tool to help address this.

### **5. Work with universities, starting with those on the continent, to develop and revise modules on feminist macroeconomics, either as stand alone or to be integrated into degree programmes.**

This would specifically target economics students but could also include other disciplines. This intervention could be done with others who have started similar approaches already, such as IEJ.

Women's Rights & Macroeconomic  
Engagement in Africa: A Mapping

Chitra Nagarajan & Fatimah Kelleher  
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