

Strengthening the Continental African Women's Movement towards
a New Value-Based Eco-System



African Women in Dialogue:

“WOMEN’S VOICE AND POWER
AS AGENTS OF CHANGE”



Buen Viaje/ Saalamu / Tsamayang hantle / Au revoir / Farewell

ع يدوت

The last five days have been a revelation of the creativity, diversity, sensitivity, tenacity and ingenuity of African women. We have all been truly blessed and empowered by the offerings of each speaker, each participant, each volunteer and each sponsor who has contributed to creating the AfWID platform for all African women to dialogue.

Every discussion, debate and question raised has been heartfelt, sincere and thought-provoking. As we part ways on Friday 08 November to head back to each of our 55 different countries, we go back united in spirit as an African nation of woman-kind. We also go back united in our commitment to take practical steps to action the many excellent ideas proposed that have the potential to transform Africa in a way that will make a meaningful difference to our quality of life as African women. The struggles and challenges we face are common to us all. The solutions to them surely also reside within us all as well, founded on the love we have for each other.

Beyond the five days we spent together, the dialogue continues. AfWID 2019 has been a powerful platform for connecting, sharing, and reflecting. It has brought us closer to our true selves and closer to each other. There are many more women in our communities back home who did not participate in person, but are looking to us to take this conversation further and to draw them into the circle of solution creators. As you go, we ask that you share what you have learnt from each other, as well as activate your big ideas that will take this beautiful continent of ours and all her people into a prosperous future.

We are indeed the ones we have been waiting for.

The AfWID Secretariat and the Founder

Pictured: Back row: Nonhlanhla Masemola; Luz Helena Hanauer; Zanele Mbeki; Naledi Maite; Sibongile Tshabalala;
Front Row: Samantha Sibanda and Linda Vilakazi

Zanele Mbeki

Africa in all her Glory

Reporter: Hawa Mayere



Leading up to the second African Women In Dialogue (AfWID) forum, 1000 women arrived from all five regions of Africa. The arrival of the participants has always been an exciting experience for participants, many of whom left their countries for the first time in order to have an opportunity to interact with other participants from across the continent.

From early morning hours to late evening, women arrived in their beautiful, colorful and vibrant African prints. Hailing from all corners of Africa, some made it by air, others by road and others by train.

Upon arrival from Morocco, education student Asmae Oubaba (19) said: "I am excited but tired, as we have been traveling for 24 hours."

The distinctive relationship that African women have built with each other throughout the decades, was expressed in terms of their shared fashion sense, high spirits and positive energy.

The reception area was filled with the exquisite images of women from West Africa in their striking Ankara print dresses, multi-coloured attire from the South, and the exceptional Northern attire of the matching Shams/ Hijab (head scarf) and Baati/Abaya (long dresses).

The foyer was a beautiful babel of different languages, including French, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Kiswahili, IsiZulu and English to mention a few. All the women had one desire in common; to discuss how to reshape African society for the betterment of all and how to come together to strengthen the women's movement in Africa.





Day One: AfWID Opening Session

Reporter: Nonkululeko Muravha

“African queens gather to emphasise women’s voices and power as agents of change”.

The African continent comprises 55 countries. Sixteen (16) participants from each of these were invited to attend a conference anchored by modern day queens of the African continent. The aim was to empower and equip all participants to become agents of change within their respective nations.

Participants were warmly welcomed with the beat of African drums, along with the sweet melodies of Marimba music performed by a group of four young and talented women from Daveyton, namely Thandi Dube, Glenrose Ndlovu, Zinhle Ndlane and Naledi Nkabinde, also known as “the Goddess”.

As the participants made their way into the main hall, they were further welcomed by the “Wits Choir” singing the AU Anthem, followed by the South African National Anthem.

The crowd settled, and Programme Director Lebogang Chaka, CEO and founder of Afro Visionary Legacy, a strategic advisory and public speaking firm with a focus on Africa and its diaspora, took participants through the programme for the day.

On stage Lebogang welcomed Mu-Aalima Amya Fakude, who led a multi-faith devotion before the programme officially started.

She made a passionate plea for understanding that leadership is not about the people who have been appointed to lead, but about the people who have appointed those people to lead. “The problem in Africa,” she noted, “is not about our leaders.” She continued by saying that “we have to learn from our mother, Mrs Zanele Mbeki. People will only heal when they dialogue. I would like us to pray, to go to our communities to begin to dialogue, to find out from our people what they want, and then to take it to our leaders, to say this is what the people want.”

Gogo Vela Maseko took African women back to their roots in calling upon the ancestors and inviting the presence of the Holy Spirit to the event.

Adv Mojanku Gumbi, a ZMDT Trustee, provided a beautiful welcoming message, explaining what the forum of AfWID was about, and, on the issue of protecting women’s rights. Gumbi reminded the women of Africa that they were the descendants of great warrior women that gave them the early examples of what they saw as freedom today. She observed that it would indeed be freedom if women continued to fight until women didn’t have to fight anymore to be recognised as being deserving of a liberated and violence-free nation.

“We know the challenges that women face and we have to raise our collective voices to bring about the necessary changes” she said.

She quoted Bob Marley, saying, “Who feels it, knows it, Lord”. She said that women were the ones who experience the most serious challenges, therefore only women could say what and how they wanted those changes to be. “Until we become our own women, we will not stop fighting to protect our own kind,” she added. She encouraged the crowd to voice out their views, since “no view is wrong”...

Ms Editar Ochieng, founder of the Feminist for Peace, Rights and Justice Centre in Kenya, shared her painful experience of rape and how she survived the trauma and pulled herself together to protect others, explaining that “the question I ask whenever I’m being asked why I do what I do is ‘Do you want it to happen again to other women?’ and that seems to give them the answer to their question...”

Wits Choir Profile

Reporter: Pfarelo Muthige

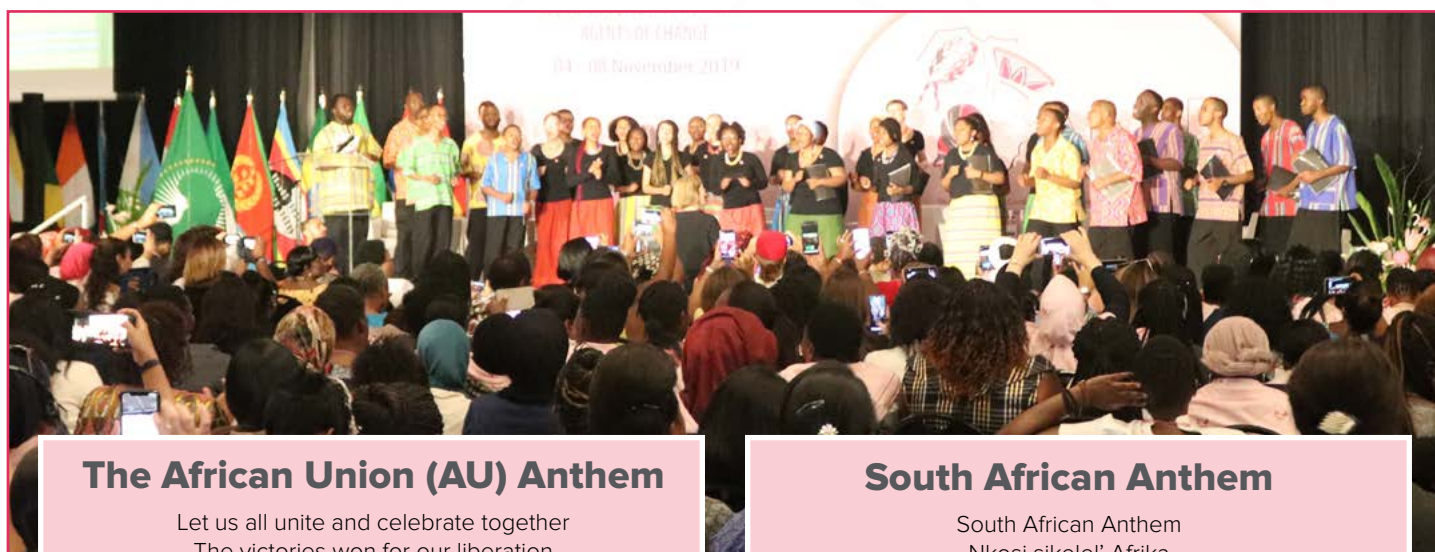
As African women embarked on a journey of a week in dialogue, the participants were serenaded with soulful African sounds by the Wits University Choir.

The Wits Choir is now in its 56th year of existence, and is also celebrating 25 years of excellence under the direction of Dalene Hoogenhout, as she was appointed to reconstitute the choir as an independent and representative ensemble of high musical standards at Wits University in 1994. The Choir has brought the music of the African continent to many audiences, and also to other choirs, both locally and internationally, during numerous tours and outreach projects over the years.

Membership is open to all, resulting in a fully representative choir, drawn from diverse national and international cultures.

Wits Choir is a South African choir that celebrates diversity and embodies the principle of Ubuntu. The choir encourages the individual to flourish in a respectful and accepting environment whilst shaping socially responsible, open, confident and sincere human beings.

The mission of the Wits Choir is to achieve excellence in choral performance whilst sharing the enjoyment of the universal language that is music.



The African Union (AU) Anthem

Let us all unite and celebrate together
The victories won for our liberation
Let us dedicate ourselves to rise together
To defend our liberty and unity

O sons and daughters of Africa
Flesh of the sun and flesh of the Sky
Let us make Africa the tree of life
Let us all unite and sing together
To uphold the bonds that frame our destiny
Let us dedicate ourselves to fight together
For lasting peace and justice on earth

O sons and daughters of Africa
Flesh of the sun and flesh of the sky
Let us make Africa the tree of life

Let us all unite and toil together
To give the best we have to Africa
The cradle of mankind and fount of culture
Our pride and hope at break of dawn

O sons and daughters of Africa
Flesh of the sun and flesh of the sky
Let us make Africa the tree of life.

South African Anthem

South African Anthem
Nkosi sikelel' Afrika
Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo,
Yizwa imithandazo, yethu,
Nkosi sikelela, thina,
Iusapho lwayo.

Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso,
O fedise dintwa la matshwenyeho
O se boloke
O se boloke setjhaba sa heso,
Setjhaba sa South Afrika

- South Africa.
Uit die blou van onse hemel,
Uit die diepte van ons see,
Oor ons ewige gebergtes,
Waar die kranse antwoord gee,

Sounds the call to come together,
And united we shall stand,
Let us live and strive for freedom,
In South Africa our land...

Speech by Adv Mojanku Gumbi

On The Occasion of the 2019 Edition of the AfWID, Birchwood Hotel, November 4, 2019, Benoni, Johannesburg.
Habari ya asubuhi. As-salamu alaykum. Bonjour. Good morning. Bom dia



We are here ladies. We are here, despite all the challenges we faced, both in terms of our life stories and the journey to Johannesburg. We are here, in all our glory as African women. Karibuni Madada zangu. Msiwe na hofu lolote kwasababu huko ni nyumbani kwenye kama makao yoyote hapa Africa. Bienvenue en Afrique du Sud. I am honoured to welcome you to AfWID 2019. On behalf of the Trustees and the dedicated staff of the Zanele Mbeki Development Trust, who are permanently thinking of ways of improving the lives of African women throughout the continent and beyond.

The AfWID platform belongs to all of us. The usual rules of protocol do not apply here. We are creating our own rules. In that vein, I want us to recognise the efforts of our volunteer-in-chief, our biggest cheerleader, and the woman who has never once taken her eye off the cause of women's empowerment, Ms Zanele Mbeki.

Bienvenue a votre plateforme, la plateforme que nous avons cree vous appartient a tous. Nous esperons que vous l'utiliserez pour liberer votre voix et exprimer votre pouvoir. Merci beaucoup de nous honorer de votre presence. Bem Vindas! Estamos muito contentes com a vossa visita

This is probably one of the most important gatherings to take place in South Africa during this year. It has brought together over 1000 women from all the five regions of the African continent to discuss challenges faced by African women and, by implication, the continent as a whole.

We hosted our first platform last year, with participants coming from SADC countries. It is not an easy undertaking to bring us all together under one roof. We work with a very small team for such a major undertaking. As fate would have it, our team is weaker this year because just over two months ago death robbed us of

one who gave us so much energy, even as she dealt with her own challenges. I ask that we please rise and observe a moment of silence in honour of our sister, Dr Thandi Ndlovu, and all others who passed on that we may not be aware of.

The AfWID platform aims to be as inclusive as possible. Our team at ZMDT, together with our outstanding regional coordinators, have reached into corners that are usually neglected; to find the voice of women across all social, political and economic strata. Represented in this room are mainly rural women, young women, women with disability and other marginalised groups. We all have the same standing when we are interacting on this platform. There is no Minister, no NGO worker: we all have the same voice.

Our continent faces many challenges ranging from poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment and gendered-social inequality. This bleak landscape exists side by side with an abundance of wealth in vast oceanic resources, innumerable precious minerals in the inlands, and, for the most part, land that has never been farmed since the dawn of creation.

This is exacerbated by the fact that some of our countries still face deadly conflicts which take the lives of innocents and result in the displacement of civilian populations; mostly women and children. Especially noteworthy is that these conflicts are often started by men who are too old to do the fighting themselves and, in most cases, too secure to be personally affected.

For us, this underscores the need to pose difficult but necessary questions about the:

- i. formulation and practical implementation of policies for peace, governance frameworks that support and promote peace, economic development and greater social justice, with Africa's resources at the center of the achievement of these goals;
- ii. pedigree of leadership that the continent needs to achieve for peace, and governance frameworks for peace, economic development and social justice;
- iii. affirmation of the **"Women's Voice as a catalyst for change,"** and the issues we must place on the continent's agenda in order for each one of our countries to achieve the goals of peace, good governance and social justice, and;
- iv. the overall coordinated role and African sisterhood solidarity we as women must discharge in this regard.

The above suggests that by the end of our four-day meeting, we should come up with a clear commitment to the realisation of the objective of an Africa free from hunger, wars, and the waste and water theft of the resources meant for her children.

To a large measure, we do not need to reinvent the wheel as much of the policy framework already exists in the form of the African Union's Agenda 2063 which was adopted by the continent's Heads of State and Governments at the AU's 24th Ordinary Assembly held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2015, other policies of the AU and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the outcomes of the Beijing Platform of Action.

As Bob Marley said: "Who feels it knows it, Lord." As the majority

of the citizens of our continent who bear the brunt of much of the problems of poverty and underdevelopment, we, the women cannot but be central to the implementation of all these policies and programmes. We have to monitor their implementation or non-implementation and raise our collective voice not only in protest at non-implementation but at how the implementation must be undertaken for the good of the peoples of the continent.

Lastly, no view is wrong or incorrect. Please feel free to express yourself without self-censorship or fear that someone will shout you down. If we express differences of opinion, as I am sure we will, it is because we want to emerge with a view and a programme which resonates with the experiences of the large majority of women across the continent and to impact positively on their lives. One cannot emphasise this point enough: We are here to learn from each other and together to find solutions to common African challenges and problems which require many minds and many voices, in particular the voice of women.

When I attended my first SAWID it was with a fair dose of skepticism and circumspection. The good thing is that I handed myself over to the process. I have never regretted that. Please immerse yourself in this process. You will not regret it.

We have tried our best to put together a very stimulating programme. We will not be human if we did not make mistakes along the way. Please bear with us.

We have an amazing team of young people who have volunteered their time to assist all of us. We cannot thank you enough for being so generous with your time.

In the end, we must as women emerge out of this dialogue ready to wage war; war to silence the guns by 2020: war against poverty, against underdevelopment and against patriarchy. We must never forget that we are descendants of great warrior women:

Of Empress Taytu, who commanded forces at the historic battle of Adwa, in defense of Ethiopia against the Italians.

Of queen Mother Yaa Asantewaa, who led the Ashanti rebellion against British colonialism.

Of queen Nzinga, who fought against the Portuguese in Angola.

Of queen Nandi, who was a woman of great resilience and a strategist of note.

Welcome to South Africa. Welcome home.

Thank you. Shukran. Merci. Obrigado. Asante sana

Message of Support from Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

Reporter: Marthe Muller

In a video-taped Message of Support from Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, she greeted all her African sisters, and thanked AfWID founder Mrs Zanele Mbeki for facilitating this excellent work and for getting women to dialogue within South Africa and Africa. She emphasised that women were meeting on the eve of a significant year in the world of women. The year 2020 marks 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action; 41 years since the passage of CEDAW, and more than 20 years since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action in Cairo. She pointed out, however, that even though a lot has happened since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, yet not a single country has achieved gender equality.

She also shared that two important UN Women events would be taking place in 2020 aimed at increasing gender equality. The first is the "Generation Equality" event that will be taking place in Mexico between the 7th and 8th of May 2020. The occasion will look at how the gender gaps can be closed, using the methodology of Action Coalitions, and noted that further actions would be taken to endorse these Action Coalitions, in an attempt to address the issues that are the real pillars of patriarchy.

From 7 to 10 July 2020 women will convene in Paris, France, to announce these Action Coalitions, and to realise the vision 2030 of the SDGs. She explained that it is crucial that women collectively identify what success will look like, as change has been prolonged and very uneven, despite the hard work done by so many women since Beijing. She hoped the Paris meeting would result in resolutions on how to address VAW, the exclusion of women from

leadership, the burden of care that women bear, and issues of women, peace and security.

She highlighted the critical work being done by the African Women Leader's Network in this regard. In conclusion, she noted, "We look forward to the deliberations. We look forward to seeing you at the UN CSW, at CEDAW, and at the Generation Equality Forums in Mexico and France," mentioning that there would also be discussions in Africa (one in SA, one in Senegal). She invited women to galvanise support for these forums and to ensure the inclusion of young women, so as "to create a new generation of activists." Finally, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka expressed her gratitude to all the participants and wished them all the best for the dialogue.



Healing Methodology: Ms Bunie Matlanyane Sexwale

Reporter: Marthe Muller

An important part of the proceedings of the first day was the “Breaking Barriers” facilitated dialogues aimed at providing the participants with an opportunity to meet and connect with self and others.

The overall facilitator of these dialogues, Ms Bunie Matlanyane Sexwale, was introduced as “a spirit-led woman, an activist, a freedom fighter, a women’s movement builder, and a facilitator of women’s healing.” The name of the organisation she co-founded, Lesaka La Basadi, refers to a sacred kraal for women, a solidarity circle of women consciously healing and transforming the self.

She noted that “all of us were born innocent, loving, and in awe of everything we see around us. We started to learn to crawl, to speak, to walk, but somewhere on that journey, we were damaged...” She invited all those present to be children in the next barrier-breaking section of the programme, and to pay attention to “that being, that inner child” within each one of those present. “Welcome home to yourself,” she added.

Ms Sexwale explained that in women’s struggles, whatever they have been, women have inherited a patriarchal way of doing things. These include the abuse of women’s voices and the fact that women too went into wars, rationalising these wars. Women called them “wars of freedom”, or “just wars”, but whatever they were, they damaged women, and women have always remained the ones on the bottom-most rungs. “Patriarchal wars happen upon us,” she noted, and men continued to see women as their property.

But “I am my own woman”, she pointed out, challenging the audience, “Can we free ourselves today, and say we are our own women?” She then invited the participants during the next one and a half days “to loosen up”, and to find and heal the inner child so that “when I go into a struggle with my sisters, I will not throw stones that are verbal, or emotional, or real stones, or sticks...”

“At whatever age I shall depart this world,” she concluded, “I would love to have contributed to making feminism an act of love. It is the beginnings of that love that we will need to move this movement forward...”





What African women are saying about AfWID 2019

Lova Rafenomanantsoa – Madagascar

To have women come together and share with each other is the kind of growth I have never experienced in my life. It is unexplainable. The time, opportunity and occasion to express myself is very important. AfWID has been a great experience for me.

Nadia Damanti Tarang – Cameroon

The AfWID platform and the Breaking Barriers sessions helped us to connect with ourselves and other women. I think it is helpful in giving us a voice and assisting us to share our experiences with one another and to contribute to building a new Africa. In my country (Cameroon), women are behind in most things. We do not have such platforms to speak and express ourselves. We are spoken for. Therefore, this opportunity means a lot to us.

LouPou Manet – Guinea

Sharing with other women has given me courage to express myself. It is like therapy because there is a lot we go through as women on our own. AfWID is a great platform for women to put their strengths together as a continent. We women of Africa are stronger than men. We need to be united.

Mawa Consuelo Estefanaa – Equatorial Guinea

AfWID platform is a great experience. The Breaking Barriers sessions are empowering. Before you can assist others, you have to start with yourself. There are a lot of women who have been betrayed and are going through a lot of emotions. A Platform like AfWID is helpful for healing and expressing ourselves.

“Dr Judy Dlamini embraces her own African Pride”

Reporter: Thomas Lethoba



Dr Nobuhle Judith Dlamini, well known as Mam Judy, was born in the remote area of Westville in KwaZulu-Natal. Despite being in the business world, Mam Judy is an author, the Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand and the founding chair of the Mbekani Group.

Hailing from a family of leaders where everybody believed in love, peace and solidarity, Dr Dlamini was clearly destined for

higher office and to serve her people very well. She is not only a formidable businesswoman, but also a very influential woman who aims to change the lives of people through encouraging others and through her motivational speaking engagements.

Sharing her experience as a participant in the AfWID platform, Dr Dlamini strongly emphasised African unity and women empowerment to reinforce and rebuild the African continent. She made a point of highlighting that she is a very proud African woman, and in her own view all people are equal, regardless of their age, gender/transgender identity, race and any other category they are boxed in.

“AfWID is a great call to all African women to take the initiative to share all their experiences and all the hardships they go through in life. I am confident that at the end of the 5-Day deliberations, we will come with some solutions to burning challenges that are encountered by women,” said Dlamini.

In response to the high incidence of GBV cases in the country, Dr Dlamini suggested possible measures to be taken to ensure that women are safe and that men are taught how to respect women and give them all the dignity that they deserve. “This is a call for the continent to wake up and act against GBV,” she pleaded, “in a bid to ensure that every corner where a woman walks through, she will be safe.”

Dr Dlamini aims to be a proponent of empowering women, which, she says, starts with a quality education from the earliest age and goes all the way through to challenging stereotypes and prejudices about women leaders. “If you stick to stereotypes about who can lead, you will have a very mediocre leadership.”

“We Forget That We Are Diamonds”

Reporter: Lebogang Mathebula

“Meditation is a very important tool for healing”. People speak honestly and we share our hearts, but once things come to the surface, we don’t have the tools to support the journey. To that end, “I believe meditation is vital in this process,” said Fatima Dike of the Brahma Kumaris (BK) society. Dike co-presented a much-needed meditation plenary after the Breaking Barriers break-away sessions. The break-away sessions required participants to discuss and face the most painful and vulnerable parts of their past and present realities.

The meditation session kicked off with each participant being taken back to the most innocent time of their lives – their childhoods. Dike made use of imagery to take each individual back to their place of happiness and purity. With their eyes closed, participants

were taken through a serene setting, where they could find peace and tranquility. Dike noted that it was important to take one back to one’s childhood for such activities, because she believes people are like diamonds that have fallen into mud, since life experiences can often cause people to lose themselves and forget that they are in fact precious stones.

Many participants walked into the room with heavy hearts, feeling drained after reliving the most excruciating times of their lives. However, the atmosphere instantly lifted to a more peaceful state by the end of the session. Dike went on to say that people think meditation is a retreat from life when, in actual fact, meditation is a way to come back to yourself.

Tuesday 05 November Panel Discussion

Theme: “Women’s voice & power as agents of change” moderator: Ms Farida Yahya

Overview by: Malebo Vilakazi

Day two of African Women in Dialogue started with a continuation of the Breaking Barriers Workshops. Led by various facilitators, the workshops ended with a meditation session led by the Brahma Kumaris, a global spiritual movement. Only after the gentle meditation did the panel discussion start. The panel discussion was facilitated by Ms Farida Yahya. The panelists consisted of the following:

Ms Kasha Nabagesera (Founder of Freedom and Roam from Uganda); Ms Fadumo Dayib (Founder of Move Somalia Forward); Hon. Cicilia Saayioi Wuapari (Minister of Education, Youth, and Gender, Culture and Social Services, Narok County, Kenya and Ms Tsitsi Masiyiwa (Founder and co-chairperson of Higher Life Foundation, Zimbabwe).

Ms Fadumo Dayib kickstarted the discussion by stating that “women actually lead informally. All I wanted to do was to formalise that leadership”. Ms Tsitsi Masiyiwa, a philanthropist and social entrepreneur in Africa followed by saying she’s very happy to be part of the panel. Ms Masiyiwa and her husband are founders of

the Higher Life Education which focuses on supporting education for more than 250 000 students in Zimbabwe, Burundi and Lesotho. With her passion she developed an online smart learning platform namely Ruzivo Digital Learning. She also co-founded the Mazinda Hub in Zimbabwe.

In response to the question posed to her by Farida Yahya who facilitated the whole session “How do you stay grounded and true to yourself”? Ms Masiyiwa responded by saying “that its important as women or mothers of Africa to do everything we can in order to be driven”. This is what makes her want to interact with every single woman she comes in contact with. Ms Masiyiwa said that “happiness is not between me, my husband and God, but between me and God”.

Ms Masiyiwa emphasised the power of the collective and working in cooperation with others. She has worked hand-in-hand with her husband. Along the journey she found herself and was helped by reading especially the Word of God. She went on to say that she had to take a risk in what she believed in.





Panelist 1: Kasha Nabagesera – “The LGBTIQ+ community is resilient”

Interviewer: Abigail Moyo

Panelist Kasha Nabagesera, founder of Freedom and Roam in Uganda, said being involved in AFWID was a humbling experience because the dialogue afforded her with an opportunity to educate African women about the LGBTIQ+ community.

“Twelve years ago I once walked into a room full of women and they all walked out only because I was a lesbian.”

Nabagesera said she faced difficulties during her university years as she would get expelled from universities because of her sexuality. “When I learnt that I was being expelled from universities because of my sexuality, I became very angry and that is when I promised myself that I would educate Africans that being different is normal and there is nothing one can do to change another person’s sexuality,” she said.

“Africans are not open to talk about sex and that makes it more difficult for someone to speak out on issues about the LGBTIQ+ community.”

“The problem is that if we don’t talk about these issues in our homes, how are children going to open up to you as parents if you talk ill about the LGBTIQ+ community?”

Elaborating on her journey as a lesbian woman in Uganda, Nabagesera said, “What keeps me moving is knowing that I have managed to motivate many people to stand up for themselves and they are able to wake up each day and proudly say that they are bisexual, lesbian or transgender.”

Sharing more about her challenges as a lesbian woman in Uganda, Nabagesera added that, “Because of my sexuality, I was denied to adopt a child in my country and I am currently suing my government because I can’t be denied to be a mother because of my sexuality.”

Panelist 2: Fadumo Dayib – “If I am a prostitute, then I am the most educated one”

Interviewer: Lindokuhle Mabena

Being led by a female is still seen as a taboo in many parts of the world. Being the first woman to run for the presidency in Somalia, Fadumo Dayib is also an example of women who experienced different forms of abuse in a journey of women leadership. Apart from being an aspiring, powerful woman in leadership, Dayib is also a mother and a student at the same time. These twin-challenges also came with daily personal threats. “I had to prepare my children to be ready for anything that might happen to me”, said Dayib. She further added that she has been called by all sorts of derogatory words, including being called a prostitute. She responded to that name-calling by saying “If I am a prostitute, then I am the most educated one”.

Though she was not fully literate until the age of 14, she still put positive energy towards educating herself. She holds three Masters

degrees and is currently registered for doctoral studies.

Seeing that the society still looks down on women especially in leadership, Dayib said that all that she wanted was not to negotiate women’s existence, not to beg, not to ask, or loiter around the leadership table but to actually formalise women’s leadership and to pull out the chair, sit down and say “you know that I am here and I have every right to lead.”

Dayib reiterated that she waited for more than 27 years to be saved by a man who would be a leader but actually realised that she is the leader that she has been looking for. She gives accolades to her late mother who was her inspiration because of the support and positivity she had.

Panelist 3: Honourable Cicilia Saayioi Wuapari – “Being educated is an eye and door opener for women”

Interviewer: Gugulethu Mayisela

The Honourable Cicilia Saayioi Wuapari, the current Minister of Education, Youth, Gender and Social Services in Kenya, holds a Master's Degree in Education. She is a Maasai woman. She is very passionate about education for girls, and about ending child marriage and early pregnancy in the Maasai community. She grew up in a town called Narok, where she and her nomadic family moved from place to place with their animals for survival. Growing up, she witnessed a lot of discriminatory practices towards girls, which led her to be passionate and committed towards addressing Gender Based Violence issues.

Speaking with a voice of authority, she contends that “as a continent, we are finally tapping deeply into the issues that affect women in all the aspects of their lives. From an early age, women are confronted with issues like Gender Based Violence, Patriarchy, Education, Sexuality, Economic Inclusion, Leadership and so much more. Quality education is one of the most important issues currently, not only in South Africa, but also throughout Africa. In countries that are not so fortunate in terms of access to quality education, some women have had to go into exile in other African countries to get the kind of education that has allowed them to improve themselves”.

“Through education, I can liberate my sisters, through education, I'm able to touch lives”. As a trained teacher, she firmly believes that liberating and giving education to young girls can prevent them from making decisions that will lead to early pregnancy.

Wuapari mentioned that when women like her become part of government, the government starts concerning itself with issues of education, which is good, because “through education so many changes can happen.”

“There is power in being able to change attitudes towards women through education”.

The patriarchal issues in her culture gave Wuapari the motivation to empower not just women, but also girls, to show them that there is more to life than to be oppressed as a female. She believes in giving back to one's community in order to help others become better people. As a formidable power woman Wuapari is especially interested in providing girls with fruitful knowledge that will make them grow.

Open Mike Session



To: Ms Dayib

Q- What strategy are you using for effective activism after withdrawing from elections?

Taking time off and taking care of yourself before taking care of anyone else, and disengaging from social media negativity.

Love and appreciate yourself by investing in your own education. There are also non-conventional ways of educating yourself. Women should not feel inferior and they should know that.

To: Hon. Wuapari

Let me define what education is, what you learn from when you are born to when you die. It doesn't have to be that I have to have money in order to advocate for them. Things that we believe could never have worked, are now working. The more self-actualised you are, the more similar you become.

To: Ms Fadumo Dayib

Q: Do you think today's women are ready to be agents of change in 2020?

Long term goals are more realistic and they provide long term benefit.

Q: On the issue on how women can reconcile.

Let us love our sisters the way we love ourselves. Whatever you want for yourself, allow your sister to have it herself. There are also younger sisters.

Please do not diminish them. Do not patronise your younger sisters, allow them to enter, as it is not for you to dwell in that space until you die in it. It is your task to open the door so that others can come in.

To: Ms Nabagesera

Q: There is discrimination against the LGBTIQ+ sector.

Q: You spoke about yourself and the Christian faith that came to condemn homosexuality. What is your message to Christians and Muslims regarding their position in terms of LGBTIQ+?

Q: How can we ensure there is understanding of homosexuality among people of faith?

Uganda is predominantly a Christian country. The only time the interfaith religions meet is when they talk about homosexuality. There is a thin line between love and hate. If you can choose to hate, why can't we choose to love?

Panelist 4: Ms Tsitsi Masiyiwa

Ms Tsitsi Masiyiwa, Founder & Co-chairperson of the Higher Life Foundation, in Zimbabwe, has helped over 250 000 children, and shared her journey of a life in pursuit of valuing life and the importance of each single human being. She confessed that very few husbands want to support their wives to have power, and that she needed to find herself first. “I am a Christian myself”, she confided, and she explained that she herself needed to define what power meant to her, and how she would use her power of being able to influence, and of being able to convene.

She had to find her power to make financial decisions, take risks and put her foot down. She observed that she gives her husband a space to do what he does, and that she expects the same courtesy, as they are joint partners. She added, “happiness is not me, my husband and God, it is me and God...”

She emphasized that it was very important to have a budget for girl and women empowerment, since people were hurting. “As women

we have enough on our shoulders. Our babies are stunted, due to poor nutrition. When they get to school they are stunted, and our girls are raped. We need to speak on their behalf...” She pointed out that in the rural areas, the Chiefs have a lot of power and the majority of those who make decisions are men. “That is why young girls aspire to be teachers,” she noted, “in order to have their voices heard.” She highlighted that large budgets needed to be allocated to changing mind-sets, since, “if we change mind-sets, we will change the world...”

In conclusion she explained, “For me it is very important that you love your neighbour as you love yourself. If you don’t love yourself, you cannot love your neighbour. We have to look at education from birth to old age. We have to measure, and take a long-term view. We need to take a long term view, as the short term view is only looking at the self. When we take a long term view, the focus takes us away from ourselves and the immediate gains...”

African Market Showcase

“Colourful African market showcased during AfWID Week”

Reporter: Nthabiseng Gagoopane



The AfWID dialogue gave women from all the African countries an opportunity to showcase and sell their crafts, bags, jewellery, African spices, and clothes. Those who showcased their products were entrepreneurs from Togo, Mali, Mauritius, Madagascar, and South Africa, among others.

Many of the women make a living from selling all these products in their own countries, and they are looking to distribute to countries such as South Africa. The products are made from natural African ingredients such as Ginger, Mint, Lemongrass, Kinkeliba, Moringa, Baobab leaves, and honey that are found in abundance in Africa.

Sakale Traome, an agronomist and founder of Mamali Moringa from Mali, offers products derived from Moringa such as tea, cookies, oil, seeds, powder and jam. Her business is inspired and evolves around the promotion, awareness and enhancement of Moringa in Mali.

Ntshantsha Tafeni-Majombozi, is the founder of Yivani. The company manufactures 100% South African natural skin care products derived from South African indigenous herbs and oils. Tafeni-Majombozi’s inspiration comes from her grandmother who was a staunch believer in natural healing, using anything that grows from the ground to treat ailments. The Yivani range includes hair products, skin care products, and foot pampering, and one of the main natural ingredients is incense.

Ahoe Products is an agribusiness from Togo. The company specialises in the processing of local products such as soy milk, seasoning spices, unmixed turmeric, ginger, Star fruit and many more. The company aims at contributing to the well-being of the Togolese population by offering healthy natural and therapeutic products.

Most of the businesses of these African women are inspired by their everyday struggles to make ends meet. It is about providing for their families, sending their children to school and putting food on the table at the end of the day. Their businesses are all about using the natural ingredients that were used by their foremothers. Therefore, their businesses serve as a way to sustain their traditional cultures and beliefs as well.

“The demand to be part of the AfWID dialogue grows”

Reporter: Nthabiseng Gagoopane

AfWID is an inclusive dialogue platform which seeks to unite African women from all walks of life under one roof, to deliberate and discuss issues of continental importance. The platform hosts women in all the stations of their lives.

The demand to be part of the 5-day dialogue grows yearly. It is the informative presentations, interactive panel discussions, and the empowering and entertaining spaces that make the women want to come back.

The demand is from women all over Africa. Even those who have been at the dialogue before want to savour the repeat experience of the platform. It is not a surprise when both the AfWID team and

Birchwood Hotel staff come across women who are not registered but want to be part of this experience. However, it is sad when the women have to be turned away because the dialogue can only accommodate about 1000 African women.

When women become aware that the dialogue is happening, phone calls start flooding in and women want to be included at all costs. Some of the women go as far as offering to pay for their own accommodation and stay at the venue, just so they can be part of the activities and festivities that come with the AfWID experience. Although it becomes very costly for the AfWID team, it at times gets very hard to turn away the unexpected guests and their unsatisfied expectations.

HOT TOPIC

“Untying the Knot of Child Marriage”

Reporter: Lindokuhle Mabhena

While some countries are slowly moving towards democracy for all, some are still burdened under the yoke of children and women's oppression. Young women, and in some cases minor children under 15 years, are subjected to the practice of arranged marriages in some African countries. Thus, they are denied of their rights of transitioning normally from girlhood to womanhood in their cultures. Arranged marriages are practiced by different families, often done to maintain cultural traditions in a variety of situations affecting both the poor and the rich. At times it is as a strategy of poor families just to maintain their livelihoods.

Tanzania is amongst the many countries which experience child marriage and its Supreme Court of Appeal recently upheld an earlier ruling banning parents from marrying off their daughters before the age of 15 years.

In 2013, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution aimed at strengthening the means to prevent and eliminate child marriage. In 2014, the African Union (AU) launched a campaign to end child marriage in Africa by enhancing continental awareness of its harmful impacts and requiring states to take appropriate legal, social and economic measures to address child marriage.

According to previous reports, the high court ruling in 2016 declared sections of Tanzania's marriage act as “unconstitutional”, while still allowing the practice of under-aged girls as brides. The high court directed the government to extend the legal age of marriage to 18 years within a year.

Amongst other reasons behind the appeal was the hope that this practice would protect unmarried girls who get pregnant. In 2016 the UN launched an initiative to protect young girls from child marriage. Statistics indicate that, if this practice continues, child marriages could amount to one billion by 2030.

The UN highlighted that girls who marry below the age of adulthood are less likely to achieve their full potential; are more likely to leave education early; and are more likely to suffer domestic violence.



Wednesday 06 November Panel Discussions

Reporter: Akhona Valashiya

The African women set the mood for the opening of the panel discussions on day three of the AfWID 2019 dialogue with cheerful greetings in different languages, accompanied by song and dance, and the lifting up of the flags of various African countries, all united in one voice: "Peace and security in Africa!"

The morning devotion, which had the auditorium up on its feet, was led by Central Africa, with a fervent prayer delivered in French, asking the women to stand and be grateful for life and for being present.

The panel discussion, expertly directed by Ms Diakhoumba Gassama, from Senegal, Regional Activism and Youth Coordinator

for Africa at Amnesty International, kicked-off with a viewing of the documentary entitled Women, Peace and Power by the organisation Peace is Loud. This documentary follows the stories of female activists, politicians, and ordinary citizens in Northern Ireland, Liberia and Afghanistan, as they tried to influence the peace talks in their country against all odds.

The viewing of the documentary, was a great way of reminding the participants of how far women have come in the fight for peace and security in Africa and the rest of the world. The documentary set the tone for the panel discussion.

PANEL DISCUSSION THEME: WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY

PROGRAM DIRECTOR/MODERATOR: Ms Diakhoumba Gassama, Regional Activism and Youth Coordinator for Africa at Amnesty International (Senegal)

Reporter: Nthabiseng Gagoopane

The opening comments were delivered by Prof Cheryl Hendricks, Executive Director of the African Institute of South Africa (South Africa). She noted that, "from where I am sitting, South Africa's morning today looks beautiful. I am so honoured to be in your presence, given the traumatic experiences that South Africa has been through recently", acknowledging the cases of violence against other African nationals that had erupted during the preceding months.

Prof Hendricks mentioned that, for each of the countries present, it has been a long journey to attain peace and security. She went on to say that, although the journey has been long, progress has been slow.

"All that we hear from the United Nations Security Council is that we need to be implementing. We just adopted another resolution to implement all the other resolutions that have gone unimplemented". Prof Hendricks went on to say that things needed to be done differently, and this is what she has been pushing for in all the different places that she has been exposed to. "I know that if we want to make progress, we need to do things differently, we need to utilise our resources, pull them together and build towards peace". Prof Hendricks went on to say that "women have shifted the meaning of peace and security from traditional conceptualisations of securing the state, to securing the people".

"Peace for me in very simple terms, is to live long, to live well, with dignity, to have opportunities and to have choice. For one to assist with peace building, one needs to be at peace with oneself".

Prof Hendricks believes that, if people in all the other countries are not at peace, South Africa cannot have peace, because the struggle for peace and security has to be a collective effort and has to be inclusive.

"We have all the structures and training, and the organisations are all in place. What we need to do is harness that which we have created in the last 20 years..."



Panelist 1: Pratiba Daya



Pratiba Daya, a member of the Brahma Kumaris, a global spiritual movement, shared her conviction that for any kind of lasting peace, the personal is just as important as the public work that one does. She explained that the Brahma Kumaris teaches that a person has to empower him or herself from within, since only when we connect with ourselves on a deeper level, can we also connect with others on a deeper level.

Daya pointed out that the Brahma Kumaris is an organisation that was started in India in the 1930s, and that it is one of the few spiritual organisations in the world led by women. The organisation teaches that only when we understand that the true nature of every human being is peace, and when we feel a deep connection with each other, are we in alignment with our true human essence.

She implored women to begin by shifting their own perceptions, beginning with self. “Don’t forget to give time to your own inner wellbeing”, she cautioned. “When you don’t take care of yourself, it is an act of violence against the self. Take care of your needs, don’t be afraid to express what your needs are. We often think it is selfish to even say what our needs are. Make that as a shift. It is not selfish to take care of the self.”

In conclusion she reminded women of the important role they play in bringing up sons and daughters. Women therefore needed to gain a sense of their own value and their own worth and create an environment that nurtures the very best. “Only when we create a shift in ourselves and in our homes, will we also inspire a shift in the community. It is like a pebble that you throw in a pond, she noted, and peace in the self will also encourage the very best in others.

Panelist 2: Amb. Liberata Mulamula, Associate Director and Visiting Scholar, Elliot School of International Affairs, Institute for African Studies, George Washington University (Tanzania)

Reporter: Hawa Mayere – “Women keepers of peace in Africa”.

Conflict in Africa still remains one of the contributing factors to the many vulnerable economies on the continent. Conflict impacts on the fragile political systems. Conflict has negative physiological and psychological effects on women and children. In addition, the stigmatisation and the daunting task that the women face of keeping families together during and after the conflict are underreported. Despite these challenges, women have always been at the forefront of peacekeeping and the champions of peace and security in Africa.

Amb. Mulamula's key message was that women should stop considering themselves as crying victims, but see themselves as agents of change. She mentioned how Africa knows her problems, what has been done and how it has affected the continent. Moving forward we should be able to look beyond this and figure out “How are we going to find a solution?” Mulamula added that African

women in particular have resources at the community, country and at the continental level. All that is missing is forming a coalition as women and taking action.

Furthermore, ownership is important, as it greatly contributes to the solutions instead of seeking solutions from abroad. She quipped that “a determined woman is unstoppable” urging the women to find lasting and implementable solutions.

A few of the solutions provided by the ambassador was that we as African women need coordination, harmonisation and cohesion in our peace efforts. She put emphasis on self-confidence as opposed to self-doubt. Strengthening the role of women in conflict resolution and being peacekeeping agents is the way forward for peace on the continent.

Panelist 3: Ms Avril Andrews, Founder of Alcardo Andrews Foundation: Mom's Move for Justice (South Africa)

Reporter: Thomas Lethoba

Ms Avril Andrews started by showing her gratitude for being part of a platform that gives voice to African women and that aims to redress issues of peace and security, transgender and multi-faceted inequalities.



Andrews shared her experience of losing her son due to the gang violence that afflicts the Cape Flats, in Cape Town. “I was a very background person and couldn't make decisions, but that changed following the loss of my son due to gangster killings... He was only killed because he didn't want to be enrolled in gangsterism,” she said.

“I never thought I would be driving change, having always been in the background. But, I realised that I can't blame the government, or judge the church, or civil societies. So, I decided to avail myself,” she explained.

“I then came forward and realised that, as women, we are ready to lead and be truthful to one self. In this regard, I fully understand the importance of moving forward together as women and as agents of change,” said Andrews.

Ms Andrews strongly highlighted the fact that peace means everything. Peace is nothing else than the right to be. Peace is the right to live in a secure environment. “Women have to be at peace wherever they are,” Andrews noted. She shared that she had to make peace following the death of her son. She now aims to build peace and solid relationships, even with those who are enemies, to preach unity and solidarity on the African continent for cooperation and development.

Panelist 4: Alaa Salah “Everything has a price. In our revolution the price is very high...”

Reporter: Lindokuhle Mabhena.

The most common roles for women in the revolutionary wars were as cooks, maids, and laundresses. The world has seen women in different countries fighting against this oppression and aiming to dominate the leadership chairs.

Discussing the theme “women, peace, and security”, Alaa Salah outlined that everything has a price and that the price to be paid in revolutions is very high. Salah elaborated that the price paid includes the lives of brothers and sisters who get killed during the struggle.

Being an anti-government protester in the country of Sudan, Salah said that the role of women in the revolution is to fight for peace which sometimes results in violence, killings, rapes, and kidnappings. She said that women need to be at the forefront of this revolution and fight for people's rights.

She also spoke about taking steps rather than talking because women are considered to be weak and incapable of performing other activities, but “communities should know that women are strong. During the next AfWID conference, we should come back to talk about things that we did, changes that we have implemented, instead of talking about our problems”

Women's capabilities are undermined because of differences they have as compared to men. In this regard Salah said: “We have to know that we are different, but we also need to respect our differences.” She said that women do not need to be told what to do, because they know what to do.

Salah is known as Sudan's singing protester, since she received recognition from a photo taken of her atop a car with her right hand held high and a finger pointing towards the sky.

Are there enough platforms for women to voice out their grievances?

Reporter: Lindokuhle Mabhena.

From growing up as a young girl to a point where a person is now a mother with a family to look after, and feed, not mentioning the struggles that women face in their various countries, it is clear that every woman has a story to tell... The question is, however, are there enough platforms to hear them?

During the break-away sessions which were held on the first and second day of the conference, women got to share their stories as they were given a platform to share without being judged from the background or countries they come from. Nompumelelo Shabangu, who was a facilitator in one of the break-away sessions, shared that though women got a platform to share their stories in AfWID19, the platforms are still not enough.

Some countries still keep women oppressed, so that they do not have a say, especially in decision making, which hinders them from getting opportunities to lead in their various countries. Shabangu is one of the women who had to leave their families when they were still little girls to stay in exile. She is originally from Eswatini but grew up in East Africa and Tanzania, and later moved to Zambia.

Shabangu shared that she left her original country in 1986 when she was five (5) years old. She said that being all alone in a foreign country was difficult for her as she did not have a chance to be a child but had to grow up very fast. What she learned during that time in exile is independence, and also strength, as she is now considered one of the powerful women.

Shabangu is a co-founder of the Home Schooling Network. She learned that in every situation women encounter they gain more strength and learn lessons. Surrounded by women from Tanzania, Gambia, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, she shared that it was one of the most joyous and emotional moments for her to reconnect with powerful African women who had different stories to share.

Shabangu said that she was very privileged to host a group during the sessions, since “I take home with me a sense that Africa is a very rich continent. We have multi-dimensional kinds of people who are so powerful in their voice.”

AfWID hosts a self-declared person of non-binary gender for the first time

Reporter: Mabhena Lindokuhle

For the first time, AfWID hosted a self-declared person of non-binary gender. Belonging to a non-binary gender definition is often little known or accepted by society, especially in Africa. One of the inhibiting factors is that people are afraid to come out to show who they are due to restrictive cultural norms and beliefs.

Non-binary gender identities can fall under the transgender umbrella since many non-binary people identify with a gender that is different from their biologically assigned sex. They are referred to as people with two or more genders, being described as “bigender” or “trigender”, which is a spectrum of gender identities that lie outside the traditional gender binary.

Dumiso Gatsha is the first person of non-binary gender to be hosted by AfWID. Gatsha is the founder of Success Capital Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Success Capital is an LGBTIQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/gender diverse, intersex

and queer) youth led, managed organisation serving grassroots communities, which is working on moving its community from survival to success.

Success Capital has been a revolutionary movement as decades of sexual oppression have made it difficult for the LGBTIQ+ community in Africa to freely come out. Gatsha is amongst those who were afraid to come out about their sexuality, “because of the environment I grew up in” and she explained that she was only able to identify her sexuality when she was at the university. She outlined that because of the stereotypes people had, she was then identified as gay. She was confused as she still feels a sense of identifying neither as a man or a woman.

In conclusion, Gatsha said that she feels that AfWID is the right platform for people like her to come out and not hide their sexuality.

Interview with Salva Cherinda, Miss Mozambique 2019

Reporter: Akhona Valashiya

Q: How are you as a young woman using your crown to influence young girls in your country to use their voices and be agents of change?

Salva Cherinda: I have come up with programmes where we talk about all the issues affecting women in Mozambique. First of all, education is most important, especially to women. It gives you options and opportunities and without it a lot of women settle for anything and become vulnerable to being used and abused because they just want to earn money.

Another big issue is that some women get educated, and they get opportunities to make a difference in their communities. But, once they succeed, they change and they forget where they come from, and they stop caring about the plight of others. In my programme we try to inspire women to use their minds and learn to work hard and fight for change in their communities.

The AfWID platform has given me an opportunity to teach other women independence and confidence, and to teach women to believe in themselves. My mother always says that “if, as a woman, you’re used to opening your legs when you want something, then you will always open them, forever”. I believe that if we do not fight and work hard for ourselves, then our situations will never change. A lot of women forget their values and start losing themselves. So, it is important to teach them, especially young African women, to love themselves, to embrace their natural beauty.

We are living in a world where women often do not help each other. They do not uplift each other. We destroy each other’s self-esteem. That leads to young women committing suicide and suffering mentally, and then our collective futures suffer.

We are dealing with a problem of human trafficking because young women are seeking opportunities in wrong places and through the wrong people. To that end, when a woman disappears, no one cares and no one bothers to ask what happened to this person.

Q: What inspired you to enter the Miss Mozambique pageant?

Salva Cherinda: I wanted to learn and experience different cultures in Africa. To meet women from other African countries. To learn from them and take some ideas home and help my own people and uplift them. I believe that as women we need to use all our opportunities to gain the knowledge to uplift ourselves.

Day Three: A Selection of Women's voices

On Peace and Security

- (Country inaudible) "We have no life because we are in continuous trauma, we can't live if we have no peace and security. We have all these delegations, but we must stop being some intellectual movement, without being in connection with the communities... I would like to ask a question to our sister from Sudan. How did you kick away the dictator?"
- Rwanda: I am proud and honoured to belong to this society of women. It is a shame for a country like Rwanda, we don't have the voice of the community level women who are represented here. When we talk "peace and security", it is when a mother can send a child to a neighbour to borrow something...
- Angola: We live in a male dominated society where women are raped and physically affected. In what way can women reach the peace and tranquillities in their own countries?
- Senegal: Peace and security is like water, without peace and security, everything is in disarray. We need to keep our girls at school. As long as women are not in decision-making positions, the problem will continue. Without peace we will have nothing, let us hold our hands with our hearts.
- DRC: It would have been useful to have Congolese women in the panel. I would like to inform you that every day at least 1000 women are raped in my country, 40 per hour, and I would like to ask all women, esp. in the Great Lakes region, to have an open dialogue. We need to have dialogue. The second is about Congolese being rejected in other countries. It has been done in Brazzaville, and women were raped. Dear Sisters, can we work together to start all of this. You told us how we can act, but give us a concrete example. We should have regular meetings and dialogues, because guns have not helped us.
- South Africa: Something needs to happen between communities of farm labourers and their employers. There are terrible tensions and we need a dialogue to defuse these tensions, since there has been a lot of violence. The employers put up fences, and the abuse continues. There are other burning issues, like people coming through borders, and what happens to women along the way...
- Namibia: I am from civil society and I am a survivor of Swapo atrocities. Peace in Namibia is defined narrowly and belongs to the state apparatus. Stop modelling Namibia as a model. We are languishing in poverty, unemployment, and drug abuse, amongst other ills. Help us to pray the devil back to hell.

On Pan Africanism and Collective Action

- Gambia, West Africa: We must have a collective form of direct action. We must take this back to our villages. What kind of Pan African direct action will we organise?
- Niger: Niger is surrounded by countries at war. Women are united and we will make sure that we find solutions. Women are active, they are marching, they are protesting, that is how the women manage to call upon other women. We call upon the other African women to support us. It is our problems, we will find our own solutions. This group from Niger is made up of various ethnicities, let us be united.
- Algeria: I want to hail the organisers, since as North Africans we have often been forgotten. I want to thank women in Algeria who stood against colonialization. Today there are young Algerian women who are in prison. Today we are united in order to find solutions, today we can speak about free movement. I greet the Algerian women and all the women who fought for our freedom.

On Linking to Grassroots Women and Women Living in Rural Areas

- Somalia: We get stuck in frameworks, and we forget the part of going to the ground. My country of Somalia has experienced a 30 year long war, and as the current situation is, there will be an election a year and half from now, but government and civil society are not speaking to one another. There is an inability to reach grassroots women. The Professor mentioned that we now have resolutions to implement resolutions. Have African women had enough, and what can we do?
- Zimbabwe: We are not rural, we are not rural. It is the environment that is rural.
- Cameroon: In the video, I saw women galvanizing the grassroots, taking their voices to the table, those grassroots women who cannot read and write. The panel is made up of sophisticated women. Please, I wish to ask, can these women from the grassroots sit on the same table, can they be given this opportunity? What are the strategies to have their voices to be heard, speaking in their own dialect?
- Angola: How are we going to teach women in rural areas, given that they have been taught that they have neither voice nor decision-making power?
- Nigeria: We do not have war but we have insurgents, like Boko Haram, but as grassroots people we resorted to using the internet to have our voices heard.

On Women with Disabilities:

- Kenya: We have issues of peace and security, issues of radicalisation. Young men are being recruited, and women with disability and their children suffer more during war. There were clashes, and men and women decided to go and talk to the tribes, explaining, "When you kill each other, you are killing us, because we cannot run, we cannot hear, we cannot see." We got an international award of peace, Let us change and make a difference in any place where people are deciding...
- South Sudan: I am a deaf person from South Sudan. There is not much help being offered, and we are being left out and marginalised. How can we have the same voice? In South Sudan there was an old lady who was sexually abused and left with HIV and she died due to lack of knowledge. If maybe we can have one voice and one resolution.

The Centrality of the Family and Education

- Chad: We should not forget the importance of the education of our children within the household. We are facing conflict and lack of understanding in our families and communities, Street kids, migrant children, the centre of the problem is the family environment. We should begin this peace in our own families. While we are trying to find peace, our households are getting empty and our children are left alone and do not have the support and care that they need, and we also need to fight against alcoholism...
- Gabon: For sustainable peace we need to educate people. We should have education about the reasons for wars. We learnt about the 1st and 2nd world wars. We should teach young children to be at peace with their brothers and sisters.

Success Stories and Recommendations:

- Tunisia: In Tunisia we are the first Arabic country that started a revolution by the people, without foreign interference, with little bloodshed, thanks to women. We had the Nobel Prize of Peace in 2015, (awarded to the National Dialogue Quartet for building a pluralistic democracy in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution of 2011) which allowed the country to avoid a civil war. We worked very hard, just like our grandmothers who have fought hard. Now we have many women in parliament and in the ministries.
- Burundi: I fought greatly for the integration of my community in our country and the central African regime. I am the only woman pygmy in parliament, but I also acknowledge the other women from Burundi. We are all here to listen, and share. We greatly appreciate this wonderful inspiration that God has given to the founder. We hope that she will have a long life to enjoy the fruits of her work. We recommend that we use this technology that we have used so that other women can benefit. Women should use the courage that God has given them so that they can take up leadership positions and their rightful place.

- DRC: I have two solutions. The first one is that AfWID should establish a fund to support women that are going for political positions in Africa. We say that women should be empowered. We need this continental fund. My colleague spoke about sustainable peace in the Great Lakes region. In all these agreements, we need to rise together.
- Sudan: I greet you in the name of the revolution in Sudan. We are telling the stories of women who are greater than us. For 30 years women have been going to these spaces. We trained ourselves, we taught ourselves to train for this moment. At the end of this day we have decided to revolt. Revolt, African women, everywhere, you are not stones, you are human beings.
- Benin: There is no parity or gender equity in my country. I would like to congratulate Mrs. Mbeki for this wonderful initiative. This solidarity, we see it here. We have to organise ourselves, sections within our regions and cells within local wards, so that we may have love, love, love. That love will bring a better world.
- Morocco: I am speaking for the 44th anniversary of the Green March. The very first point is that threats do not always come from outside. Unity comes from inside. Africa is rich with human potential, but Africa is poorly managed. We should be the actor of our own peace and development.



Feedback from Panelists:

Alaa Salah:

How we have been uprooted, since peacefulness was the source of our power. We did not know when the regime would collapse. How can we achieve peace in society? If women are not engaged in the negotiating table, there will not be peace. I think we can all appreciate the gift of Afwid, the more that we focus and keep engaging and keep dialoguing, the more we can find the peace we are all speaking about...

Avril Andrews:

I am fortunate to work with women who have lost their children, Continuing this work is very risky, due to male dominance, and patriarchy. For women, because we have the power, we need to do the activism. There are many women who marched. For us as organisations in South Africa, we can learn from each other. We shouldn't leave the boys behind. We are mothers, and there are so many dysfunctional boys who become perpetrators. So many boys are raped at school, and when they cannot get the healing, they start acting out and become perpetrators.

Ambassador Liberata Mulamula:

How do we bring grassroots women to the diplomatic table? I ensured that no woman was left behind, by ensuring that in the rules of procedures, there would be 50/50 women in all the parties, yet I could not reach every woman in the grassroots. How do we educate women in rural areas about leadership? Women know about leadership, they just need the courage. I don't think they need to be taught, it is just about having the courage to convene, to speak about, to bring about. For Western Sahara, my first task was in Western Sahara. We just don't follow up. Call us and we will join you in solidarity.

Professor Cheryl Hendricks:

Leadership is not a position. Leadership is an action. Many people in leadership are not taking us where we want to go. What is preventing us from being the biggest social movement on this continent? We need to go to Western Sahara, to South Sudan, to Mali... We need to support you to sustain every gain... This time we need that Pan African focus. We can become the largest social movement on the Continent, but we need to define our principles, and our methods...







Day Three: Afternoon Side Events

AFRICAN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP NETWORK

Curator: Anne Githuku Shongwe

Rapporteur: Marthe Muller

Setting the context and background

The African Women's Leadership Network (AWLN) is an intergenerational movement of African Women launched on the 2nd of June 2017. A hundred diverse women gathered in New York, with the support of the AU and the UN. The vision of AWLN is to build and drive the transformation of Africa through six key pillars, in alignment with African Agenda 2063. The pillars are:

1. Empowering women living in rural areas
2. Political participation
3. Peace and Security
4. Young Women Leadership
5. Financial Inclusion
6. Social Mobilization

One of the methodologies of the AWLN is to make solidarity visits to countries where women are facing the biggest challenges. The first Solidarity Mission of the AWLN took place in Nigeria. The second went to the DRC. The third took place in Djibouti, counting with the presence of Ms Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, and Ms Amina Mohammed.

The following were the first countries to establish national chapters at country level, starting in December 2017:

- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- Cote d'Ivoire
- Central African Republic
- Sierra Leone
- Congo, Brazzaville
- Seychelles
- Nigeria



A commitment was made to establish at least 25 national chapters in time to celebrate Beijing plus 25 in Mexico and Paris in 2020.

- An interim steering committee meeting took place in Addis Ababa, and an intergenerational dialogue of the youth branch took place in Nairobi.
- The AWLN consists of a steering committee, a core group, and a secretariat, hosted by UN Women and the AU, and Germany is the main donor, through the government led by Angela Merkel.
- Dr Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been selected as the main champion of the AWLN. A Women Leaders Fund was launched. The fund is expected to support women's projects.
- Amb Mulamula was given the responsibility in the AWLN to coordinate Peace and Security.
- Mrs Gertrude Mongella, "Mama Beijing", and first President of the Pan African Parliament noted her passion for the pillar of social mobilisation, and hoped that the AWLN would "bring us back to being Africans." She noted the need for collaboration with men. "I love men. This network is being led by women, but the spirit should be captured even by men."

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Mechanisms to truly reach grassroots women living in rural areas, especially through social media. "We don't need women to speak a foreign language for them to be recognised as leaders."
- Concerns around issues of duplication and partisanship, and ensuring absolute inclusivity, including issues of social cohesion, refugee migrants and women with disability.
- The need to translate this network into a viable Pan African movement with some kind of direct action/summit/workshop/women's march/educational programmes in each country.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group.)

- A commitment was made to make a list of all participants who attended the side event and share it
- UN Women was asked to help with the mapping of existing organisations in each country, and to provide the contact details of UN Women staff per country to start national chapters.

NOTE: The AWLN is an inclusive African women leaders network, uniting women leaders, (including Dr Gertrude Mongella, Ms Amina Mohammed, Dr Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, Mme Diop of AU, and Amb Mulamula, amongst others) as well as market women, women living in rural areas, women with disabilities and young women.

AFRICAN FEMINISM AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE IN AFRICAN FAMILIES

Curator: Saida Ali

Rapporteur: Mu–Aalima Amyna Fakude

Setting the context and background

The side event was centred on activities of the Kibera Feminists for Peace, Rights and Justice Centre based in Kenya, a programme designed to empower young girls in the Kibera slums. The programme provides space for the development of the girls' self-worth, each as a person in their own right, safe without any fear of being judged, discriminated against or socially excluded or abused on account of any difference in their being. The centre accommodates those who do not fit in with the norms and standards of the Kenyan community.

The right of every person, especially women, to personally choose their own gender and openly live by that choice is emphasised. Women and girls actively engage with gender-based challenges and situations militating against the wellbeing of the community by using projects they conduct for the beneficence of the Kibera community. Their interventions feature an adequately equipped and staffed Community Library, out of which Outreach Programmes to educate the people of Kibera are run, and a Rescue Centre for victims of GBV that provides timely and relevant response and to any situation, including giving refuge.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

Definition of Feminism:

African Feminism defined “as resistance to patriarchal notions be they implicit or explicit”. Yasmin Muhammad explained how such notions present and how the Kibera Feminist Movement prevents their onslaught against the community.

Yasmin was followed by 18 year old Ruth Juliet, a devout feminist activist who shared the experiences of women in Kenya and the interventions the Kibera Feminist Programme offers which includes feminists advocating for women participation in policy making and leadership. She elaborated that agitating for inclusion of women is not a genuflection by women, but a gesture to sensitise the Kenyan society of the importance of implementing gender equality, failing which as Feminists, they create their own tables and run parallel feminist policies from which they advocate for feminist rights, not excluding menstrual health management and reproductive issues that more often than not leave the women with the burden of care. It was impressive to the group to hear someone so young being that effectively conscious of the plight of women.

Ruth was followed by Beryl, who goes by the name Afrika – a firebrand African Feminist. She reiterated modalities of Feminism and, touching on Radical Sisterhood as practised by the Kisumu Radical African Lesbian Feminism Movement, went on to explain Radical Feminism as the type that stands in stark contrast with Liberal Feminism. She explained Liberal Feminism as a sell-out type of feminism that negotiates sexuality along patriarchal lines, only seeking economic, political and social equality. Radical Feminism on the other hand is an all or nothing concept that redefines feminism

and, is demanding, makes no excuses for the existence of LGBTIQ communities, but ensures equality for all. She went on to explain that African Feminism rejects and deconstructs the notion that women are the weaker sex. It advocates that intersexuality, which acknowledges and recognises the existence of a wide diversity of genders, is crucial for young girls in Kibera slums.

The three young women that introduced Feminism were authoritative in matters of gender inclusivity, community cohesion and equality, and so were the last three that succeeded them, who demonstrated in practical terms, through some of their personal experiences, the importance of an unapologetic feminism to liberate mankind.

Radical Feminism

Much as the participants seemed awe-stricken by so much information, some seemed to raise concerns that this approach to feminism may inadvertently alienate rather than unite the people.

LGBTIQ Kibera Feminists Approach

Issues regarding LGBTIQ, approached from the Kibera Feminists' perspective, seem to run the risk of polarising communities and isolating men indiscriminately as perpetrators of gender inequality and violence. Participants indicated that unanswered questions remained, which only an intergenerational dialogue, which included men, could tackle.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group.)

What makes one a feminist?

Participants enquired whether being a Feminist was a prerequisite to participate in this Side Event. Others wanted to know if sensitivity about matters affecting women makes one a Feminist. There was a concern regarding why the Feminist Movement does not have male advocates. A participant responded that Pope John Paul II and the US Former President Barack Obama are men, yet by their personal portrayal and utterances, they have declared themselves Feminists.

Khadija from Libya asserted that feminism should be understood as a power, a calling that extricates women from tentacles of misrepresentation of their gender to a freedom to be; thus, this task is not the exclusive preserve of feminists, but the responsibility of the entire humanity. Everyone was kept alive and interested but it was clear that to many, a lot that feminism advocates shocks.

Much as civil action, advocacy and community outreach programmes effectively bear fruit as evidenced in the young people from Kibera, participants felt the same militancy should be proactively and equally inculcated in entire families, communities, men and women or parents as well as amongst all youngsters on the African continent.

African Feminism vs African Tradition

The group agreed that there needed to be reconciliation between African feminism and African tradition. Women from different countries in the continent had strong disagreements with ideas of feminism that rejected everything traditional because African tradition they said, is not responsible for Gender Based Violence. Historically in certain areas of Africa, matriarchs reigned up until the advent of colonialism. Participants felt it was better that Africans develop African policies that deal with gender matters as a collective, so that a value system that is gender conscious pervades Africa and protects all genders, wherever people live. Participants described the session in their own words, and in various ways.

A clear distinction was made between feminism in general, or as defined by the west, which is “the advocacy of women’s rights on

the ground of equality of the sexes”, and African feminism which at the end of the day the group agreed to summarise as “the rejection of all issues that lean towards being pillars of patriarchy with a potential to hamper chances of gender equality.”

Need for Community cohesion

African feminism could be summed up as intersectionality which restores human equilibrium. Participants summed up the side event as “awesome”; others said it was “informative, instructive, disruptive, innovative etc. The session terminated an hour late, justifiably so since it had begun much too late.

Everyone was upbeat, chanting the slogan, “African Women Power! Agitate, Organise, Educate and Liberate;” a war cry to validate talk and urge the setting in of decisive action.

WOMANOMICS AFRICA MASTERCLASS

Curator: Rehema Isa & Lebo Biko

Rapporteur: Hawa Mayere

Setting the Context and Background

- Unpacking how African women can participate more meaningfully in economics.
- Researching goods and services available in Africa, instead of exporting from abroad, where you often pay double for something Africans could equally well manufacture.
- Transformation of African perceptions in terms of believing in the local products manufactured in Africa.
- Engaging and educating women on how they can contribute in the energy, agriculture, manufacturing and in the mining sectors.
- Women as drivers of the economy (realising practical ways of achieving economic success without boundaries).
- Taking local and small trading businesses to the global trading stage (understanding what can be done in order to compete on the global markets)



3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

Organising ourselves

Organising ourselves – Having an understanding of what it means to be on the largest trade free markets. What needs to be done in order to have an organised market in Africa?

Trade opportunities

Trade opportunities – Where is the flow of money in markets? Where is the niche in the market? Gaining an understanding that Africa has large trade markets, the question is just: “where and what is that market?”

Gaining insights into the available industries, and how to access the research relevant to these markets.

Unlocking economic highways

Unlocking economic highways - where is the current highway that is easily traceable and how can it be accessed, to provide African women with the necessary financial support?

Providing strategic advisory services and programme execution support

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Mobilising groups of women selling or providing the products or services. (Inter-connect across the countries)
- Accessing the geographical markets (see who is selling what and where?)
- Enlightening women on what is available at the level of continental markets
- Enrolling women to engage in the economic growth in their countries

REHUMANISING THE AFRICAN WOMAN TAKING HER RIGHTFUL PLACE IN SOCIETY

Curator: Dr Judy Dlamini

Facilitator: Thabisile Phumo

Rapporteur: Prof Lulama Makhubela

Setting the Context and Background

Dr Judy Dlamini, as curator of the session, set the engagement in the form of a panel discussion. Facilitated by Thabisile Phumo, the panelists included Irene Charnley, Thandiwe Matthews, Tsitsi Masiyiwa, and Dr Motlalepule.

A deep reflection on how colonial and apartheid dehumanisation of Africans lingers in our minds and women and children carry the brunt of self-hate learnt from the violent system of Apartheid. What will it take to heal the mind and the soul of an African? How do we regain humanity?

Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

The burning platform include issues centering around education, culture and the negative community narrative on women and about what women feed themselves.

- Women's rightful place in different spheres
- Women are not represented in business and society
- Culture and religion plays a role in the dehumanisation of women
- Women not considered as human beings and therefore don't have a voice in all spheres of society
- South Africa has not dealt with the impact and history of Apartheid and therefore continues to perpetuate the violence against the weak in society, including women and children
- South Africa has got the laws and systems in place but implementation is a challenge
- Education has a big role to play in assisting women regain their humanity
- Redefine the identity of women as human beings, and women's rights as human rights
- Healing – acknowledgement of historical legacy of colonisation and apartheid and programmes to deal with them



WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

Some Proposed Actions:

Education – Inclusion of Gender Based Violence in the curriculum.

Culture – Review of cultural practices that perpetuate the dehumanisation of women and advocating for their eradication

Narrative – change the narrative and publish names of perpetrators of the violence

In view of above, some tangible action points to regain our humanity include:

- Make a public list of perpetrators
- Identify cultural norms that dehumanises us (e.g. virginity testing for girls) and what we need to get rid of the practice
- GBV to be part of the revised curriculum
- Positive stories that will change the negative narrative and help Africans to know their history
- Media - put money in documentaries that produce positive stories
- Investing in ourselves
- Becoming the voice as women leaders to bring change. Engage in courageous conversations. Coordinate strategies and locate them in communities. Fund community development models that will bring change in the lives of women.
- Challenge many of the practices such as religious practices
- Becoming active citizenry.
- Saying no to more laws but become better citizens that monitor our governance.
- Holding our parliamentary representatives to account
- Restoration and centering of dignity in all we do. Women Rights to be respected
- Activism and solidarity important. Young women to come together in solidarity
- Share best practices and working models such as “Sabela uyabizwa Model”. Nothing new but community –based model. “Never again Movement” - based on the “He for She campaign”
- Start with ourselves. Woman have a voice. Let it be heard. Strong as individuals but stronger as a collective.

In closing, women are encouraged to commit to some of above. One woman at a time.



UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 REVIEW

Curator: Rana Magdy Elfeky

Rapporteur: Suraya Bibi Bhyat-Khan

Setting the Context and Background.

The AU took three landmark decisions:

- The 2010 Decision of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) asking the Panel of the Wise to undertake a study on Women in armed conflicts;
- The 2014 Decision of Ministers of Gender calling for the creation of an association of women in mediation;
- The 13 March 2017 Decision of the PSC to create FemWise. The African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government established the Network of African Women Mediators, known as FemWise-Africa, to strengthen the role of women in conflict prevention and mediation. FemWise-Africa's location within the African Peace.

In light of above, the context and background of FemWise Africa requires:

- Professionalising the role of Women in Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation
- Bridging Gap in Track 1, 2, 3 mediation
- Eradicate the marginalisation of African women in different peace processes.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Clarity on the structure and function of FemWise. Not clear if the question was to be Women Mediators. UNSCR 1325 was mentioned.
- To attain membership, may have missed questions on reality to sustainable Peace in different regions.
- Eradication of marginalisation of African Women in different Peace Processes.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- AfWID to coordinate and strengthen FemWise, a point of departure for positive feedback from Regions.
- The work and experience required to bring positive change
- Regional and National Networks to provide platforms for strategic advocacy with FEMNET
- The capacity building during networking, enhancing and take home information and training methodology, implement the commitments to women's inclusion in peacemaking in Africa.

THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE JOB APOCALYPSE

Curator: Prof Babu Paul

Rapporteur: Pfarelo Muthige

Setting the Context and Background

What is Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)?

The 4IR is the current and developing environment in which disruptive technologies and trends such as the internet, robotics, virtual reality and artificial intelligence changing the way we live and work.

Why 4IR is important?

The fourth industrial revolution brings about many exciting challenges and opportunities

- The 1IR was actually the steam revolution
- The 2IR electricity energy
- The 3IR electronics Automation computers

The reason why today we have 4IR is because data has increased, 90 percent of the data in the world today has been created in the past two years alone.

The worlds data, is expected to grow by 40% each year.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Unemployment
- Misconception, Misinterpretation and Resistance
- Will Social sciences survive the revolution?

Added to above, the South African state of readiness with regards to Electricity access, Internet access, Education system and Transformation, Housing, Waste management, Health Sector and Transport.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

Recommendations\Skills to thrive in the 4IR:

- Complex problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- People management
- Coordinating with others
- Emotional intelligence
- Judgement and decision making
- Service orientation
- Negotiation of skills
- Investment in early childhood education
- Development of professional teaching workforce with strong technology skills
- Revitalization and moderation of technical education
- Basic and tertiary education needs to review the curriculums
- Introduction of tinkering – labs at school level aligned to industry 4.0



CODING WORKSHOP

Curator: Prof Mercy Mpinganjira and Mr Ronny Mabokela
Rapporteur: Nthabiseng Gagoopane

Setting the Context and Background

Due to the 4th industrial revolution it is important to know how to cope, not be left behind and in order to keep up with upcoming technological changes/developments. To that end, Africa needs coding skills.

Coding is about developing computer Apps that help make life easier. It is coming with solutions that will solve economic and social issues, among others, in our communities.

It is important that women know that coding is not a career path that is meant for males only. Women can also develop Apps that can make life easier by solving gender-specific problems facing them.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

The importance of coding for Women

- Women can be able to start their own businesses and compete diligently in the job market
- Women can be able to get an insight into how all these applications are working
- They can become entrepreneurs and build their own small software businesses
- Women can manage their data well by creating databases
- Coding can help develop logical skills

Using coding in different career paths

- Coding can be used in all sectors of the economy
- Learning coding abilities will help individuals with starting their own business, enabling them to be independent.
- Coding can be used to enhance different careers and widening the job prospect

Teaching future generations about coding

- Coding provides children with stable career options
- By teaching children how to code, we will be setting them up with skills and the ability to fulfill any position
- As children experiment with coding, they strengthen their technical skills, gaining the confidence to create.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Women must understand that coding is not for the male gender only, women must consider learning how to code as well.
- Coding should be introduced in schools – it provides better and stable opportunities for children
- Business people and entrepreneurs can use coding to market and benefit their businesses and improve their products
- With the 4IR in, it is important to learn coding as many future jobs will rely on technology and computer skills



MITIGATION, ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE IN CLIMATE CHANGE

Documentary: *A Plastic Ocean*

Curator: Dr Luz-Helena Hanauer/Seychelles

Rapporteur: Akhona Valashiya

Setting the Context and Background

- Viewing of a documentary: *Plastic Ocean* which is about raising awareness on plastic pollution on the ocean and the effects of climate change on the environment.
- Participants learnt about the negative impact of plastic and pollution in our lives.
- Participants discussed the effects and impacts of poverty and livelihoods in cities and villages.
- To talk about the vulnerability of Africa to climate issues and changing the way we do things.
- Acknowledging that we have a problem and change the way we understand normality.
- A highlight into how other communities in the world depend on the ocean for livelihood and the effects that pollution has on their daily lives.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Mitigation
- Adaptation
- Resilience

Africa needs to vote with its wallets and vote with its feet to stop the manufacturing of plastic.

How do we make a difference?

Seychelles is implementing policies with regards to mitigation, adaptation and resilience, trying other ways to replace plastic straws with paper straws.

Using waste to generate electricity in the future (Seychelles) is something that is being discussed and in the process of being implemented along with other recycling and reusing projects. Changing the mindsets of people and making them understand the importance of environmental conservation and the banning of plastic usage.

Environmental Affairs department in Guinea would like to follow Seychelles example and find out how they implement their environmental conservation.

Liberia suggests that every woman who has attended AfWID should go back to their countries and implement ideas of where to go in managing waste, especially plastic.

Cameroon: Focus on the manufacturing of plastic, the Cameroon has prohibited the use of plastics but it is a vicious cycle where still plastic is in use and the only solution seems to be approaching and boycotting the manufacturers.

Chad: we need to change our behavior and find alternatives for

plastic, the use of plastic to do artistic things and this would help in diminishing the plastic issue in our environment.

The countries that have implemented ways to ban the use of plastic need to teach other countries how they did it.

South Africa: Having conversations with people and places that use plastic and starting there, that could make a difference.

Angola: The documentary was very helpful in highlighting the plight of our environment. If we do something now we can save the world for the future generations and fight for their survival.

Morocco: Bags used to be made out of vegetable plants in the olden days in Morocco, then plastic came and that's where the problem started. It starts with one person and the rest follows, since doing good is infectious.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- We need to put pressure on the manufacturers and policy makers.
- Thinking about the earth and the ocean as another being that we are responsible for, creating wealth and well-being without destroying and predating and creating wealth that is not destructive.
- We need to change mindsets.
- In order to heal our planet, we must remember that we are all connected. We need to think of others even if we are not personally affected, since someone out there will be.
- It is time that women came together to educate society and to implement change continuously.
- The countries that have implemented ways to ban the use of plastic need to teach other countries how they did it.
- Using waste to generate electricity in the future.



FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Curator: Diakhoumba Gassama
Rapporteur: Lebogang Mathebula

Setting the Context and Background

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been a growing problem within many parts of Africa. This is the act where external female genitalia is completely or partially removed. This was mostly practiced in Islamic countries where they argued that it was part of their religious practices and any woman who did not go through the process was considered to be unclean.

Jaha Dukureh of Gambia sought to make this practice illegal after experiencing the brutal mutilation of her own genitals at a tender age. After being sent off to the United States to get married at the age of 16, she had to be cut open in order for her to engage sexually with her husband. She states that because of FGM all her sexual experiences have been painful, and that the process has deeply traumatized and damaged her, and she does not want to see any other girl child go through such a horrific experience. Since she first began her campaign, many countries have now made FGM illegal.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Genital mutilation of young girls across the continent
- People living in rural areas do not get all the relevant information on women's issues
- Females in rural areas try to stick to tradition more than education

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Writing letters to governments and creating campaigns in order for the act of FGM to be criminalized
- Spreading awareness to women at the grassroots level in order for them to have all the necessary information on issues which affect them.
- Reach out to women in the villages and find means to formally educate them in order for them to be more independent and speak out on issues pertaining to their bodies.

DIALOGUE AS TOOL FOR MEDIATION AND PEACE KEEPING

Rapporteur: Lavhelani Tshotheli

Setting the Context and Background

GUIDE FOR INTERACTION:

- You are a free spirit, feel free to change your mind.
- Hold your assumptions lightly.
- Welcome disagreement as a way of getting to know the other.
- Honour risk taking.
- Stay in the present respecting those in the room – cellphones on silent.
- Questions are as important as answers.
- All of us have a part of the answer to our own and someone's question, share and participate.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

HOW CAN THE GUIDE HELP US?

- "It helps break the ice and connect us"
- "Equal footing and equal space for all"

WHAT IS PEACE:

- "what is peace-keeping we often hear these terms but what do they really mean"
- Peace: "Security, there's no picture of what peace looks like, it's a state of wellbeing".

WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TIME TO DIALOGUE:

- "Being interested in another person, that's when dialogue takes place".

Day Four: Morning Side Events and Day Four: Afternoon Side Events

BEIJING +25 REVIEW

Curator: Memory Kachambwa
Rapporteur: Nthabiseng Gagoopane

Setting the Context and Background

The Beijing +25 review is rooted in deep Pan African feminist principles and the women who were present in Beijing at the time of the declaration.

The review started with the curator wanting to know where each of the women attending were in 1995 and what they were doing at the time. The session was to find out the untold stories of Beijing, as told by African women.

It is to recognise each and every country and the history of warrior women in each of the countries, to highlight the role that women have played throughout history and to ensure that their names and efforts are not forgotten.

The review is also to let African women know that it is okay to be the way they are. They do not have to change anything about being African, they should embrace it.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

Discussing the 12 critical areas of concern

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action flagged 12 key areas where urgent action was needed. It also laid out concrete ways for countries to bring about change. These areas include women and the environment, the girl child, women and the economy, human rights, and violence against women, amongst many others. The opinion was that these issues should not be put aside and forgotten, these are issues that are being faced in all the African countries and they should be addressed and spoken about.

Discussing the role of the African women who were present in Beijing in 1995

Finding out the experiences of the women who were present in the 1995 Beijing declaration. Women such as Dr Gertrude Mongella who played a prominent role in the Beijing 1995 declaration. Mongella was UN Under-Secretary and Special Envoy to the Secretary General of the United Nations on Women's Issues and Development at the time. These were the women who were in the front row of the gender struggle and fighting challenges in their own countries.

The celebration of African women who were involved in the history of liberation struggles

The session was fired up as women that fought in the liberation struggle from all the African countries were celebrated. It was emphasized that none of these women should be forgotten as they played a huge role in the liberation struggle. The general opinion is that these women should not be forgotten and more information needs to be made available to honour them.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Credit and acknowledgment should be given to women who have fought throughout history.
- We need to ensure that the information put out on the internet is correct and has not distorted the facts or misrepresented history.
- Women with disabilities should be given a platform and be included in conversations.
- Issues of Gender Based Violence should be put a stop to, women and children need to be protected.
- “Her story” – of the African women should be told more often and openly.
- The men that acknowledged the efforts and power of women should also not be forgotten. (E.g Steve Biko, Samora Machel etc).



AFRICAN FUTURISM

Curator: Gratia Ilibagiza Mutabazi

Rapporteur: Felicia Nkhwashu

Setting the Context and Background

- African futurism is about how African people imagine themselves in the future in terms of co-existing with the arts, culture, science and technology.
- The women were quite interested in exploring whether they will be able to adapt to new technologies as they advance.
- The curator then played videos of how African people imagine the future to be. One of the videos was a trailer of the famous Black Panther movie.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

Africans as pioneers of finding a way to exist in the future

Even though Afrofuturism offers the possibility of imagining one's self existing in the future, we need to be critical about where African women would be in such a future vision.

Technology

This plays a huge role in isolating and deny black people to exist in the world of technology, due to expenses, like travelling in a spaceship.

Archiving

There is a need to archive and document people's current lives online for future reference and for the young and future generations.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Documenting and archiving of one's daily lives online using social media so that there can be a comparison of then and now.
- Learning more about online data ownership
- More women need to take part in technology
- Situating Africans centrally in all future scenarios

THE STRUGGLE OF UPHOLDING LGBTIQ+ RIGHTS IN AFRICA BY THE COALITION OF AFRICAN LESBIANS (CAL)

Curator: Donna Smith

Rapporteur: Malebo Vilakazi.

Setting the Context and Background

The Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL) is a non-profit organization based in South Africa. Its main goal as a NGO is to fight for justice, equality and non-discrimination among African lesbians in the continent. It plays a major role the LGBTIQ+ community across the entire Africa which tends to be a massive taboo whereby pastors, chiefs etc, consider it as unclean and unholy.

In Nigeria, gay marriages have been banned and one can get jail time of up to 14 years for being gay, as well as in Cameroon, where a lesbian woman can get close to 5 years jail time, just to mention a few African countries where lesbians have been seen as a bad omen.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Fear of speaking out and coming out to the community because of the high rate of murders, rapes and arrests of LGBTIQ+ persons, mostly lesbians
- Most African lesbians are forced to live in solidarity in order to survive
- Lesbians and gays are considered as taboo in most African countries, and the majority of them live under threat of banishment from their countries and communities.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- The Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL) will continue protesting and writing to the government in order to get back the status which was rejected in 2015
- For CAL to launch and work with independent campaigns, and in the process try to talk to our own government, rather than travelling to Banjo to talk to that government
- For CAL to get more involved in terms of bringing more information to the community given that certain countries like Eritrea can't even talk about the word "lesbians"

WOMEN & LAND RIGHTS

Rapporteur: Gugulethu Mayisela

Setting the Context and Background

Women in other parts of Africa do not have rights to own any land and they want, and are fighting for, that to change. They want to own land without any patriarchal restrictions.

Women are questioning the powers that be as to why they cannot access land... The only way to fight poverty is to have proper land rights in Africa. There is a need to empower women to get opportunities to get access to land in their own name.

Women are always at war against the men and society, fighting and begging to get things or to own things. Land is an important resource, regardless of the type of economy, formal or informal.

Land is interlinked with many other socio-economic indicators. Women have been marginalised in its access, control and ownership, as though they are not entitled.

Without full access to land and ownership women will always lag behind in all endeavours of life, be it economically, politically, socially or culturally.

Patriarchal values are generally dominant in African countries such as Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.

Legal frameworks that respect the equal rights of women and men to own and inherit land are vital.

Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Women want to inherit property or land from their husbands when they die, instead of it going to the husband's family.
- Women cannot own any land or property, whether inherited or not.
- Women want to have equal rights when they have to purchase or get land from the state.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Start NGOs that can help women fight for land in communities
- The state must implement the land legislation in reality
- Women must inherit land for them and their children
- Women are more productive, they must be given opportunities to work on land, because they are capable of doing more than men
- Educate our women to stand up for what they want
- Think about our history, because land was taken away from Africans during colonization
- Human rights are women's rights
- Naming and challenging the ideology of patriarchy and other oppressive ideologies.
- Women should however not focus on comparisons with men over land
- Ensuring voice and representation of real power in both private and public decision-making.



MUSIC AS AN ELEMENT OF PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION

Curator: Luz Helena Hanauer

Rapporteur: Hawa Mayere

Setting the Context and Background

Music is a central part of the daily lives of the Sudanese people; however, musicians struggle to find support. Music in Sudan is seen as a tool to liberate the people. The Sudanese express themselves through music, as it unites the people. Music allows people to express themselves while they are internally at peace. Female musicians are seen as Awarah (something hidden). The music space in Sudan is a very male-dominated space, hence female artists are looked down upon.

To salvage the people of Sudan from their own fears, music allows them to express themselves without restrictions and create hope within them.

Through the music the humanity of people become visible. The people feel that oppression is a lot, because of the humble and giving nature of its people.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- How to make music compatible to the different religious beliefs.
- Creating safe spaces together (mobilising ourselves into groups where we can work together)
- Community participation. Societal judgement and values play a role in what is seen as morally acceptable and what is not.
- How can women enter, navigate and get rid of male dominance in the arts space?

- Women need to understand that competing for masculinity in the music space is toxic.
- Being wild, young and free should be acceptable for African women in the music space.
- Women are being divided in the African music space in order for a man to have a position.
- Being conscious of the reality of the arts and music spaces
- Being rational is seen as exhausting, hence we need to move away from the auto pilot mentality.
- Loving our culture, arts and religion will make us unique enough to be able to give the global space something different.
- Remaining feminine in these spaces and staying true to who you are. The authenticity is what's missing on the global stage.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Discover the strength that we have and having the pride given to us as Africans.
- Realising the strength within.
- Getting rid of the oppression that is we experience. We as Africans and women needs to unite in order to achieve the respect and recognition we deserve (compassion is key).



MICRO FINANCE

Curators: Fikile Buthelezi, Mandisa Matyeka, Sibongiseni Malakoane
Rapporteur: Asphina Sikhauli

Setting the Context and Background

WDB Trust's Zenzele programme is a psycho-social and socio-economic development programme with aims and objectives to intervene at household levels in order to assist families to graduate from poverty. They provide psycho-social support to build productive and self-reliant families within poor communities.

Siyakhula Development works hand in hand with Zenzele and they all fall under the WDB Trust. Siyakhula provides education to the illiterate women in the rural areas, providing earning facilities along with learning and teaching resources.

Both These Developments play a huge role in educating women to become independent. They assist by connecting the poorest households to development resources to help them pull away from poverty.

They aim to install social protection in communities and families by bringing the resources that they need closer to them and educating them by providing skilful material that will enable them to be self-reliant.

These developments do an area research to find out where the poverty is and they then do what they call area intervention where they visit the areas affected by poverty. There they meet up with women from the rural areas and introduce themselves to the communities and provide them with information on who they are and what they are bringing to them.

A Center is then opened within the community with resources such as a school with a computer center to educate both the literate and illiterate women of that area in order to give the skills that will help them starting their own businesses to feed their families. Through these three developments talents and skills are being recognised and put into action.

Fikile Buthelezi said "if you help a woman you assist the entire family", since, "even when the father of the house is hungry, they ask the woman what is to be eaten" she added. The WDB Trust targets women from poor rural areas to help them to generate an income to feed their families and mostly to do away with poverty. The developments produce independent women who provide for and protect communities.

A basic education for Adults who cannot read and write is provided from the beginners phase where one is taught to write their name and surname. People are also taught to count numbers.

After they have gained that knowledge of being able to read and write, they then attend the computer center to learn the basics of a computer, from how to switch it on, typing skills, colours, spacing and how to switch it off. As they grow, more information is delivered to them, and they even go as far as learning how to get financial assistance to start their businesses, for example, learning how to make a loan using digital gadgets.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- The WDB develops strategies to help women break away from poverty.
- The difficulties of getting women to engage within the development platforms
- The linking of poor households to development resources that will assist them to graduate from poverty, and the struggle to get the government to intervene

Members of the WDB Trust strongly believe in the saying "don't give a man a fish to eat, teach him how to fish and feed him for life". Instead of giving the poor communities food and clothes, they provide them with knowledge and education to uplift their skills so that they can feed themselves for life as they will be able to use the knowledge gained and the education to start businesses that will provide and generate an income so that they will be able to feed their families for life and secure what they need most of all: productive self-reliance.

Only then will they be able to break away from poverty, since poverty is not being illiterate, but it is the lack of basic human needs such as food, clothing and proper shelter with clean water. When the women in the poor rural areas are so well equipped from these training programs that they can provide the basic needs for their own families, the idea is to get the government to intervene. The developments have already managed to get the attention of the government, yet the process of their interventions is quite slow.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

The WDB Trust aims to change their style of approach when entering the poor communities because the members of the poor communities tend to think that since they are not coming with the tangible things that they need, like food, clothing and water, then the developments are not there to help them.

The WDB Trust is piloting a way to make it easier for government to issue support and provide the resources that are needed towards equipping women living in rural areas and that's an advantage for all the women, since they can get their skills development through the organisation because everything that they need is provided without any costs.

The Developments aim to be relatable to the target, and they remain as simple as possible in order for the women to feel a sense of belonging, allowing them to engage even more through the centers and platforms provided. The programmes also create better relationships within communities.

AFRICAN INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Curator: Dr Vuyisile Phehane
Facilitator: Morongwa Masekela

Setting the Context and Background

This session tackled the issues of traditional medicines and intellectual property protection, the law of traditional indigenous knowledge, as well as internal issues that particularly affect indigenous African people in their bids, attachments or claims to their corporate identity and land.

In a bid not to be marginalized, along with the desire to recognise and protect their collective and human rights, and to maintain the continuity of their individual cultures, many Africans have sought identification as indigenous people in the contemporary global sense of the term.

Three Burning Issues and Opinions:

The law of traditional knowledge:

This includes the law of copyright to one's identity. The copyright issues remain a concern as African people's assets are repossessed due to not having copyright licenses e.g. in Lesotho, the design of the traditional blanket was stolen and reinvented by Louis Vuitton and designed as an expensive shirt, and due to lack of copyright the case was won by Louis Vuitton.

Colonial Impact and its post-colonial reverberations:

We still have a colonized system, whereby our people are still not well informed of their very own culture. "For instance, we don't have our very own African language, and we still use the language that colonized African people."

Lack of sufficient medications to battle diseases:

Africa is known as a continent where diseases such as Malaria, Ebola and prostate cancer mainly target African nationals, and due to the lack of cooperation between medical doctors and traditional doctors, people die in large numbers. The African identity has been abandoned, and people insult African traditional doctors.

Recommendations:

The law of traditional knowledge:

In the SADC region there have been now institutional bodies that assist those who own cattle and those who work in the agricultural sector, in order to alleviate the situation whereby their properties are forcefully taken. This strategy will be shared with all women's sector bodies to resolve issues of ownership.

Women were encouraged to create their own structural methodologies to challenge the system on the issue of intellectual property, since the western system implemented laws in the agricultural sector that resulted in people losing their assets.

It is necessary to enforce the justice system and to ensure that cases are held accordingly to levels of fairness.

Colonial Impact and its post-colonial echoes on oppression and inequalities:

There should be an adoption of a modus operandi to ensure that women in this conference maintain contact on a daily basis with each other to solve issues on the African continent.

Develop a vision to be planted as a seed of hope that Africans wake up and be independent and resistant against policies of oppression.

In the SADC region there are now structures resourced to assist in issues of African Indigenous Knowledge. "We can in this regard share the information with those who come from western, northern and central African regions so that they can also be able to solve the issues they're encountering."

Lack of sufficient medications to battle diseases:

South Africa is the leading country in Africa to initiate a Memorandum of Understanding between universities and traditional medical centres to assist in curing diseases.

"In Cameroon there's a herb that we plant and reap. This herb is mixed with food and although it is a very bitter herb, it is good to alleviate Malaria."

In Lesotho there are various plants or "herbs" to heal people, for instance, there's a leaf and vegetables such as Seruwe le Thepe, which are good veggies to fight cancer, and this was also encouraged by the Sefako Makgatho University.

With regards to traditional knowledge, you have to make a declaration and acquire the certificate as a traditional doctor to heal people.

Comoros is a country that is still struggling with extreme poverty and hospitals are often unable to assist citizens, so, to alleviate this issue, people often consult traditional doctors for aid.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AWARENESS: BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER WORKSHOP

Curator: Pinkdrive: Neoleen
Rapporteur: Pfarelo Muthige

Setting the Context and Background

What is Breast Cancer?

Cancer that forms in the cells of the breasts.

Causes of Breast Cancer\contributing factors

- Smoking
- Drinking
- Previous Cancer
- Family History
- Family Planning
- Early onset of menstruation or late menopause
- Not having a baby before the age of 30
- Not breastfeeding
- Poor diet/obesity/not exercising

What is Cervical Cancer?

A malignant tumour of the cervix, the lowermost part of the uterus.

Causes of Cervical Cancer

The human papilloma virus which causes genital warts is associated with the development of cervical cancer.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Quantification and over-diagnosis
- Evaluation of service screenings outside of research settings
- Absolute benefit in terms of numbers needed to screen per life saved
- Which types of tumours benefit most from early detection?

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

Building awareness in women and men about the dangers of late detection of Breast Cancer.

- Mammogram
- MRI Magnetic Resonance Imaging
- Regular Self-Examination
- Pap Smear
- Early detection
- General Self care



UNDERSTANDING FEMALE LEADERSHIP STYLES IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION & MANAGEMENT LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Curator: Zoneziwoh Mbongdulo-Wondieh
Rapporteur: Thomas Mojalefa Lethoba

Setting the context and background

This plenary organized by Women for Change Cameroon (WFAC) undertook to engage on issues of Gender Based Violence (GBV), female leadership conflicts and violent attacks by Boko Haram to defenseless women throughout all the Central African states.

The history of violence against women has been ranging from Colonial to post-colonial times. In most countries on the African continent, women are victims of abuse every day and rape has been normalized in many societies.

The situation happening in Chad, Cameroon and Congo Brazzaville is dreadful. The burning question of the plenary is what is the solution for the crisis of GBV facing the African continent at large?

Four Panelists from Cameroon, Republic of Chad, Congo Brazzaville, and Equatorial Guinea led the discussions.

Three Burning Issues and Opinions:

Female leadership concerns:

The majority of women in Africa are excluded from decision making processes, and even Parliamentary women are limited in participating in law making. Another issue is that women are often expected to exchange sex for access to leadership positions.

Violent Attacks by Boko Haram

The riots and attacks by Boko Haram mainly target women and small children, even though their concerns relate to internal issues against the governments of the countries they operate in.

Peace and Gender based violence

Women are not living in peace, and they continue to be victims of abuse every day. Equatorial Guinea, Congo Brazzaville, Cameroon and Chad have experienced brutal killings of women since the colonial and post-colonial era. Young people are used by politicians to attack one another and kill each other.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

Female leadership concerns:

To resolve issues facing women, they need to cooperate and be in solidarity. Call neighboring countries for help and resolve forms of conflicts. Congo Brazzaville experienced terrible violence in 1978, and many women were brutally killed. After such women organized a camp and alerted young people to not be used by the power hungry people.

The need to draft strategies to adopt women representation in leadership positions where the women's voice needs to be heard.

"We have to stand up and use one voice to fight against all forms of oppression. Women can lead also, as women are as equal as men."

Violent Attacks by Boko Haram

Women in Cameroon organized various organizations as defending tactics to fight the abuse of the Boko Haram. The 'Women for Peace' movement was established to prepare women to be always cautious and be ready to defend themselves when attacked.

There is a need to create a network or a committee that can be communicated to all women across the continent.

Peace and Gender Based Violence

There are many strategies that women use to be in solidarity, and speak in one voice such as, sharing stories, advocacy, communication and mobilizing all women to stand together.

In Chad, there's a woman that transformed a surveillance centre into a prayer house, so that people can pray to God to find mechanisms to all sorts of violence. This really worked.

In Sudan, there are UN sites occupied by women, children and men. They created contact with one another to alert each other to acts of conflicts by setting alight firewood.



ENHANCING FINANCIAL CAPACITY FOR A SECURE FUTURE

Curator: Gloria Kono

Rapporteur: Akhona Valashiya

Setting the Context and Background

The aim of this event was to provide women with the tools to identify safe from unsafe financial institutions and leave them with a checklist of savvy financial practices to increase their wealth.

The challenge of African Women:

- Historical Facts
- Cultural Barriers
- The Global Burden
- Lack of Imagination and Innovation
- Limited Education

Situational Analysis:

- Women in Africa generally view money in the perspective of what it can do to enhance the well-being of their families, with major emphasis on their children.
- Unfortunately the majority of women are not mentally programmed to project beyond the daily basics to create a solid empire and a reserve for contingencies

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

Nigeria - Some women are financially independent but because of unemployment most women depend on their husbands for financial support and providing for their families.

Lesotho - Women in Lesotho since the Beijing 25 years ago are able to own farms and businesses and are self-sufficient without depending on men

How have women benefited/been affected by access to financial sectors? Eg: Banks, Microfinance institutions, savings and loans companies, credit unions, Fintechs:

- Lesotho - Women getting off the ground and getting study loans and business loans to enhance themselves financially
- Ghana - Women mobilise resources to increase capital
- Liberia - Women are asked for collateral if they want to get financial aid, only men are able to own houses and get loans independently
- Zambia - Invited people living with disability to be taught farming, gardening and marketing by skilled professionals to be able to earn a living

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

Recommendations:

- Women can form stokvels and assist each other to reach financial goals
- Enter into hand work and design learnerships and make a living
- Women start loan shark groups and charge interest and share the profits amongst the group
- Getting into the transport businesses to earn income and sustain families
- Personal Budgeting

Lifting the underprivileged (Women's dreams and possibilities):

- Lesotho-Fight tooth and nail with governments for the disabled to get monthly stipends in other countries as well just like it is done in South Africa
- Liberia- Fighting for curriculums in countries to be inclusive so that everyone can actively participate in improving themselves and their economies

Solutions Discussed in Groups:

- Enhancing Solutions for SMMEs- (i) Be sure of the vision you have (ii) Making good strategic business plans (iii) Start by networking with big and small enterprises
- A Glance into retirement and old age- (i) Starting businesses to save income for retirement (ii) Building houses and renting them out to earn a living while on pension (iii) Planning early for financial security to prepare for retirement
- Mentoring children into Investment- (i) Child savings, encouraging children to save. (ii) Creating afterschool jobs for children to help them to learn from an early age to be financially independent. (iii) Saving for children's futures and education monthly.



SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE (OXFAM)

Curator: Rehema Isa & Lebo Biko

Rapporteur: Hawa Mayere

Setting the Context and Background

Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) is an organization which consists of approximately 19 independent charitable organizations, and it has worked with over 90 countries. One of the many initiatives of OXFAM is working with women who were or are sexually harassed in the workplace, which refers to inappropriate behavior by making sexual remarks or touching another sexually in a workplace or other professional situation. OXFAM is not a reporting organization. If a case needs to be reported, it will be given to the authorities. OXFAM also offers a procedure whereby you can report anonymously, through the "Whistle Blower" process.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Management of sexual harassment claims, where employees in companies ask for sexual favors from women employees in return for getting a higher positions and higher pay
- Women who are breadwinners in their homes may think that their only option is that of sleeping with the recruitment manager

- to get hired and not have poverty in their communities
- Government leaders in other African countries tend to violate the laws in terms of sexual behavior, corruption and nepotism in order to get what they want from women of that specific country

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Reporting the situation to either Human Resources Management or authorities; also gathering witnesses for the case to gain more weight and make the claim more tangible
- As women we need to empower boys and girls about sexual harassment in our communities and fighting back by saying "NO"
- Do platforms about sexual harassment all over Africa

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Curator: Kwezilomso Mbandazayo

Rapporteur: Lebogang Mathebula

Setting the Context and Background

Gender based violence (GBV) is a growing issue within the African continent. From cases such as those of Uyinene Mrwetyana who was raped and killed in a post office to the rape and murders of girls as young as six months. We are hearing of cases of Femicide on a more recurring basis, where people who were meant to protect us are the ones harming us and taking our lives.

GBV is spreading throughout Africa in countries such as Gambia where Female Genital Mutilation was rife and women were being cut in their private parts from a young age. Countries such as Uganda, Nigeria and Somalia have laws in place to punish any woman who chooses to love differently from what they consider to be the "norm."

There are many movements that have been put in motion in order to fight the discrimination and the abuse that women are constantly being put through. Though some of them have made a big difference in changing people's mentalities, there is still a long way to go.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

- Not enough laws protecting abused women and those in place have many loopholes, which often sees the perpetrators going scot-free.
- Women and children continuously being oppressed, deprived of education, deprived of having a voice and deprived of being who they are.
- Lack of LGBTIQ+ movements across the continent

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Lobby to get more women into government in order for laws and legislatures to be changed.
- Create awareness and movements to fight against GBV, especially in rural areas.
- Work together in unity as various countries across the continent to fight and eradicate GBV.

WOMEN WRITING IN AFRICA

Curator: Khwezi Femele

Rapporteur: Felicia Nkhwashu

Setting the Context and Background

Various writers gathered to share their love for writing and the challenges they are faced with as professional writers, aspiring writers, bloggers, copy writers and many more.

African women have been using writing as a way to express themselves.

The women read out stories and poems to each other.

Their aim is to create a platform to curate legitimate African stories which will reclaim their African identity as their stories interlink as Africans regardless of coming from different countries.

3 Key Issues – What is the burning platform?

Using digital platforms to tell stories

People these days use different methods to tell their stories, using blogs, social media, and documentaries, among other platforms.

Preserving languages, culture and indigenous knowledge

The experienced writers expressed how they were not happy how African children cannot write in their own languages; let alone speak them. They are also not familiar with their traditions and cultures.

History

As much as we are living in the present, it is crucial to write stories of where people came from, their experiences and their backgrounds.

WHAT NEXT? (Recommendations: Key Commitments or Initiatives that can be taken up by the group?)

- Using blogs to encourage the young generations to write and engaging with them in meaningful discussions about the past.
- Teaching the young ones to write stories and poems in their indigenous languages and to preserve their languages, cultures and indigenous knowledge systems
- African history needs to be documented



MOVIE REVIEW: WHERE DO WE GO NOW?

WRITTEN BY: Thomas Bidegain, Labaki

DIRECTED BY: Nadine Labaki

GENRE: Comedy, Drama

RATED: PG 13

It is believed that more peace could be achieved in the Middle East if only women governed the region. Men seem to have the need to prove their maturity through power and authority, which in turn relegates women to duties other than governance. Furthermore, religion is governed by men. Although women are also flawed by their human nature, they lean towards compromise and accommodation, and do not consider all challenges as tests to their authority.

Nadine Labaki's "Where Do We Go Now?" is an interesting comedy about women in a small Lebanese village. The purpose of the film was to bring about peace between Christians and Muslims. The differences between the two religious groups had brought about diversity and conflict due to propaganda on both sides painting each other as enemies. When conflict arises, it is usually brought

about by insecure hotheads at the frontline. In fact this conflict is unnecessary, because, as the film shows, both these groups do the same things, they work in the same jobs, eat the same food, like the same music and speak the same language.

Their ancient instincts have evolved long before religion existed. Men are warriors by nature, and they are wired to defend their people. However, the role that religion now plays in their lives, has put them in virtual cages.

Other situations depicted in the film suggest that there have been real tragedies, like that of one mother who lost her child, and unfortunately the emotions arising from this death are not easily defused by comedy, which is one of the weaknesses of the movie.



AfWID in Numbers

By: Thomas Lethoba

15 AfWID 2018
SADC region countries

LONGEST TRAVEL TIME:

Western Sahara
Morocco
Tunisia

2.5 Days

55 AfWID 2019
African countries

TRAVEL 896
Flights & buses:

YOUNGEST SPEAKER: **23**
Alaa Salah, Sudan

YOUNGEST PARTICIPANT 18

Volunteers 60

Participants per country 16

DIVERSITY

Total participants: **1000**

Day visitors: **714**

15 – 35: **350** 36 – 81: **159**

WOMEN: **< 950**

MEN: **28**

WITH DISABILITY: **47**

Urban: **421**

Rural areas: **75**

Peri-urban areas: **119**

Undeclared: **> 350**

BREAKING BARRIERS

42 venues with **20** participants per group



Journey to AfWID: Country Reports

ANGOLA

A VOZ E O PODER DAS MULHERES COMO AGENTES DE MUNDANÇA

By: Isabel Ganga & Maria Mucumbi

Angola tem cerca de vinte milhões de habitantes com uma taxa de fecundidade de 2,6% e o crescimento populacional anual acima de 3,1%. O acesso limitado aos serviços de saúde sexual e reprodutiva, A baixa cobertura de contraceptivos moderno (16%) facto que influencia no índice de gravidez precoce onde a cifra de 2017 apontou para 16 mil casos registados; Dificuldade na inserção no mercado de trabalho, O não acesso ao ensino, Analfabetismo.

Há varias organizações ligadas aos direitos da mulher, como também a media tem espaços onde os direitos das mulheres são debatidos, como tv, rádios e encontros específicos, muito embora algumas televisões e rádios realizam mais em dias dedicados a elas, mas a sociedade civil trabalha muito para que a voz da mulher tenha força e seja ouvida.

Nos anos passados em Angola Já teve muitas mulheres em governação das províncias, mas este ano conta apenas com uma governadora, na província do Huambo. Hoje, as mulheres em cargos de decisão, isso em Ministérios corresponde 40 dos 12 que são dirigidos por elas.

- Finanças;
- Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia;
- Saúde;
- Acção Social, Família e Promoção da Mulher;
- Ambiente;
- Cultura;
- Ensino Superior, Ciência e Tecnologia Inovação;
- Indústria;
- Ordenamento do Território e Habitação;
- Juventude e Desportos;
- Turismo;
- Pescas e do Mar.

São 57 mulheres que corresponde 26% de mulheres ocupam lugares no parlamento angolano e 11% de mulheres na governação (ministérios).

Angola foi colocada na delegação da África Central, enquanto que faz parte da Africa Austral e isso afectou o acesso a participação dos problemas que afecta a região, e uma outra foi a ausência de painelistas de países de língua portuguesa.

A delegação de Angola teve um descontentamento com a organização na emissão tardia dos bilhetes de passagens motivo esse, que fez com que chegássemos um dia depois do previsto.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

By: Grace Mirleine Anselme Ngbaleo-Mbileine

Les femmes en République centrafricaine sont estimées à 2707092 soit 50,21% sur une population actuelle de 5328636. Etant l'agent de paix et du développement socio économique, la femme centrafricaine traverse au quotidien des énormes défis au rang des quels figurent, le problème de l'éducation, la violence liée au conflit, la paix et la sécurité, le leadership féminin, le financement des projets, et sa représentativité au sein des instances décisionnelles.

Pour y faire face, les plates formes de défense et promotion des droits de la femme se sont créées. On peut citer l'Organisation des Femmes Centrafricaines, (OFCA), l'Association des Juristes de Centrafrique, le Réseau des femmes parlementaires et ministres, le Cercle de Réflexion et d'Echange Permanent pour les Elèves et Etudiantes (CREPEE) la plate forme de la société civile « I LONDO AWE ».

Des programmes des magazines sont initiés pour parler des droits et de la liberté de la femme, Femme et développement sur Radio Notre Dame, Tango ti A wali « le temps des femmes » sur la fréquence RJDH (Réseau des journalistes pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme) et le magazine la « Centrafricaine » pour ne citer que ceux là . Des sessions de dialogue sont programmées situation par les organisations ou les agences des Nations Unies « ONU Femme » pour parler de la situation de la Femme Centrafricaine.

Malgré cela, la participation des femmes dans la société reste à améliorer, un constat fait par Barbara Sanga membre de la délégation centrafricaine AFWID 2019 à Johannesburg, « nous déplorons vraiment la participation des femmes dans les instances de prise de décision dans notre pays. Au parlement par exemple, sur 140 sièges, les femmes n'occupent que 12 soit 8, 55%. 7 femmes sont dans le gouvernement sur 38 ministres soit 18 %, et au conseil économique et social le pourcentage des femmes est estimé à 25% . Ceci en désaccord avec la loi sur la parité de 20013 demandant 35% des femmes dans tout les instances de prise de décision », a-t-elle souligné.

On note également la présence de quelques femmes dans des affaires, « Mme Joséphine Déjon ; Mesdames, Sophia et Isabel Dessondet qui tiennent réciproquement un micro crédit et un bâtiment « Sophia crédit » et « Sophia BTB » , Mme Félicité Ko, qui est dans le voyage et tourisme, Mme Gisèle Bedon dans l'immobilier, Sylvie Kolingba dans l'entrepreneuriat ».

Des figures influentes on y trouve aussi en RCA. On peut citer l'ex présidente de transition Mme Catherine Samba Panza, Mesdames Léa Koyassoum Doumté, parlementaire et leader du parti politique PUN (Parti d'Unité Nationale), Marie Madeleine Hoornaert Kouet, présidente de l'Autorité Nationale des Elections (ANE), Béatrice Epaye parlementaire et présidente de l'organisation de la société civile dénommée Réseau des Organisations de la Société Civile Centrafricaine pour la Gouvernance Démocratique « ROSCA- GD) et Mme Brigitte Izamo, coordonatrice actuelle de la plate forme des confessions religieuses.

La participation de la RCA à AFWID est un geste salubre, ce pendant les participantes se sont confrontées à de problèmes logistiques dans les préparatifs. Eudoxie Willibiro Kogonbe, cheffe de la délégation centrafricaine AFWID 2019 a souligné que « l'ambassade de l'Afrique du Sud en RCA, pour le moment ne délivre du visas que pour les passeports diplomatiques et services, donc il a fallu effectuer un déplacement au Cameroun pour obtenir les visas, les passeports nous aient parvenus la veille du voyage, alors que l'établissement des billets étaient conditionnée à la présentation des visas », a-t-elle regretté.

En dépit de tout, l'AFWID 2019 est une opportunité donner aux femmes centrafricaines pour s'enquérir d'autres expériences afin de relever les multipliant défis évoqués et de favoriser le bien être de la centrafricaine.

Grace NGBALEO Journaliste Radio Notre Dame Centrafrique.

GHANA

Women's Economic and Political Empowerment in Ghana – The Power of Voice

By: Juliet Enam Obiri

It is estimated that women account for 70 percent of the world's working hours, yet earn only 10 percent of the world's income. Clearly there is gender inequality at the labour front globally. The growth of women's economic empowerment has not been a priority in most African countries because of the male dominant patriarchal system.

During June 2019, Ghana had an estimated population of 30.42 million people, up from the 2010 census figure of 24.2 million, with an average of 50.9 percent men and 49.1 percent women. Generally, there is low participation of women in leadership roles in Africa.

The African Women in Dialogue Forum 2019 demonstrated to be a dynamic platform for women in Africa, to gather under one umbrella to discuss issues bothering them and breaking cultural barriers to have their voices heard in their communities. To the Ghanaian woman, such an opportunity to be part of this event is like breaking the shackles of slavery. Most of the participants from Ghana are from rural communities with little education and low income. Some of them are farmers from rural communities. Among the 16 participants from Ghana, are teachers, health workers, a Journalist, women in Agribusinesses and other trading ventures. Some of them have never travelled outside Ghana before and were full of anxiety until they got to Johannesburg.

Ghana has quite a number of women's rights organisations. Some of these include the Women in Agriculture Platform, African Women in Agribusiness Ghana (AWIA), Abantu for Development, Alliance for African Women Initiative, Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs (GAWE), The Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHTS), Network for Women in Growth (NEWIG) and many more.

Over the years, most gender activists called for economic empowerment for women in Ghana, especially for women living in rural communities. Lack of education, discrimination and inability to save and borrow money to grow businesses are the top three challenges facing women in Ghana. There is a high illiteracy rate among women in Ghana since most of them cannot read and write, even in their own mother tongue or local languages. It is a fact that income generated from empowerment activities for these women will keep their children in school and this will also bridge the literacy gap.

The presence of women in politics is still low, although their participation rights are guaranteed under the 1992 Ghana constitution. There is however a lack of female representation in government. This can be attributed to longstanding cultural norms. The traditional beliefs that Ghanaian women should not have responsibilities outside the home contributed to the deficiency of women in politics. But some of these cultures have evolved over the years. We have come from the era when women were solely left in the kitchen to the era where women have become Chief Justice, Speaker of Parliament, Chief of Staff, Attorney General, Presidential running mates and Commissioners of various institutions. Ms Fadumo Dayib, founder of Freedom of Move Somalia Forward grieved about how corruption has eaten into politics, especially in Africa and making it difficult for women to participate. She says, women who run for political offices must have a support system, thus, financial support. She told a story about her challenges when she was running for the presidential race in Somalia, and about how her male opponents tried to oppress her with money by corrupting the system.

Most speakers at the AfWID19 stressed the need for empowerment through a united front, education, change and transformation. This can also lead to peace in our environments. The participants were encouraged to focus on solutions to problems known to exist by creating a feminist economy that is putting women at the heart of businesses in Africa through networking.

LESOTHO

By: Refiloe Mpobole

According to the Lesotho Council of non-governmental organisations, in 2015 Lesotho had a Gender and Development index score of 65 percent and ranked 4th on the 15 South African Development Community (SADC) countries. However, the country still faces some challenges which mostly affect women.

An interview with Mapenkula Monyooe from Lesotho, who is a member of parliament, explained that violence against women is still the main challenge. She mentioned that not long ago, several incidents arose where more than five women were killed by their partners consecutively. The killings led to a point where the women held a protest against gender based violence. "This violence remains a challenge because most men still believe that they own us," she said.

Kellelo Rakolobe, who is a gender volunteer from Lesotho, mentioned that child marriage, especially in rural areas, which prevailed for many decades, still remain a challenge even now. Young girls are being forced to enter into marriage and this is not only done by men but also by other women. "This child marriage results in unwanted and teenage pregnancies of which is borne by women," she said. She added that child marriage is affecting young girls not only emotionally but psychologically. She mentioned one case which has just happened recently to a 21years-old lady from Lesotho whose children died through fire when she was out. The lady was considered irresponsible. "What I realised is that the mother married young. She was not psychologically fit to raise those two children. That is why she left them alone in the house," she said.

Rakolobe further mentioned that it is also challenging for women to have equal power and opportunities in governance. "As much as there are committees which entail only women in parliament, those committees hinder women from partaking in national executive committees which is the decision making body," she said. However, there are several platforms which have been created to promote gender equality although some of them have not managed to reach every person in the country. Rakolobe mentioned a programme which was conducted by the former Minister of Social Development, Matebatso Toti, while she was still in the ministerial position, and by princess Senate Seeiso where they were travelling to all the districts, raising awareness about child marriage.

Palesa Mokotjo, who is the secretary of the council for the Likhoele constituency in Mafeteng, mentioned that there is also a committee in their council which deals with violence against women and ensuring that justice is served. The intervention is not only happening in their constituency but most of the constituencies and villages have engaged in these kinds of programmes.

Mokotjo explained that this programme was established in collaboration with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Gender Links in realisation that people are still scared to report violence against women. She explained that they deliver teaching through public gathering, events and they also go to schools. "We try by all means to engage all the groups of people," she said.

Despite the challenges, more women have taken a stance to participate in governance and businesses. Monyooe explained that there are more women in parliament and there are women-only committees. "In this current ruling government, we had two women ministers. But, but due to reshuffles which are conducted frequently, we are left with only one women minister," she said.

Even in business, small entrepreneurship is dominated by women. This does not only include running small businesses but also running big companies. Mamello Phomane is currently nominated as the first women Managing Director at Metropolitan Lesotho.

LIBERIA

By: Garmai Garyah

Among all the challenges women are faced with in Liberia, the following major ones were highlighted:

Economic exclusion

Economic exclusion is a multidimensional process in which women are prevented from participating fully and equally in the economic life of their city or metropolitan area. This exclusion includes financial systems that perpetuate discrimination against women; limited participation in political and public life; lack of access to education, poor retention of girls in schools; gender-based violence; harmful cultural practices, and exclusion of women from peace processes.

Gender inequality in Liberia and violence against women

Liberian women are yearning for equal political participation and representation as a way of enhancing gender equality and ending years of gender inequality. The way to do so in their view is to have a non-contestable 30% representation in government, but critics say women need to work towards it, instead of having it handed to them on a silver platter.

The extent of gender inequalities varies throughout Liberia, with regards to status, region, rural/urban divide, and traditional cultures. In general, women in Liberia have less access to education, health care, property, and justice when compared to men.

Liberia suffered two devastating civil wars from 1989–1996 and from 1999–2003. The wars left Liberia nearly destroyed with minimal infrastructure and thousands of people dead. Liberia has a Human Development Report ranking of 174 out of 187 and a Gender Inequality Index rank of 154 out of 159.

During the First Liberian Civil War, there were widespread reports of sexual violence towards women. After the war, a survey taken of 205 women in the capital city of Monrovia showed that 49% experienced at least one type of physical or sexual violence by a soldier.

Health/ Fertility rate

The fertility rate has been slowly declining from 6.9 births per woman in 1984 to 5.4 in 2007 and 5.2 in 2012. Although fertility rates are decreasing in Liberia, the population growth rate is 2.6%, meaning that Liberia is one of the fastest growing nations in Africa. This growth is caused by a large percent of the female population being of reproductive age, along with early marriage practices and widespread polygamy, especially in rural areas. Contraceptive use is low among women from poor households and unmarried women. Maternal mortality is a major problem in Liberia, in 2010 there were 770 deaths per 100,000 live births. The devastating Liberian Civil Wars destroyed the country's health infrastructure. Even finding accurate numbers on maternal mortality is difficult because most cases go unreported, along with problems recording traditional births.

Journey to #AfWID19

A team of fifteen women from Liberia, headed by Madam Betti Sambola Woods, traveled to South Africa to participate in the AfWID forum. The journey from Liberia to South Africa was a great opportunity and challenge for the women. Due to the long distance, the flight was not direct. A stop was made in Ghana, providing an opportunity for some of the women of Liberia to have a chance to see their neighboring country, Ghana; where eating some of the Ghanaian food was amazing, especially as the Liberian women had to eat with their hands, which was a strange experience, since eating with one's hands at a gathering is taboo in Liberia. It took another five hours by air to arrive in South Africa.

MADAGASCAR

By: Fehizoro Rafalimanana

Dans la journée du 02 novembre 2019, 16 femmes Malgaches issues de différentes régions et de différent secteur se donnaient rendez-vous à l'aéroport international d'Ivato pour former une délégation et participer à l'évènement Afwid19 au Johannesburg, Afrique du Sud. Avant d'arriver à Ivato, celles qui habitent en région ont dû partir de chez elles quelques jours plutôt et ont dû se déplacer en taxi-brousse. Avec un vol direct de 3h20 de l'aéroport International d'Ivato à OR Tambo international airport, le vol a été agréable affirment les membres de la délégation. Cependant certaines ont rencontré quelques difficultés dans la procuration du passeport. Malgré son nom de famille assez particulier, une membre de la délégation a dû se procurer un certificat de nationalité malgache pour compléter ses dossiers alors que les autres n'ont pas eu besoin. Il s'agit d'une procédure au sein du ministère de la sécurité publique locale.

De par cette expérience durant une semaine riche en partage, les femmes malgaches ont uni leur voix et espèrent que la femme soit plus entendue, considérée et estimée dans tout ce qu'elle entreprend. De retour au pays faire connaître l'évènement AfWID et ses objectifs et agir pour le bien être de la femme devraient être au cœur des actions, en vue de l'émancipation de la femme. Par ailleurs, les femmes malgaches ayant participé à cette édition AfWID19 estime une amélioration considérable de la confiance en soi ainsi que l'engagement dans la promotion de la femme au sein de la communauté, des divers secteurs d'activités pour impacter par la suite tout le pays. En effet, aujourd'hui, les femmes malgaches font face à de nombreux points de blocages qui freinent le développement. Ces blocages sont généralement liés aux us et coutumes dans chaque région ainsi que les pratiques religieuses. Le mariage précoce suivi d'une grossesse précoce demeure depuis plusieurs décennies un frein au développement socio-économique et au bien-être de la femme. Les chiffres sont alarmants surtout dans la partie Sud de la grande île. Environ 48% des jeunes filles de 15-19 ans ont déjà donné naissance à au moins un enfant dans la région Atsimo Andrefana, estime un rapport publié par UNICEF Madagascar. Selon un témoignage recueilli dans le Sud, une jeune fille qui fréquentait le collège d'enseignement général, a été obligée d'arrêter l'école en 2014 à l'approche de la fin du troisième trimestre quand elle avait 14ans, parce que ses parents lui ont trouvé un mari. En contrepartie, le mari devrait fournir quelques têtes de zébus aux parents de la jeune fille. Durant une investigation que nous avons réalisée en 2018 à ses 18ans, elle affirme qu'elle n'a ressenti aucun épanouissement dans sa vie de couple. Le mariage, rêvée en compte de fée se transforme en drame et se termine par une séparation. Délaissée avec ses deux enfants, elle retourne chez ses parents et est considérée comme un fardeau pour sa famille.

Cette pratique, encouragée par la tradition, continue à persister malgré que Madagascar ait adopté la stratégie nationale de lutte contre le mariage précoce et l'accord de la SADC qui fixe le mariage à 18ans. « Cette pratique qui fait transformer la femme en objet de vente pour subvenir aux besoins doit être bannie » réclame une membre de la délégation malgache à cet évènement Afwid19. Pour y remédier, les actions de sensibilisation devraient être renforcées auprès de toutes les communautés de base afin de lutter contre le mariage et la grossesse précoce et réduire ainsi les conséquences nocives sur nos jeunes filles et nos femmes.

Conscientiser la société sur l'importance de l'éducation, surtout en terme de scolarisation des filles, est également un défi pour la société malgache. L'équité tant réclamée doit débiter par une éducation au sein du foyer familial. Aucune discrimination ne devrait être faite à l'égard des filles et des garçons à commencer par les tâches ménagères qui ne sont pas forcément des activités réservées aux filles.

En outre, une discrimination est également observée dans le secteur du travail à Madagascar. En effet, les offres d'emploi pour des postes stratégiques au sein d'une entreprise sont généralement destinés aux hommes notamment la recherche des directeurs, ou un poste équivalent.

Après cette semaine, une fois de retour au pays, nous espérons améliorer notre mode de vie. Nous pensons également que les prières et pratiques culturelles que nous effectuons avec un régional amour on Madagascar.

MOZAMBIQUE

Premature marriages and lack of support for female entrepreneurship

By: Joana Macie

Mozambique, located in southern Africa, has 28.8 million inhabitants, of which 15 million are women and 13.8 million are men. The country still faces challenges linked to child marriage, domestic violence, and a lack of funding opportunities for women. In Mozambique, about 48 percent of women aged 20-24 have been married or have been in a marriage before age 18, and 14 percent before age 15, according to data from the United Nations Children's Fund. Initiation rites in the north of the country and lobolo in the south, as well as poverty and low levels of education are identified as the main causes for the high rates of child marriage.

To combat child marriage and other harmful practices against women, parliament, government and civil society have come together to create and pass three important laws for society, in particular for women and girls, namely the law against Premature Unions, Succession and Family Act, which means that anyone who gets into an intimate relationship with a girl under 18 is arrested.

Also the wife can no longer be deprived of the property of her husband by the husband's family in the event of his death. "These are laws that help women and girls and ensure stability and peace in families," said Alice Banze, executive director of Gender Links, who added that women's organizations played a leading role in approving these instruments. Regarding women's political participation, although much work remains, improvements have been made in recent times. At Africa level, the country ranks 10th and 5th at SADC level in terms of creating space for women's integration in political leadership. The country held general elections on 15 October, and the involvement of women, in both the electoral campaign and the voting process, was encouraging, as observers, presiding officers of polling stations, and as candidates for the National Assembly.

SOMALILAND

Challenges Facing Women in My Country

By: Salma A Sheikh

The Republic of Somaliland declared its independence from the former Somali Democratic Republic on May 18, 1991, and after a bloody civil war that led to the death of thousands of people and the destruction of all properties. Since then, Somaliland succeeded to retain peace and stability in the country and has inaugurated five elected presidents. The last three presidents and their vice-presidents came to power after a one-man-one-vote presidential elections. The country's Upper House known in Somaliland as the House of Guurti (House of Elders) has zero women participation, while there is only one woman in the House of Parliament.

In every presidential election, the candidates promise a significant increase of women's participation in the government cabinet and an attractive quota in Parliament seats. However, nothing has materialised so far and that frustrates women of Somaliland.

Women are lacking behind, significantly, in many other domains; 'female youth not in employment or education' is more than 53%, compared to just a little over 24% in men, as the research sponsored by NAGAAD Network, a women's umbrella network in Somaliland, point out. The research explains that "young women aged 15 to 24 are twice as likely as young men in the same age cohort to be neither employed nor in education and a woman's educational background decides the type of employment accessible to her". This leads to women in Somaliland taking up lower ranked jobs such as secretarial and catering, while the biggest chunk work in the labour force and others engage in smaller entrepreneurship. Women and girls in Somaliland have a very slim chance to find employment in the country, where unemployment has soared to its highest, with the few qualifications and limited experiences they possess.

These three issues; inadequate education, unemployment and lack of political participation go hand in hand and result in the biggest challenges that women in Somaliland face. Women's awareness levels and resources to fight prejudices and fight together to overcome such challenges is very low. The country's lack of international recognition is another factor contributing to Somaliland women's challenges in participating in the decision-making realms. There is no demand from the international community to enforce women's inclusion in the country's decision-making processes. There is a proverb in my country that says, 'be a mountain or depend on one', and it is used in relation to wanting to break barriers and succeed in unaccommodating situations.

Women in Somaliland and in any other country in Africa, today, have significant challenges in overcoming inequality and prejudices. Programs like the African Women in Dialogue (AFWID) programme presents hope to the millions of African women who are in a predicament with men-made problems and who are searching for inspiration and support to move forward.

Women in Somaliland can truly be agents for positive changes for women in the Horn of Africa and in the rest of Africa if our voices are heard and if our potentials are realised.

SUDAN

By: Ikhlass Nimir

.... عيقيريفال فارملا راوح يف رواحمل ما ، صاصرلا توص تالكساو يارلا عيرحو عيعامتجالا قلدغلاو مالسلا*
رمن صالغا /جرييسن اوج*

جرييسن اوج قنيدم يف African Women In Dialogue تايقيريفال اساسنلا راوح راوشلا وه اذه ناك، (ريي غتلا لم او عك انتوقو فارملا توص)*
تسرت تنمبولفيدي، يكييما يلي ناز قديسل قسوم عياعر تحت، دوش تريي قديف يف 2019 ربمفون نم عبالرلا يف حاجاتفا مت يذلاو، قليملا
(Wits) غاوج ستو قورف توصب، ينطولا ايقيري فال بونج ديشنو ، عيقيري فال داخالا ديشنب ، عيحاتتفال قسلجل تادب دقو، (Development Trust
Choir) نم ديزم ىلا ةمونم ، جم انربلا اذه نمض تاو لصرلا عيما ، قنيما قديسل تديف ذا، ناي دالا نيب قداب عل نع ، دو كاف قنيما قديسل تشدحت كلذ دعب ،
شادح لجا نم، تقولا مارتحاب قبل اطم، ممالا نيب راوحلاو مالسلا رشن عيما عل ع ، دو كاف تديكا امك ،، عيرشبلل ضرا ايقيري فال لجا نم ، قالدلا او اعدلا
، قنيما تبل اطاو، كلذ ىل ع اساسنلا عيچشبو راوحلا قرورض ىل ع تزكر ييتلا ، ، يكييما قديسل رود ىلا كلذب قريشم، عيقيري فال فارملا ممالا ريي غتلا
متالوادم لك يف يقيتلملا هجوتو ، ناكلما للظنت نا سدقلا حورلا وكيسام اليف قديسل تاعد ، امك ، ايقيري فال لجا نم قالدلا او اعدلا يف دهجل نم ديزم لذبل
ريي غتلا وحن ، متاوطو.

ىل ع قنكوم ، (ايقيري فال نراد يف) متيسا ادب تايقيري فال اساسنلا اب ، يكييما الي ناز قسوم انا سلاج موصو وكن اجوم قديسل تبلجر ، يرخا عيخان نم
فارملا هجاوت ييتلا ، تايديحتلا هجاوم قرورض ىلا امثي دح يف وكن اجوم تمونو ، كلذ يف ، يكييما قديسل رودب قديشمو، راوحلا لال خ نم ريي غتلا عيما
، عيعامتجالا قلدغلاو قنكوجلاو مالسلا تاسايسل يلم عل قيبطتلا وحن ، دامتجالا نم نم ديزم و عديما، عيماو رقفو لهج نم ، قراقلا يف ، عيقيري فال
ايقيري فال اساسن ييموج قديسل تفصوو. عيرحو عاجش لكب ايلاع امتوص عفر قرورض اهل عيبل اطم ، ناماضتلاو ريي غتلا روحك فارملا توص اال عاو
يفو. عيروكلذلا قنميلا دوجوب ، اساسنلا ىل ع ققبطملا ، عيچاودالا ذنبو ، صاصرلا توص تالكسا قرورض ىلا قريشم ، نهناطوا رييحت لجا نم ، تابراجملاب
(قححتو املا ح ناك) مناب هل قفصاو ، عيقيري فال فارملا راوحب تداشا ييتلاو، قلدغلاو مالسلا قوقح لاجم يف ققشانلا ، غنشتوا راتي قديسل تنمث امثي دح
قلازا قرورض ىلا كلذب قريشم، تاسايسل عضوم يف اسفن عضوب ، عيقيري فال فارملا امتلمك يف تبل اطاو، لودلا فلتخم نم تاكراشمل رود تنمث،
يارلا عيرحو عيماو ، زيي مي تلا
رييحتلا لجا نم فارملا لاضنو ، مالسلا عيما عل ع ، ايقيري فال بونج يف يداسبال الكاسيل قمنملا كراشمل سسوملا ينال ييتام ما ينيوب، قديسل تديكا دقو اذه
. اساسنلا ترمم دق برحلا نا يلا قريشم ،
يراچال ربمفون نم نمائلا ىتح رمتسيس راوحلا نا ، ركلاب ريديجل

SWAZILAND / ESWATINI

The Situation of Women in Eswatini

By: Ms KB Nhlabatsi: Social Media Officer: Coordinating Assembly of NGOs

The situation for women in Eswatini is inextricably linked to multiple issues, which need to be addressed with an organised and sustained response. Swaziland has a deeply patriarchal society, where polygamy, violence and deeply unequal cultural and religious norms reinforce inequality, power differences and disadvantage to women. Such deference undermines the constitutional rights of women.

Gender based violence is one of the challenges that face girls and women in the country. The issue of poverty and dependence of many women on men have normalized abuse. The weekly killings of women due to relationship problems show that even courts and community leaders do not take part in protecting women.

However, Eswatini made some progress towards the promotion and protection of women's and girls' rights through the passing of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 2018, which provides the framework to curb sexual and gender-based violence in the country. The country's ability to implement this law is yet to be evaluated as it is fairly new. Notwithstanding its age, there are signs of lethargy in fully implementing it.

Eswatini women are also disadvantaged in terms of the economic ownership and control of the means of production of land, capital, livestock and other assets. Policies have been formulated granting women equal land access, however there has been poor dissemination and implementation of such policies. Many widows are also forced from their homes.

Platforms for women to engage and dialogue in Eswatini are organized by various civil society organizations, including NGOs who advocate for gender equality and the promotion of women's rights. These have been very limited and not far reaching. Amongst these are regional dialogues for women, women networks, and initiatives for rural women focused on economic empowerment. Gender disparities in women's participation have remained deep and persistent in the country. Women's political under-representation is mirrored in a gender gap when it comes to interest in public affairs and desire to run for political office. Other gender gaps are found in business, where women predominantly occupy informal trade and are not sufficiently empowered to graduate to the formal economy.

The journey to the AfWID forum has been an exciting one for the Eswatini team. The proximity of Eswatini to South Africa made the travel logistics less strenuous as there was no need for Visas or air travel to the conference. Our 16 participants fully represent the diverse population of women in the Kingdom. Amongst the participants are business women, women from the LGBTIQ+ community, women in public service, rural and urban women, young women, students, a faith leader and a housewife. A majority of our population representatives are affiliated with various programs and organizations. A lot will be shared amongst these on our return to Swaziland.

ZAMBIA

The Sad reality of Zambian women Under-representation, GBV and Maternal Deaths

By: Annie Zulu

From the time that Zambia got its independence in 1964 to date, women have continued to face serious challenges such as under-representation in decision making, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and maternal deaths.

Under-representation in Decision Making

There has been a misconception that politics is about issues which concern men more than women. It is believed that men are associated with 'hard' politics and women with soft politics of the home. But should women only be in the kitchen? Some men are also better caterers and better home keepers than women. A good example is the fast food industry, which has become a male-dominated area, rather than a domain of females. Aren't the operations of this industry centred on the kitchen?

Currently, there are 30 women out of 166 members of Parliament in Zambia. Figures in the 2012 national census show there are more women than men, in a total population of 17.86 million. Views from people and various stakeholders engaged in promoting women inclusion in decision-making show that women can play a better role in ending corruption and addressing some major problems in society when voted into power not only as ministers or Members of Parliament, but also at the highest level as president.

So far, Zambian women like Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Catharine Namugala, Chief Justice Irene Mambilima and Vice President Inonge Wina are occupying high positions in decision-making in the country and other women could take a cue from them.

GBV

GBV is another challenge that women are facing in Zambia and the country has in the past few years recorded massive cases of this vice. According to the Zambia Police Victim Support Unit 2019 Second Quarter GBV Statistics Report, there were 6, 139 GBV cases reported countrywide.

GBV is a term used to describe any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed differences between males and females.

While men and boys can be victims and survivors of some types of GBV (particularly sexual violence), GBV has a greater impact on women and girls.

Maternal deaths

The 2018 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey revealed that 674 maternal deaths were recorded in that year. The primary causes of these deaths were obstetric haemorrhage and indirect causes. Obstetric haemorrhage was the most common cause of death among women ages 30-49 and among women who had experienced more than one pregnancy, while maternal death also accounts for the most deaths among pregnant women ages 10-29 and first-time pregnant women.

Local platforms of engaging women

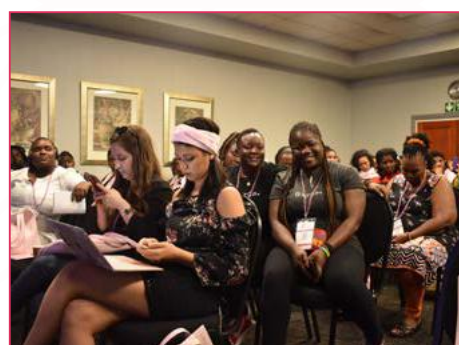
The Women's Movement Organisations such as the Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL), the Non-Governmental Coordinating Council (NGOCC), Young Christian Women Association (YWCA) and the Women in Law Southern Africa (WLSA) have created various platforms to help address these challenges that women are facing and also engage with them through platforms such as workshops, the media, road-shows and door to door sensitizations among others, although much still needs to be done.

The AFWID journey

1000 women from 55 African countries attended this year's AWID forum, a forum which seeks to unite African women from all walks of life under one roof to deliberate on issues of continental importance in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Forum which was held under the theme "Women's Power and Voices as Agents of Change", saw women from various African countries share strategies and ideas how best they could address challenges faced by women on the continent.

It is certain that one of the biggest ways to address evil vices affecting women is through strengthened dialogue and AFWID has created that. If only African women could stand up together and speak with one voice, challenges such as under-representation in decision making, GBV and maternal death will be a thing of the past.





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