

# AGGREGATE REPORT AWID'S 2013 INNOVATION SEED GRANTS

Prepared by AWID with inputs from Seed Grant Reports

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## 1. Introduction

This report presents a comprehensive summary and analysis of the 24 Seed Grant initiatives that stemmed from AWID's 2012 International Forum on Women's Rights and Development, and were implemented throughout 2013 and 2014. Along with a summary description of the key achievements, impact and lessons learned for each grantee, we provide an aggregate analysis that reveals the diversity of innovative strategies and activities involving a wide variety of sectors within feminist and women's rights movements. We also draw some conclusions on the added value of supporting seed grant initiatives and the ongoing impact of the AWID Forum, tracking how ideas generated at the Forum have far-reaching benefits and ripple effects.

Above all, these seed grants represent an opportunity to learn from women's rights and feminist organizations around the world on how they are articulating their priority concerns and creatively engaging in the transformation of economic power to advance women's rights and justice. Our comparative analysis shows that the vast majority of grantees contributed to **filling knowledge gaps, raising awareness, and enhancing capacity and economic opportunities**. This implies that short-term, small scale funding of this nature is a first step in a longer process. Seed grant funding helped to lay the foundations to pursue more long term advocacy, policy influencing, alliance building, and awareness raising activities aimed at strengthening women's rights advocates' and organizations' ability to transform economic power. Grantees coincide that one of the biggest challenges was a lack of time and funds to undertake successful activities which met their economic transformation objectives. The seed grants thus emerge as one way to kick start a process, try out an idea, build connections and gather additional support to carry out a more long term change processes.

### 1. What are AWID Innovation Seed Grants?

Innovation Seed Grants have been an [AWID](#) tradition dating back to 2002 and awarded after its past four International Forums on Women's Rights and Development, held every three or four years. AWID Forums are a point of convergence—for ideas, perspectives and experiences, agents of change, partnerships and commitments that aim to enhance women's human rights worldwide. We feel strongly that ideas need to become realities and that women's rights advocates and organizations must be the ones working together to lead these changes. Provision of seed grants is one of many concrete ways that AWID seeks to fulfill its movement support role by providing small startup funds of USD 5,000 each to successful applicants who have attended the most recent AWID Forum and present an original initiative based on the Forum theme. Preference is also given to groups with annual budgets under USD 500,000.

Since AWID's 2002 Guadalajara Forum AWID has awarded 75 seed grants totaling USD 375,000. This support has branched successfully across women's movements – including diverse sectors, nationalities, generations, and languages to creatively advance women's rights. AWID's most recent [2012 Forum](#) was held in Istanbul in April 2012 on the theme of *Transforming Economic Power to Advance Women's Rights and Justice*. This was AWID's largest Forum to date, bringing together 2,239 women's rights advocates, from 140 countries and six continents. Coming out of this Forum, AWID launched a Call for Proposals for Seed Grant ideas which received an unprecedented response of close to 300 proposals from Forum delegates, each detailing a plan to turn ideas sparked at the Forum into concrete projects. With guidance from an International Selection Committee, [24 winners](#) were selected to implement initiatives for transforming economic power.

A diversity of donors generously responded to our call to support implementation of these seed grants in 2013, including African Women's Development Fund, Channel Foundation, New Field Foundation, Oxfam Canada,

Open Society Foundations - Sexual Health and Rights Project and EILLEEN FISHER and The Eileen Fisher Community Foundation. AWID's 2013 core funders also supported seed grant expenses<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. 2013 Seed Grantees

The 24 Seed grants represent 19 countries from 11 regions and a broad diversity of sectors. *(Click on each title to read the summary for each grantee)*

	Seed Grant Title	Organization	Country
1	<a href="#">Engendering Tax Policies in Selected Countries in Asia, A Research-Competency-Development &amp; Advocacy Project</a>	Jubilee South Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (JSAPMDD)	Philippines
2	<a href="#">Palestinian Women in Israeli Civil Service: A Critical Examination of Economic, Social, and Political Ramifications</a>	Gender Studies Program at Mada al-Carmel-- Arab Center for Applied Social Research	Israel
3	<a href="#">The Bio-economy through a Gender Lens</a>	Global Forest Coalition (GFC)	Paraguay
4	<a href="#">Empowering Home-based Worker Women Project</a>	Kozadan İpeğe Home-based Worker Women Cooperative	Turkey
5	<a href="#">Introducing Feminist Economics to Gender and Sexual Justice Activism in Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe</a>	Bishkek Feminist Collective SQ	Kyrgyzstan
6	<a href="#">First Transsexual Persons' Human Rights Report in Chile.</a>	Organización de Transexuales por la Dignidad de la Diversidad (OTD) (Organization of Transsexuals for Dignity of Diversity)	Chile
7	<a href="#">"Owning my money, owning myself"</a>	Asociación Mujeres con Voz (Association Women with a Voice)	Spain
8	<a href="#">Basics: Feminism and the left</a>	Jelena Savic, independent Roma feminist	Serbia
9	<a href="#">Advocacy campaign of the national women's network for the recognition of the role of women in the artisanal fishing sector.</a>	Réseau national des femmes de la pêche artisanale en Mauritanie (National Network on Women in Fisheries in Mauritania)	Mauritanie
10	<a href="#">Project to support the emergence of women's organizations for effectively including women's issues in development projects.</a>	Promotion de l'Entreprenariat Jeunesse et du Leadership Féminin (PEJELF), Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurs and Women's Leadership	Niger
11	<a href="#">Creating leaders in Feminist Economics on the road to the 2013 National Feminist Encounter.</a>	Centro de Apoyo para el Movimiento Popular de Occidente (CAMPO) - REPEM (Support Center for Grassroots Movement in Western Mexico)	Mexico
12	<a href="#">Food Sovereignty and the Care Economy: gender strategies to confront income and time poverty</a>	Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (CEDEM) (Center for Women's Studies)	Chile
13	<a href="#">Opening a bank account to save money</a>	Aids Myanmar Association National Sex Workers Network (AMA NSWN)	Myanmar

<sup>1</sup> AWID's 2013 core funders include Sida, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Hivos, Cordaid, Levi Strauss Foundation and anonymous contributors

14	<a href="#">Red Umbrella Diaries Memoir Storytelling Workshop</a>	Red Umbrella Project	USA
15	<a href="#">Sex, Fun and Money</a>	Debolina Dutta, independent researcher with sex worker collectives Durbar Mahila Samanyaya Committee (DMSC) and Veshya Anyay Mukti Parishad (VAMP)	India
16	<a href="#">Sex workers' rights are human rights</a>	Association of Hungarian Sex Workers (SZEXE)	Hungary
17	<a href="#">"Where's the Money for Women's Rights?": A Kosovo Case Study</a>	Kosova Women's Network (KWN), and Alter Habitus (AH)	Kosovo
18	<a href="#">Centering Economic Justice for Caribbean Women: the Caribbean Institute in Gender &amp; Development: An Intensive Training Programme</a>	Institute for Gender & Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit	Barbados
19	<a href="#">Gender, Extractive Industries and Livelihood in the Pacific Islands with initial focus on Fiji and Papua New Guinea</a>	Pacific Network on Globalization (PANG) and partners	Fiji Islands
20	<a href="#">Young women workers Trade Union for economic sustainability</a>	Serene Secular Social Service Society (SSSSS)	India
21	<a href="#">Building a political voice for women living with HIV to demand for increased funding for women's human rights and social justice</a>	International Community of women living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa (ICWEA)	Uganda
22	<a href="#">Using Comics for Economic, Social and Gender Justice Advocacy</a>	Alliances for Africa (AfA)	Nigeria
23	<a href="#">Agricultural Community Warehouse and agricultural activities for women and girl victims of sexual violence and other vulnerable women and girls of Kamanyola/Walungu</a>	Action pour le Développement Intégral de la Jeunesse et de la Femme (ADIJF), (Action for Integrated Development of Youth and Women)	Congo, Democratic Republic
24	<a href="#">Awareness Raising and Education to Promote a Culture of Peace as a Means of Recognizing the Work of Women as Economic Operators and Not as Instruments of the Economy, Women Peace Initiatives, Cameroon.</a>	Women Peace Initiatives	Cameroon

## SECTION 1: AGGREGATE ANALYSIS

The 2013 Seed Grants represent a remarkable depth of diversity in terms of geographic location and sectors within the global women's rights movement as well as types of activities and methodologies used to address the 2012 Forum theme.

### 1. Snapshot of Diversity

- **Global diversity:** AWID prioritized representation from a wide diversity of regions with emphasis on the Global South. While we sought proportional representation across regions, there are a higher number of grantees from Sub Saharan Africa as two donors provided specific funding to grantees from this region.

Regions	Number of Grantees	Country
Caucasus, Central Asia and CIS	2	Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan

Southern, Central and Eastern Europe	2	Serbia, Hungary
East and South East Asia	2	Philippines, Myanmar
Latin America	3	Chile (2), Mexico (1)
Caribbean	1	Barbados
Middle East and North Africa	2	Israel, Turkey
North America	1	USA
Pacific	1	Fiji Islands
South Asia	2	India
Sub Saharan Africa	6	Mauritania, Niger, DRC, Nigeria, Cameroon, Uganda
Western Europe	1	Spain

- **Under-represented and marginalized sectors:** In keeping with AWID's priority constituencies, the selected seed grants involved participants from under-represented and traditionally marginalized sectors within the women's rights movement. Several grants engaged with multiple sectors, with rural, young women and women of colour among the most prominent groups. The range of participants included: young women; women of color or afro-descendent; LGBTQI; \*trans people; Indigenous women, migrant women; rural women and fisher folk; sex workers; factory workers; domestic and home based workers; women living with HIV or AIDS; Roma and Kurdish women.
- **Reach of the Seed Grants:** The influence of the seed grants was first instrumental for the just over 1000 direct participants immediately involved. These included grassroots rural and urban women, students, sex workers, trade unionists, farmers and fisherfolk, other community members, academics, women's rights activists, and representatives from development NGOs, civil society organizations and national governments. . Though difficult to fully measure, the exponential reach was much greater, reaching at least 15,000 indirect beneficiaries who gained knowledge and awareness via print and online dissemination of publications, awareness-raising campaigns, presentations at conferences and through an ongoing replication of workshop learnings, and local media coverage.

## 2. Analysis of Strategies and Methodologies

Seed Grants help us to understand the work of women's rights organizing in that they reflect which strategies and methodologies are working well to effect social transformation in a particular context. We have seen that women's rights groups and organizations do a particularly good job of tailoring their research, knowledge production, capacity building, communication and advocacy strategies to the needs and lived realities of their peers.

Types of Methodologies	No. of grantees	% of grantees
Capacity building, Skills and/or leadership training	20	83
Produce a publication	14	58
Research	13	54
Alliance building (built/strengthened networks/relationships)	11	50
Advocacy to influence public policy	10	42



Public Event: Forum, conference	4	17
Agricultural, Animal Husbandry, Fishery	4	17
Cultural Expression: Theatre, Sculptures/posters, Comics, Graphic Novel	4	17
Income generation	2	8
Awareness raising campaign	2	8

### Most Common strategies employed by seed grantees to pursue social transformation among women's rights groups:

Below we provide some analysis about the most common strategies used by grantees to pursue social transformation among women's rights groups, along with some illustrative examples.

#### Knowledge production grounded in a needs assessment of women's rights groups and used for advocacy:

A common pattern was for grantees to first focus on assessing the information needs of specific women's rights groups in order to strengthen their work, such as context analysis, resource tools for strengthened capacity, influencing public policy, and supporting movements. [An illustrative example is The Pacific Network on Globalization \(PANG\) who conducted interviews with women in eight rural villages of Papua New Guinea on the impact of extractive industries on indigenous communities. The insight from these villagers will inform PANG's advocacy for the integration of a gender perspective into policy-making on extractive industries in the Pacific Islands.](#)

**Research adapted as accessible publications and educational resources:** Another common strategy was to adapt research into accessible toolkits, manuals, educational booklets, webinars, illustrated comics or stories so that the knowledge generated could serve as an educational and skills building platform in order to strengthen the "target" groups' knowledge, confidence and empowerment to engage in economic transformation processes. [For example, with data from their survey of women's rights organizations in Kosovo, KWN and AH aim to produce user-friendly tools and materials about current funding trends and feminist resource mobilization strategies in the Kosovo context that can contribute knowledge and a potential advocacy platform to support increased resources for women's groups locally and internationally.](#)

**Broad Outreach:** The responsibility to share knowledge was another common thread with 17 out of 24 (71%) grantees producing and sharing a publication or using a cultural or artistic expression based on their research and experiences. Grantees shared information via websites, theatre, e-newsletters, blogs, social media campaigns, radio broadcasts, and through attendance at conferences and gatherings thus greatly increasing the impact of these small scale grants far beyond the immediate participants. [For example, the Training Program of the Caribbean Institute in Gender & Development uploaded course content reaching 6725 online readers; and The Association of Hungarian Sex Workers \(SZEXE\) distributed three newsletters to approximately 4000 sex workers.](#)

**Use of Participatory Methodologies:** Most grantees incorporated highly participatory techniques to assess the groups' interests and enhance participants' connection to the process. Participatory research techniques included semi-structured and/or in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys. [For example, the Kozadan İpeğe Home-based Worker Women Cooperative in Turkey conducted an extensive survey among 63 home-based women workers in order to develop a series of training workshops and educational materials based specifically on their needs.](#)

**Emphasis on Strengthening Capacity:** Twenty grantees, representing 83% of all seed grant initiatives, incorporated elements of capacity building, skills and leadership training within their activities. This strongly

connects knowledge with empowerment by providing women's rights advocates with the tools to enhance their abilities. In fact, those who received training also assumed the responsibility of passing on their newly acquired knowledge and skills to other women within their communities and networks. Use of the multiplier role emerges as an effective way to exponentially impact larger groups and to take on collective responsibility for sharing knowledge and putting skills into action. *This is illustrated by the International Community of Women living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa (ICWEA), who trained a group of 16 young women living with AIDS in sexual and reproductive health and rights. According to ICWEA "The training revealed that, when empowered with knowledge and skills, young women living with HIV are great advocates...These women are already registering advocacy success stories, for instance, one beneficiary attended the African Union meeting in Senegal on human rights violations in the region which specifically raised issues of coerced sterilization of women living with HIV registered in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda".*

**Adaptation of methodology to suit participants' needs:** Grantees made adaptations in planned activities to respond to the needs and realities of the women involved. Once activities and consultations got underway, several grantees informed AWID of changes that would make their work more effective and enhance their reach. *For example, Debolina Dutta, a grantee documenting experiences of sex workers in India changed the final product to a multi-lingual graphic novel instead of the originally planned video because ensuring anonymity was crucial for the safety of interviewed sex workers.* AWID recognizes that such adjustments need to take place and grantees felt empowered to be leading the implementation process.

### 3. Aggregate compilation of success attained by seed grantees

To demonstrate the significant contributions made, we have grouped grantee's self-identified successes within several categories. The results exemplify what is perhaps attainable for women's rights organizations to achieve within a year with small-scale startup funds. Strengthening women's rights organizations also emerges as a common success of the grantees' experience, though this is considered an ongoing process which the seed grants helped to spark. It is also important to note that each seed grant activity achieved multiple results, indicating the capability of a short term focused initiative to achieve several interrelated goals.

#### Success Categories and concrete examples

##### Filled a knowledge gap:

- Gender inequalities within tax systems, overview of women's conditions and issues of tax justice in East and South Asia
- Gender-specific impact of young Palestinian women's participation in Israel's Civil Service program and their access to economic opportunities
- Impacts of current "bio-economy" and related proposals to expand markets in environmental services on women
- Funding trends and resources for women's rights organizations in Kosovo
- The inter-linkages between economic justice and other issues which affect women, especially sexual and reproductive health and rights through curricula for Caribbean women's rights advocates
- Gender specific impacts of extractive industries in rural communities of Fiji on sustainable livelihoods.
- Funding trends for women's organizations working with women living with HIV and AIDS in Eastern Africa.
- Linkages between economic policies, violence against women and girls and gender equality communicated through a comic series set in a small town in Africa



**Raised awareness with a rights based focus:**

- Concrete practices for implementing the food sovereignty model incorporating gender equality at the family and community levels in rural communities of Chile
- Increased awareness amongst key international policy makers on the potential impacts of the bio-economy on women.
- Provision of empowerment training to help home-based workers in Turkey learn more about their economic and social rights and feel more confident and equipped to claim social security benefits.
- Relationship between women, money, migration and remittances and tools to enhance their own economic power and independence among migrant women in Spain
- Young women textile workers in India and their labour rights and how to build a movement for the economic and social empowerment of women.
- Mexican women leaders and their organizations increasing internal capacity for well-articulated action and proposals that focuses on human lives and the environment.

**Enhanced capacity**

- Home-based women workers in Turkey engage in public spaces and build a communications network
- Caribbean women's rights activists have enhanced leadership and communication skills, enabling them to act as catalysts for change
- Women fish vendors and processors in Mauritania defend their interests before authorities via advocacy for social change training
- Rural Mexican women leaders and their organizations have enhanced critical analysis applying feminist economics to reflect on the impact of current economic policy on their lives
- Trans women in the sex trade in NYC have a creative outlet to express themselves, document their experiences, and make social change via storytelling and theatre production
- Sex worker rights activists in Eastern Europe are equipped with information on human rights, national and international protection mechanisms, and are able to better articulate and expose issues that directly affect their lives and health, demanding positive changes for their own communities
- Young Roma women in Serbia have a new perspective on their gender roles, positive identity and responsibility within the Roma movement and wider society as educated citizens
- Increased community awareness of the fight against gender-based violence in DRC

**Enhanced economic opportunities**

- Home-based women workers in Turkey have increased resources to work within the social security system and have discovered alternative models to this system
- Alliance and synergies forged between women vendors/fish processors and small producers in Mauritania to defend their common interests
- Creation of a women's organization in Niger that promotes gender concerns within local development processes, and provides micro loans for income generation
- Increased financial management (bank accounts and savings) among sex workers in Myanmar leading to savings, personal empowerment, greater business control and enhanced safety
- Young women living with HIV from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda trained in Advocacy and Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) for the purpose of carrying out advocacy work in their respective countries
- Women victims of violence in DRC have established agriculture cooperatives to improve their nutrition and income, thus alleviating poverty and increasing women's socio-economic empowerment.

### Strengthened women's rights organizing

- Formation of first women textile worker's union in Tamil Nadu, India, addressing gendered aspects of labour violations and rights defense
- Movement building amongst sex workers in Myanmar to facilitate their involvement in regional and national level activities
- Establishment of a permanent working group in Cameroon among women's rights and human rights advocates to facilitate reflection on building a culture of peace for economic transformation within a sustainable development process
- Establishment of a formal women's rights organization in DRC, women monitoring committee for sexual assault alerts and for women's leadership initiatives

## 4. Seed Grants as leverage to mobilize resources

A significant impact of this round of seed grants is that 42% of the grantees (10 out 24) were able to use the AWID seed grant as leverage to mobilize additional resources for their initiative or organization, with a collective total of USD 446,907. This represents a remarkable 227% increase from the initial investment of USD 120,000 (USD 5000 per 24 seed grants) and the exponential effect a small grant can have. The amounts mobilized varied among grantees with most mobilizing under USD 50,000.

Range of resources mobilized in USD	Quantity of Seed Grantees
Under \$10,000	3
Between \$10,000 to \$50,000	4
Between \$ 50,000 to \$100,00	2
Over \$ 100,000	1

Following the work of the seed grant initiatives over time has demonstrated that these small USD 5000 grants can serve as a stepping stone for groups and organizations to secure and leverage larger pots of additional funding. This demonstrates the capacity of women's rights organizations to successfully mobilize resources, and the advantage of receiving startup funds from a recognized source such as AWID. Seed grantees were able to capitalize on this opportunity by demonstrating their operational, financial management and conceptual capacity to other donors to build upon the initiatives started with AWID's support. In this respect the notion of "seed" grant or start-up funding emerges as an effective and successful tool to support strengthening the work of women's rights organizations, particularly since issues related to women's economic justice and rights attainment are not straight forward or as accessible to a diversity of funders.

## 5. Insights on transforming economic power to advance women's rights and justice

The seed grant experience is an opportunity for AWID and our broad constituency to learn about how to effectively pursue transformation of economic power whilst making a real difference in women's lives, through concrete practices of women's rights and feminist organizations. The following insights provided by seed grantees on ***transforming economic power to advance women's rights and justice*** should be considered as part of an ongoing discussion on how to strengthen the work of women's rights organizations and movements in an process of social transformation and gender justice. Grantees concur that social and economic transformation

must be led by the very people who are affected by inequality, and that this must go hand in hand with the process of individual empowerment.

The following categories and specific examples from grantees emerge as overarching insights:

- **Individual empowerment is an integral step to transform economic power**
  - *It seems impossible for women to empower themselves financially without prior individual empowerment. (Kozadan İpeğe Home-based Worker Women Cooperative)*
  - *Our struggles as women for access to rights and justice can only be achieved by women that are most vulnerable and in need of these rights, all they need is empowerment in rights and instruments that support access e.g. international, regional and national declarations and commitments. (ICWEA);*
  - *Women are a target group for the realization of poverty eradication, therefore, it is important that projects that aim to improve people's livelihoods target women's own needs and empower them in order to gain participation in decision-making. (GFC)*
  - *Raise women's awareness of the obstacles that hinder their development by strengthening their capacities. (PELEF, Niger)*
  - *The collective and public defense of the economic rights of women is achieved through personal reflection on the implications of the relationship with money and questioning of the naturalization of poverty. (Association Women with a Voice)*
  - *Asking the open-ended question "how do we fix it?" is not the right approach. Members of our community aren't always sure how to identify ways to improve their conditions with respect to economic injustice, relationship dynamics, work situation, as well as the stigma and discrimination they face... To be effective activists, we need to nurture skills, critical analysis, and confidence among our community members. (Red Umbrella Project)*
- **Collective sharing and strategizing strengthens the transformation process towards women's rights and gender justice.**
  - *The only way to overcome prejudices among women is to provide these women with the spaces and opportunities where they can come together and spend time with one another. (Kozadan İpeğe Home-based Worker Women Cooperative)*
  - *Cohesion of women is achieved through heightened awareness of common interests. (National Network on Women in Fisheries in Mauritania)*
  - *Transforming economic power is not just about legislating on human rights, or reforming law, or changing politics: it is as much about collectivization and community building in occupations that are heavily gendered, like sex work. (Debolina Dutta)*
- **Grantees offered these statements as key elements to integrate in recognition of women's rights as essential to a more equitable economic transformation process.**
  - *Economic justice is linked to gender justice. Women cannot gain gender equality without equal access to economic resources. Gender responsive economic policies can complement women's human rights and social justice. (AfA)*
  - *Women's access to land and resources should be secured. There is a clear need for land reform policies that grant women the same land tenure rights as men in order for them to have control over and cultivate the land and provide food and water for their families. (GFC)*
  - *The alternative vision to capitalism is a feminist proposal for a liberating, autonomous and humanist economy. (CAMPO)*

- *In order for the food sovereignty model to become a robust vehicle for transformation, it must bring about broad changes internally (in partner relationships and the domestic sphere) as well as externally. (CEDEM)*
- *It is essential to advocate for the integration of women's housework into the family code ... entrenching women's domestic work as a valued and quantifiable personal contribution. (WPI)*

## 6. AWID's Reflections

It is clear that these 2013 post-Forum seed grants have laid the groundwork for ongoing processes among participating women's rights and feminist organizations with impacts that will go beyond the implementation period. The impact of the seed grants is part of a longer continuum that took root in the lead up to the AWID 2012 Forum. The seed grantees were all Forum participants who have been engaged in a long-term process of learning, reflection and praxis, culminating with implementation of the one-year small scale initiatives. Seed grantees prepared to engage at the Forum by learning more about the Forum theme, preparing their own sessions and then further deepened their knowledge through participation at diverse Forum events and access to Forum resources both during and after the event. This experience informed the preparation of their seed grant concept. The actual implementation of the seed grant further contributed to insights on how to translate the complex reality of economic and social transformation for rights attainment into concrete initiatives that were meaningful to the daily lives of women from diverse sectors and regions.

We believe that most of these seed grants have met AWID's goal of helping turn creative ideas from the 2012 Forum into action. The diverse outputs and successes achieved will resonate within local communities and societies, and are part of an ongoing process of strengthening the capacity of women's rights organizations to engage in awareness-raising campaigns and advocacy initiatives to influence policy that contributes towards transforming economic power and achieving gender equality, empowerment and meaningful impacts in the lived realities of women.

## SECTION 2: SEED GRANT SUMMARIES

This section presents summaries of each of the seed grant's experiences, based on their reports to AWID and includes information on the seed grant partner, objectives, activities and outputs, key achievements, impact and lessons learned.

### 1. Engendering Tax Policies in Selected Countries in Asia: A Research-Competency-Development & Advocacy Project. Jubilee South Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (JSAPMDD)

#### Seed Grant Partner

This project was implemented by the JSAPMDD Women and Gender working group, comprised of the secretariat, Freedom from Debt Coalition Women's Committee Philippines, Jagaran Nepal, Solidaritas Perempuan Indonesia and KRuHA (People's Water Coalition Network – Indonesia). The target recipients of the project include various women's groups, especially at the grassroots level, working on public finance and various gender issues in Indonesia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Pakistan.



#### Objectives

Participants at JSAPMDD's workshop at AWID's 12th International Forum, "Tax Justice and Women: Examining Gender Inequalities in the Tax System" drew a consensus that gender remains poorly reflected or integrated in current campaigns around tax laws and policies and that taxation itself is a poorly maximized vehicle for pushing human rights, particularly women's economic rights. The Seed Grant Project 'Engendering Tax Policies in Selected Countries in Asia' aimed to:

- Help build the capacity of women's groups in understanding tax systems and policies and in framing advocacy issues around tax and gender justice;
- Surface the women and gender dimensions of tax policies, with a focus on implicit and explicit forms of discrimination against women; and
- Craft policy recommendations towards reforming tax systems and policies informed by human rights, social justice and gender equality principles.

#### Activities and Outputs

Phase 1: Research on regional and country-level tax issues: The research focused on undertaking a policy scan of tax systems and policies in the Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. JSAPMDD drafted an initial discussion paper, which provided an overview of women's conditions in the region, highlighting issues of tax justice, as well as connections to other issues such as debt and public finance, the privatization of essential services (water and energy) and climate change. The discussion paper, [Relating Conditions of Women in Asia to Issues of Debt, Essential Services and Climate Change](#) was uploaded to the JSAPMDD website in June 2013 and several copies were printed for distribution at various meetings and conferences attended by JSAPMDD. The secretariat hired a short-term research assistant to gather relevant literature of tax policies and laws in Asia (Southeast and South Asian countries) and identify relevant issues. Research included collecting inputs from member organizations which in turn fed into capacity-building materials for the planned webinars. JSAPMDD also facilitated exchange on developments in relation to tax and gender policies.

Phase 2: Capacity Building: JSAPMDD implemented a series of three "webinars" with the goal of building capacity in key issues identified through the research. In December 2013, JSAPMDD met with its member organizations attending the 5<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Meeting in Bali, Indonesia. The secretariat organized several

parallel workshops as part of its work on Public Finance and Tax and took the opportunity to gather members for a one-day discussion on Tax and Gender and to discuss and prepare for the webinars attended by organizations from Koalisi Anti-Utang (Indonesia), Rural Reconstruction Nepal, Indian Social Action Forum, EquityBD (Bangladesh), Freedom from Debt Coalition (Philippines) and representatives from partner agencies: Christian Aid, Arab NGO Network for Development, Revenue Watch and the Global Alliance for Tax Justice. Of the participants, only three were women. The series was scheduled for March 2014, in time for International Women's Day celebrations.

Leaders and campaigners of JSAPMDD member organizations (prioritizing women) who are actively working on public finance and women's issues were invited two months before the scheduled webinars. While many confirmed their participation to represent member organizations in Indonesia, Nepal, India, Philippines and Pakistan, only six participants attended each of the two sessions due to schedule conflicts and technical difficulties. The third session on action planning was postponed as there were only a handful of participants – and served as an assessment and reflection instead.

All reading materials and presentations from the two webinar sessions were compiled and made available to participants immediately after each session. These include the reading list, books and articles on tax and gender, campaign materials of partners from Tax Justice Network and PowerPoint presentations delivered during the sessions. These materials can be accessed via the following URLs:

Session 1 (March 7) - <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/n3pk3xod33wy5ku/FzED-Nm1nl>

Session 2 (March 18) - <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/taykg8m85mfeoeo/Q-qYhio8P>

Phase 3: Policy Advocacy: The secretariat believes this phase as the most important part of the project as this is where identified strategies and actions towards a progressive, gender responsive tax system will be carried out. However, JSAPMDD decided to postpone this phase to a later date when their member organizations have more knowledge about the issue of tax and gender. They also believe that a more in-depth discussion, that involves face-to-face strategizing, is necessary.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

According to JSAPMDD, the project was highly successful in researching and making visible the gender dimensions of tax policies. This was achieved through the development of the initial discussion paper presenting an overview of women's conditions in the region with a focus on issues of tax justice and dissemination via their website and various meetings and conferences attended by JSAPMDD. This research also fed into the capacity-building materials that project recipients were sent as background for the webinars. Despite facing several obstacles in rolling out their capacity-building webinar series, the webinars identified common trends across the region in terms of women's economic status and participation in paid employment. Trends include low labour force participation of women compared to men, a huge gendered wage gap, gendered occupational segregation and the prevalence of women in the informal sector. JSAPMDD produced an E-book on gender and tax that contains consolidated information gathered from desk research, discussions during the two webinar sessions and inputs from member organizations regarding the issues in their respective countries.

### **Lessons Learned**

The major limitation for JSAPMDD meeting their objectives was that due to budget constraints, they conducted the capacity-building sessions online and technical difficulties lead to a low turnout for the webinar sessions. In addition, those who had confirmed attendance shared that they had scheduling conflicts with various International Women's Month activities. Others said they had difficulty connecting online, especially in areas where grassroots organizations are based. Language barriers also impacted on the success of the webinars. In



comparison, the face-to-face meeting in Bali in December 2013, although only three women attended, was interactive and fruitful. The need for face-to-face strategizing was identified as an important goal going forward. A key reflection is that further capacity building is needed among member organizations on the issue of tax, as many remain unfamiliar with the issue and regard tax concepts as too technical. As such JSAPMDD plans to conduct outreach to other women's groups to continue the discussion on tax and gender.

## 2. Palestinian Women in Israeli Civil Service: A Critical Examination of Economic, Social, and Political Ramifications, Mada al-Carmel—Arab Center for Applied Social Research, Gender Studies Program.

### Seed Grant Partner

[Mada al-Carmel](#) generates and provides information, critical analysis, and diverse perspectives on the social and political life and history of Palestinians, with particular attention to Palestinians within Israel's 1948 boundaries. Mada also advances critical research on Israeli society and politics in order to further understanding of its undercurrents, particularly in relation to policies toward Palestinians and Palestine. Mada offers a home for Palestinian and other scholars to develop critical approaches, exchange ideas, and develop their own research.



### Objectives

The project aimed to research, analyze, and bring critical perspectives to public discourse on the issue of voluntary Israel civil service participation by Palestinian citizens. This was established in lieu of military service for participation by religious Jews and others, but has been increasingly marketed to the Palestinian community as a means to “share the burden” and benefit from economic incentives. Over the past decade there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Palestinian citizens of Israel participating in the program, particularly among women who comprise 80% of Palestinian volunteers. Mada's research sought to uncover the impact of participation in this program on young Palestinian women's access to economic opportunities, and the ways participation may support the state's hegemony over the economic trajectory of the Palestinian community. It additionally investigated how civil service participation necessitates compromising Palestinian women's right to identity, a national narrative, and their connection to community.

### Activities and Outputs

Activities were spearheaded by Mada al-Carmel's Gender Studies Program (GSP) and overseen by its respective staff. However, in an effort to engage Palestinian academics and to encourage advanced scholarship, Mada sought the assistance of students in an Israeli college for Arab education and received their advice and recommendations on potential women to interview.

Research interviews with Palestinian Women: The program coordinator conducted semi-structured interviews with 60 young female Palestinians, all under the age of 30. GSP started the process with two focus group interviews, but as the young women felt uncomfortable and due to the sensitive nature of the topic, the GSP changed its methodology and completed the research with individual semi-structured interviews for the sake of comfort and anonymity. The interviewed participants were at various stages of civil service: 10 pre-civil service participants, 23 active participants, and 27 post civil service participants. The interviews were analyzed by the content analysis strategies of qualitative research methodology.

Interviews with Israeli and Palestinian Officials: In addition, interviews were held with the Israeli officials who administer the civil service program and Palestinian officials who hire civil service volunteer labor. The final

round of interviews, held with Palestinian political and civil society leaders, has been completed by a group of researchers in the Israel Studies Program of Mada al-Carmel and will be incorporated into the GSP's final results.

**Research papers, outreach and book:** Under the authorship of Dr. Suhad Daher-Nashif, Mada has written a chapter on female involvement in Civil Services, highlighting women's experiences. The chapter will be part of a book to be published in 2014. Although this chapter (and the book in general) will be published in Arabic, Mada are hoping to seek additional funding in order to translate it into English. The contributors to this project will attend a workshop, held at Mada al-Carmel's office in Haifa, about Arab involvement in Civil Service. Although the date for this workshop is still being determined, an entire session will be dedicated to the topic of female involvement in the Israeli Civil Service program, in which Mada will discuss their findings with attendees, and promote alternative ways Arab women might seek economic and social empowerment within their communities. Mada will invite other NGOs, as well as members of the Knesset, to the workshop to share and learn from the conclusions. A position paper will also be distributed to local policy-makers in the Palestinian community, women's and advocacy NGOs, and the Arab High Follow-up Committee. Other forms of outreach are planned to be conducted via the local print, radio, and television media, as well as Mada's website, Facebook, and twitter.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

Mada indicated to AWID that their project was "highly successful" in achieving its goals - successfully completing all necessary research and data collection, analyzing findings and establishing conclusions. Mada reports that the information they attained on how the Israeli Civil Service program impacts the economic stability and social standing of Palestinian women will constitute an important scholarly contribution that will likely instigate further inquiries into Palestinian women's economic situation, both at Mada al-Carmel and in other research centers and universities around the world. Their analysis revealed that while the Israeli Civil Service program allures women with job opportunities and the promise of short-term economic gain, such a program reinforces institutionalized hierarchies that relegate women to a lower rung of society, oppressed by patriarchy. This project importantly yielded specific responses to how Arab women suffered, ultimately, from their involvement in the Civil Service program. Through this intimate and personal look into their involvement, Mada are now poised to publish an account of how women are impacted by the Israel Civil Service program, and to identify alternative avenues for civic involvement for Palestinian women living in Israel.

### **Lessons Learned**

Mada said they have gained many valuable insights into the individual experiences of women who engage in the Israeli Civil Service program. From these recollections, and following an analysis by Mada researchers, they reached the conclusion that the Civil Service program only seeks to empower the patriarchal hegemony within society. A key learning from the research was that the Civil Service program agenda reinforces many norms that Mada believe keep women oppressed—such as an encouragement to work near the home, within the woman's community. Furthermore, when women engaged in Civil Service, they were indeed paid, albeit a very small and almost incremental salary. Thus, although women believe that they can use Civil Service for financial freedom, this is misleading as they are unable to achieve true independence.

### 3. “The Bio-economy through a Gender Lens”, implemented by Global Forest Coalition (GFC), Paraguay (Southern Office).

#### Seed Grant Partner

This grant was implemented by members of the [Global Forest Coalition \(GFC\)](#) an international coalition of NGOs and Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations defending social justice and the rights of forest peoples in forest policies.



#### Objectives

GFC members who attended the AWID 2012 Forum were inspired by a workshop session on the impacts of the bio-economy on women, which concluded that the commodification, privatization and financialization of biodiversity triggered by the expansion of the so-called ‘bio-economy’ and related ‘green economy’ proposals might have profound negative impacts on the rights and needs of women. The objective of this seed grant was to further analyze and raise awareness of the impacts of the “bio-economy” on women to international policy-makers and social movements.

#### Activities and Outputs

Research analysis and networking: GFC researchers undertook online research, complemented by direct interviews with women working on the potential impacts of bio-economy proposals on women. For example, consultations took place at the meeting of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) (Nairobi, February, 2013), among others, during which GFC met with women from different African organizations, including GFC’s member group the [Indigenous Information Network \(IIN\)](#) of Kenya, and other women’s groups and allies working on forests issues from Chad and Zambia. GFC’s participation in these events were an important source of input to the research process; a means for GFC to raise awareness on the potential negative impacts of the bioeconomy; and a way to strengthen alliances with CSOs working on environmental, indigenous rights and gender justice issues.

Publication of report on the research conclusions: GFC produced a comprehensive report, with [English](#) and [Spanish](#) versions published on their website. In June 2013, the GFC launched the report on social media: [New Report spells out Potential Negative Impacts of Bioeconomy and Markets in Environmental Services on Women](#)

Dissemination and awareness-raising: The official launch of the report took place at a side event on “The Social Dimension of Climate Change Mitigation - Tackling the Fairness Gap” organized by GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice - during **UN Bonn Climate Change Conference (UN FCCC)**, Bonn, June 2013). GFC’s Simone Lovera summarized the research findings in her presentation: [Social Impacts of Climate Change Mitigation: Women and the Bioeconomy](#) and GFC say their report was very well received by different groups, including advocacy groups who are already working on bio-economy issues but are yet to incorporate gender into their approaches. At the **World Social Forum** (Tunis: March 2013), GFC participated in four different events where the preliminary results of the briefing paper [‘Increasing the Gender Gap: The Impacts of the Bioeconomy and Markets in Environmental Services on Women’](#) were presented. At the **10<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)** (Istanbul, April 2013), GFC organized a side event on ‘Non-market-based Approaches to Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation’ where they presented findings of the draft report. A significant outcome is that the final text of this forum included a reference on gender equality which had been largely absent from former forums. Findings were also presented during a presentation of recommendations by the **Women’s Major Group** on land



management and land degradation to the chairs and negotiators of the UN working group on the Sustainable Development Goals, (New York, May 2013).

### Key Achievements & Impact

According to GFC, a key achievement was analyzing and generating knowledge on the 'bio-economy', a relatively new and unknown topic that is accelerating at a fast pace and is being pushed by governments and the private sector with little or no previous assessment. Leading on from this was the production of their comprehensive report on the impacts of the bio-economy on women, the main findings of which were successfully presented – and well received – at several important international policy meetings and other events. GFC were able to raise awareness of the vulnerability of women in the face of an expanding bio-economy and 'green economy', including amongst social movements and policy makers. GFC reached not only women's groups but also other individuals and movements who have shown interest in engaging with the campaign to stop the expansion of the proposed bio-economy, therefore strengthening the network that can exert important opposition to these kinds of policies. Through GFC's participation at the World Social Forum, they also strengthened their relationship with a potential donor from Finland. Their funding application, which is still under consideration builds on the work supported by this AWID Seed Grant with further research and advocacy on the impacts of the bio-economy and green economy and associated 'green land grabbing' on women.

### Lessons Learned

GFC shared the following reflection on this seed grant experience: "It was quite surprising to find almost no information at all related to, for instance, the impacts of biofuel production on women, while governments massively promote and even subsidize industrial bioenergy production." An important lesson *"is the secretive nature of these approaches that are being promoted by corporations and their governmental allies, and the urgent need to dig deeper into them; people have the right to know how these policies will affect them and should demand that relevant information should be openly disclosed (e.g. in the case of the biotechnologies that form an inherent part of the bio-economy: genetically engineered trees, synthetic biology, nanotechnology, geoengineering). This shows that now more than ever we need to continue campaigning on these issues."* GFC Seed grant report to AWID.

## 4. Empowering Home-based Worker Women Project, Kozadan İpeğe Home-based Worker Women Cooperative, Turkey.



### Seed Grant Partner

The **Kozadan İpeğe Home-based Worker Women Cooperative** was established in 2007 by 23 home-based worker women in order to fight poverty in Turkey. The goals of the cooperative are to make the work of home-based worker women more visible, remove the intermediaries between these women and employers, provide continuous employment and income to home-based worker women, reduce informal employment among these women, raise awareness about economic and social rights, influence public policy, and create an environment where home-based worker women come together to discuss problems and create solutions and change.



### Objectives

The goal of this project was to help home-based worker women, with limited interaction with public institutions, to get out of their houses and build positive relationships with these institutions. It also aimed to raise home-based worker women's awareness about their rights, support these women as they express themselves in public spaces, and help them build a communication network amongst themselves.

## Activities & Outputs

The Cooperative surveyed 63 home-based worker women in Ankara, and based on these results, developed and implemented the following activities:

- Empowerment training with 22 women held over five weeks on the topics: Gender; Communication; Conflict Resolution; Domestic Violence Against Women; Home-based Work; Women's Movements and Mobilization; Consciousness of Citizenship, Civil Rights awareness; and Reproductive Health;
- A two-day workshop for home-based worker women to meet representatives of public institutions;
- Development of a 'Right to Social Security' Brochure with help from the home-based women worker group;
- Production of cloth bags by the Cooperative to be distributed to participants;
- A 'Right to Social Security' meeting where participants received the 'Right to Social Security' brochure. These brochures were also disseminated to related institutions.

## Key Achievements & Impact

A key achievement was strengthening the relationships among home-based worker women. Throughout the project activities, women from different cities made connections, shared their experiences and became more aware of each other, the work they do and problems they face. Women were also able to share the responses they get from their family members and friends about their work.



Workshop participants were exposed to services offered by the Turkish Employment Agency and the Ministry of Social Security. Another key achievement was that participants were able to meet and interact with women who had conducted research and advocacy on home-based work. Connections were made among women from different educational backgrounds and the cooperation of women from different disciplines made the project more effective.

The social security rights of home-based workers were discussed and in addition, brochures were prepared on the right to social security and disseminated among related institutions to increase the awareness on the situation of home-based worker women. The project was implemented with the support of volunteers from the Home-based Worker Women Work Group, Social Security Supervisors Association and Women's Studies Association and demonstrated cooperation among non-governmental organizations.

## Lessons Learned

The Cooperative learned from their project that it "seems impossible for women to empower themselves financially without prior individual empowerment". They also expressed that "the only way to overcome prejudices among women is to provide these women with the spaces and opportunities where they can come together and spend time with one another".

A positive outcome was that participants were highly motivated and engaged with this project, and had higher expectations to go beyond the trainings and achieve more. This was also a challenge to the Cooperative as the seed grant was for short-term with a limited budget. That said, given the limitations, the project succeeded in providing home-based worker women information about the social security system and alternative models to this system, which resulted in increased awareness about social security services.



## 5. Introducing Feminist Economics to Gender and Sexual Justice Activism in Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe, Bishkek Feminist Collective, Kyrgyzstan.



### Seed Grant Partner

[Bishkek Feminist Collective SQ \(BFCSQ\)](#) is a volunteer-based feminist group of activists in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan whose mission is to promote feminist values and end all forms of oppression in Bishkek. Their goals are: to create a feminist network of residents, communities, organizations and initiatives in the sub region for meaningful engagement; to further build solidarity and alliances towards existing civil society movements that share their values of justice and human rights; to provide feminist space and practices, especially educational resources and activities to resist oppression and violence;

### Objectives

The goal of this seed grant was to empower feminist and gender/sexual justice activists and organizations through knowledge-sharing and skills-building resources in feminist economics in order to integrate an economic justice component into their strategies, methodologies of analysis and response.

The objectives were:

- To develop an introductory feminist economics toolkit and resources grounded in transnational research and regional contexts (in English and Russian languages);
- To implement three study groups in each subregion to pilot and review the toolkit;
- To facilitate a regional action plan meaningfully engaging local participant groups, organizations, and/or activists in the region, addressing feminist work on economic justice with respect to gender and sexuality.

### Activities and Outputs

The time frame on this seed grant was extended to the end of 2014, as the initial idea was re-conceptualized and engagement with feminists groups was expanded to include the sub regions of Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe. Actual activities of this seed grant are:

Research and online discussions on Feminist Economics: The project initially sought to develop an introductory toolkit on feminist economics and as such undertook peer research, review and analysis of existing transnational and local research, practices and contexts of feminist economics, economic justice activism, economic realities and power. BFCSQ members engaged in online discussions of feminist economic topics and economic injustice which culminated in the regional meeting.

Regional feminist solidarity meeting held in Bishkek, November 2014, gathering feminist activists from Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe. Discussions focused on economic issues that activists and organizations face, not only in terms of funding, but also in terms of spending and employment within our movements. Recommendations from the study groups and new insights were integrated into the regional strategic plan as an outcome of this meeting.

Creation of regional zine featuring discussions on feminist economics from the November 2014 regional meeting. See: [https://issuu.com/feminfoteka/docs/zine\\_vstrecha\\_01](https://issuu.com/feminfoteka/docs/zine_vstrecha_01)

### Key Achievements & Impact

This AWID supported seed grant sparked a larger resource mobilization and advocacy strategy for the urgent creation of a Regional Feminist Solidarity Network, based on existing small efforts that informed their organizing. BFCSQ was delighted to have quickly obtained funding via the Global Fund for Women, Mama Cash



and Catapult that supported the creation of his regional network, which was one of the initial goals of this seed grant.

The Regional Feminist Solidarity Network addresses concerns raised in discussions on a lack of regional and local feminist organizing, shared Soviet legacy, emerging religious fundamentalisms and new neoliberal challenges. BFCSQ expressed in their report to AWID that this reflection wouldn't be possible without the resources and capacity they received from AWID.

### Lessons Learned

BFCSQ shared that it is exciting and somewhat unexpected they could fundraise for the Regional Network so quickly with the support of the Global Fund for Women. Additionally, they were also able to conceptualize their AWID-inspired learning about self-care, security and rights of women human rights defenders.

## 6. First Transsexual Persons' Human Rights Report in Chile, Organización de Transexuales por la Dignidad de la Diversidad (OTD) (Transsexual Organization for Dignity of Diversity)

Information not available.

## 7. "Owning my money, owning myself", Asociación Mujeres con Voz (Association Women with a Voice), Spain

### Seed Grant Partner

This seed grant was implemented by the Asociación Mujeres con Voz, which works to integrate and empower women immigrants into the Basque society's social and cultural life, defend their labour rights, and expose the sexual harassment they suffer in public spaces and in the workplace. It also promotes and supports advocacy by immigrant women before local institutions responsible for guaranteeing the rights of the immigrant population, in order to expose racism and xenophobia in Basque society while.

### Objectives

The goal of this seed grant was to help immigrant women in the Basque region pursue economic empowerment and autonomy via personal and collective reflection on the relationship between women money, migration and remittances. The process sought to help them reflect on their role as economic provider to their families back home, and how their feelings of guilt play a role toward them remitting most of their earnings, exacerbating their impoverishment. It sought to help them identify how traditional definitions of femininity influence the management of their money and how to overcome guilt and assume total ownership of their earnings as a step towards their autonomy and economic empowerment. It finally aimed to support group reflection, so women would feel empowered to denounce situations of discrimination - work, social and political - confronted in Basque society and generate greater willingness to claim their rights.

### Activities and Outputs

This seed grant implemented the following activities:

1. Four four-hour awareness-raising workshops were held with 96 immigrant women in three municipalities in the Basque on the theme of their relationship to money and economic empowerment, including how to save money.



2. Produced an educational booklet entitled "Mastering my money, mastering myself" (*Dueña de mi dinero, dueña de mi misma*) based on testimonies from these workshops on the issue of remittances and immigrant women's relationship of women with money. The booklet includes a small ledger to support development of saving skills, the same ledger as used in the workshops.
3. Distribution of 500 copies of the booklet among workshop participants, and women's associations and municipalities interested in the theme.



### Key Achievements & Impact

According to Asociación Mujeres con Voz through the workshop and booklet distribution, participating immigrant women were able to:

Deepen their reflection on economic empowerment to feel entitled to make their own decision on how they spend their earnings. Accept control over their earnings and learn how to better manage savings for their own benefit and that of their families.

Achieve clearer understanding of how traditional gender roles in society contribute to feelings of guilt when using their earnings to take care of their own needs, which may be construed as being selfish. They recognize that this guilt creates a kind of "emotional tax" that reduces their ability to curb predatory requests for money by their families or partners. They have started questioning why they find it so difficult to put limits on or negotiate their work hours, jobs or salary.

Enhanced realization that their behavior regarding their earnings and remittances is not a personal issue but a gendered behaviour pattern that links women's social worth to the ability to sacrifice and renounce one's interests in favour of those of others. They began to think about the possible outcomes from putting limits on the incessant requests for money and strengthening their authority as they claim their status as income earners.

### Lessons Learned

The learning process was mutual for both the facilitators and the women attending the workshops. The immigrant women learned that their relationship with money is learned and not merely an individual challenge. They learned of their incredible ability to generate wealth and together discovered the difficulties they shared to manage money independently. In many cases, the immigrant women "buy out" the guilt stemming from having "abandoned" their families, breaking with their social obligation to care of their children in the provider role when a father was either absent or did not economically support the family. This role transgression makes it hard to resist the pressure and emotional blackmail and women yield with a resulting worsening of living conditions and unimaginable impoverishment. Introducing a new approach to their relationship with money is difficult as it challenges an entrenched patriarchal belief system where money is equated with masculine power and traditional male roles. It is also difficult to challenge women's internalized feelings of selfishness when they choose to meet the demands of their families whether or not they've covered their own basic needs to take care of themselves and live in dignity.

The challenges immigrant care workers face in negotiating fair working conditions are also related to their own difficulty to identify themselves as "workers" even though they are performing care work. Employers also exploit this lack of identity as workers. Given this and that the social environment is not homemaker friendly in the current context of economic crisis, it is urgent to raise awareness on the importance of defending care workers and advocate for fair wages.

## 8. Basics: Feminism and the left: Reconstruction Women's Fund in Serbia and Serbia for Roma

### Education Fund (REF)

#### Seed Grant Partner

This seed grant was implemented by Jelena Savic, a youth educator and Roma feminist. The period for this grant has been extended to mid 2014 as it faced some logistical challenges.



#### Objectives

This seed grantee identified that a major problem for women's and girls' Roma identity is the perceived role of victim, built by older Roma leaders on nationalistic grounds, without much intercultural dialogue. Roma are often treated as politicians' puppets with Roma youth, especially educated woman, feeling demotivated to participate in political life. The objective of the grant was to better equip Roma youth for political participation and to influence political agendas for the benefit of all underprivileged groups, not just Roma.

This seed grant sought to influence the way Roma women see themselves, as well as challenge stereotypes of Roma women in Serbian society (such as women who cheat, steal, and are dirty, poor women with a baby on the street asking for money, etc.) Their goal was to develop a new socio-economic perspective among young female students, especially Roma, and help them build critical thinking and readiness to reflect upon violence and marginalization through a wider political perspective. A final goal was to contribute to the building of the new image of Roma woman in Serbia as educated and responsible citizens.

#### Activities and Outputs

Training workshops with 14 young Roma women from various Serbian cities (Belgrade, Novi Sad) who were selected among a larger group of applicants. The workshops were led by experienced feminist activists and facilitators. The training themes included:

- Roma identity-discrimination, violence, racism, xenophobia, nationalism
- Feminism, gender based violence, patriarchy, history of feminist struggles, women's human rights
- Political order-state, society, democracy
- Political orientations-fascism, liberalism, Marxism, socialism, anarchism
- Activism-solidarity, poor, sexual minorities, disabled, worker.

Three follow-up events were held, each in different city, on the themes discussed in training workshops. During these events, drawings and sculptures were made by the young women to express their identity and social concerns. Flyers and posters were made and distributed to raise awareness and promote a positive identity for young Roma women. TV interviews also increased visibility.

#### Cultural Events:

- Poetry Night entitled "Roma women, between integration, identity politics and solidarity" held in Belgrade in May 2014 in cooperation with Central European University (CEU). Here atavistic poetry was read with some academic work followed by a discussion. The young women also listened to songs on YouTube (with translation) and made gender based content analysis of popular turbofolk songs. Jelena comments that this was the first time many of the young Roma women were in a position to think critically about popular culture.
- Two meetings with Roman young women (Belgrade in June and July 2014). Participants discussed topics including sex and gender, gender roles, violence against women, violence in relationships,

discrimination and exclusion, and stereotypes against Roma women. An overview was given about patriarchy and general position of with a very brief presentation on the economic position of women in general.

- Two Movie screenings where non-Roma friends were invited to watch "Gadjo Dilo" and "El Amor Brujo" followed by discussions on representation of Roma women. Ms. Savic remarks: *"It was interesting to see how dialogue is established regarding these issues; some girls had insights about their behavior that they recognized as gender based. Also the topic of poverty was tackled, reasons of poverty and capitalism as economical social order that produces the poverty."*
- Online campaign: "What is the first thing you think about when you think about Roma women?", which sought to collect positive associations about Roma women in one place. To start the young Roma women took pictures and shared them as flyers in Belgrade and Novi Sad. They did a street action in Belgrade where they asked people about their associations about Roma women and then took pictures of these people holding up signs with their thoughts. All the photos are posted on special Flickr channel <https://www.flickr.com/photos/100695178@N07/>. Then the campaign took off on social media with many activists from Serbia taking part, including support from the Reconstruction Women's fund and the Roma Access Program of CEU. The Campaign was presented at the Roma and Sinti Youth Conference organized in Belgrade in December 2014. Messages were received from all over the world including Europe, USA and Canada. Finally this campaign will be left as an open project with Ms. Savic leading qualitative research on the messages portrayed.

### Key Achievements and Impact

According to Jelena Savic the key achievements of this seed grant were raising awareness about socio-economic issues among young Roma women and contributing to building a support network. This included introducing new perspectives on their gender roles and responsibilities within the Roma movement in their roles as women and educated citizens. It also built capacity on socio-economic issues, political economy and ethics as topics relevant for their activism. A final achievement was to establish a connection for the first time between young Roma women students in Novi Sad and Belgrade with local leftist and feminist groups who expressed an interest to include them in their work, further meetings and cooperation.

The project garnered international interest on social media with coverage in local media:

- TV: [http://media.rtv.rs/sr\\_ci/paleta/4953](http://media.rtv.rs/sr_ci/paleta/4953)
- Article on online magazine "Žurnalist" on the website of the Faculty of Political Sciences
  - o <http://zurnalist.rs/studenti-radovi/item/787-izmedu-marginalizacije-politike-identiteta-i-solidarnosti-ko-su-romkinje.html>
- Coverage of poetry night:
  - o <http://www.femix.info/femix-news/p/243/>
  - o <http://www.fpi.rs/blog/paznje-vredni-dogadaji-u-narednom-periodu/>

### Lessons Learned

Ms. Savic observed that there was more interest among Roma young women, mostly from Central and North Serbia, on socio-economic topics than initially expected. However they were more interested in basic issues of sexuality, and violence and that discussions on economic issues need to be carefully developed. She gained helpful insights in working with youth and how to approach these topics in an engaging way. As these were new themes for the participants it was very difficult for them to think about socio-economic issues and political philosophy so they did not yet feel comfortable leading open discussions on the topic. Participants also observed that local non-Roma groups are interested in cooperating with young Roma women, especially on broad social issues and not just through identity politics.

They also learned of the challenges in organizing young women in different locations, with many demands on their time. They found benefit in organizing one or two larger events rather than multiple smaller events. Finally they learned how to be flexible to the interests and comfort levels of the young women, and adapted the planned activities accordingly. For instance they had originally envisioned having the young women take photos of their realities and organize photo exhibits and discussions in several cities, but acted upon the young women's preference to do sculptures, posters, cultural nights and an online campaign.

Jelena Savic concludes that this *“project contributed to opening possibilities for solidarity, developing of Roma women capacities to think in wider concepts about their position in the world and visibility of young and educated Roma women.”*

## **9. Advocacy Campaign of The National Women's Network For The Recognition of the Role of Women in the Artisanal Fishing Sector: Réseau national des femmes de la pêche artisanale en Mauritanie (National Women's Artisanal Fishing Network in Mauritania).**

### **Seed Grant Partner**

This project was implemented by [Mauritanie 2000](#) in coordination with the National Women's Artisanal Fishing Network, with work conducted by two main facilitators under the supervision of the program "Femmes & pêche" (Women and Fishing). Réseau National des Femmes de la Pêche Artisanale en Mauritanie (The Network) was established in 2009 and registered in January 2011. It has 81 economic interest groups in Nouakchott, 112 in Nouadhibou and three in the villages south of Banc d'Arguin (a total of 1,478 women). Mauritania 2000 was registered in April 1995. It works in the artisanal fishing sector for the promotion of women's entrepreneurship. Its main axes of intervention are: organizational and technical capacity building of women in fishing; supporting collaboration among different actors in artisanal fishing and; support to governance in the fisheries sector.

### **Objectives**

The key objectives of this seed grant were to strengthen the capacities of members of the National Network by introducing techniques for social change; initiating advocacy actions to defend the interests of sellers and processors; and working towards the recognition of female fish processors and sellers by the supervisory authorities and stakeholders in the fishing sector (Ministry of Fisheries and the technical services) and socio-professional organizations.

### **Activities and Outputs**

Lobbying and advocacy training: 15 Network members were trained in lobbying and advocacy methods to strengthen the Network's capacity in techniques of social change.

Training Network members in female leadership: Not fully aware of the important role women play in food security through the distribution of fish to all the markets, this training promoted Network members' self-esteem as economic agents and as an essential link in the chain of the artisanal fishing sub-sector. One of the project objectives was to strengthen the capacity of women to raise and defend their interests before authorities - most notably in challenging the fish distribution company. 15 Network members are now trained in leadership techniques, and have an increased awareness of the role women play in fish marketing and distribution. Female fish vendors and processors have also established alliances with small producers to defend their common interests.

Communications training: As the participants were also not used to dealing with administration, this meeting enabled 15 Network members to discover the fundamentals of communication - to have the capacity to represent their organization, its composition, objectives, problems and proposed solutions. As part of their advocacy strategy, one outcome of this training, was that the Network released two position papers to the

national government and local media in protest of government control of local fish markets, the relocation of processors and the creation of the national fish distribution company which pose an immediate disadvantage and decrease in income to women fisherfolk and vendors. The Network made several demands to improve the situation in benefit of small-scale fisherfolk and vendors.

Updating the Network action plan: The Network has had an action plan since 2012. After 61 Network members met in May, June and July 2013, the National Women's Network is now working from an updated action plan. Of the 61 members, 20 women were from the national office and 41 women were leaders of artisanal women fisherfolk from 4 departments within Nouakchott.

Development of communications and advocacy materials: The Network developed communication and advocacy materials: a network flyer, network logo, and two position papers, which were presented to the national government and published in news outlets. The Network now has the resources to take steps and issue statements or hold media briefings, as needed.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

According to their report submitted to AWID, the Network rated their project as highly successful. The most significant changes that occurred are: new alliances and synergy between women fish traders, processors and small producers; increased cohesion of women through a heightened awareness of their common interests; the capacity to lobby and advocate for their collective interests; and organizational development of the network, with the establishment of regular meetings, an updated action plan and new communication skills and resources.

Through the success of this project, the National Women's Artisanal Fishing Network has begun the process of recognizing their own power as economic agents as well as being externally recognized as an essential link in the distribution chain of fish in different markets. The organization has greater capacity, through individual training and the production of advocacy resources for the Network as a whole, to raise issues they face and defend their common interests, notably the recognition of a processing centre for fish products produced by women fisherfolk.

### **Lessons Learned**

The sale of fish as well as fish processing are income-generating sources that contribute to women's integration into the economic development of the country. In their final report, Mauritania 2000 said they learned that providing women with education about their role as key economic agents contributes greatly to their self-worth as well as to the improvement of their economic activities. Also, small steps such as training on advocacy and communications can result in significant outcomes such as the two position papers that were published by the media. On behalf of the Network and small-scale fisherfolk, Mauritania 2000 responded to a call for proposals from the European Union and presented a project to support artisanal fishery and in particular women and small-scale producers. While this particular application for funding was unsuccessful, it was an important learning experience for the Network that will inform future applications.

## **10. Project to Support the Emergence of Women's Organizations for Effectively Including Women's Issues in Development Projects: PEJELF (Promotion de l'Entreprenariat Jeunesse et du Leadership Féminin), Niger.**

### **Seed Grant Partner**

This women's organization was created following Ramatou Boubacar's, civil society stakeholder, participation at the AWID 2012 Forum. She stated *"We are aware and very often victim of discrimination within the structures led by some men, who use and profit from the word 'gender' only to fool donors, but in reality have no concern*



*for the many forms of discrimination and violence, and for precarious social economic, cultural conditions in which many women remain. Many women have neither access to nor control of products and services. They have no decision-making power. They are ignorant of their civic rights as well as some fundamental principles for their existence. Moreover, they experience the negative consequences of financial dependence, insecurity and illiteracy, and harmful traditional practices (early marriage, female genital mutilation [FGM] of girls, food taboos, etc.). They are unable to deal with these issues properly in organizations run by men. We, a group of women, find it useful to create an organization to freely defend the rights of women. This momentum was initiated after my participation in AWID 2012. The sharing of experience among women of several nationalities on the status of women has moved me to accelerate the process and obtain our recognition on 24 July 2012, just three months after the Forum. Our mission is to set up an effective and dynamic women's organization to defend women's rights and promote their empowerment."*

### **Objectives:**

This seed grant aimed to strengthen the institutional capacities of PEJELF to start up and begin their associative activities – the Seed Grant was their first grant application. Key objectives were to: Initiate activities of a new women's organization; support socio-economic initiatives of rural women to achieve their independence; and raise awareness, conduct training and educate women in order to promote their rights.

### **Activities and Outputs**

The new women's organization – PEJELF – was launched and started operations. This grant enabled PEJELF members to meet with five women's groups, municipal authorities in Gotheye and the fifth sub-district of Niamey. They established a partnership with both municipalities, which resulted in the NGO being listed in the official government gazette and opened a bank account. It also facilitated the drafting and submission of a draft socio-economic development program for women from these two municipalities with Canadian NGO, *Développement, Expertise et Solidarité Internationale* ([DESI](#)).

Support socio-economic initiatives of rural women to achieve greater autonomy: Three information sessions for beneficiaries were held, to discuss objectives, expected outcomes and criteria for selecting beneficiaries for income generating activities. Loans were then granted to 20 women for a total of FCFA 40,000 each. The women themselves decided on loan management, including reimbursement and operation costs. At the time of their Report submission to AWID, PEJELF were in the third month of the second cycle and women reported that their activities significantly contributed to household expenses and more specifically to the education and care of their children. This inspired interest from other women to receive loans. To date, the monthly interest by women amounted to FCFA 120,000 which allowed an extension of credit to three other women, increasing membership and loans to 23 local women. PEJELF also held a training session on Associations for 25 members of the management committees of five women's groups. Participants learned about: operating procedures and establishment of an institution; the roles and attributes of members of the Board of Directors, auditors and advisors; and the rights and duties of members (statutes and bylaws).

Raise awareness, train and educate women in advocating for their rights: A training session on gender and women's leadership was held for 25 women members of the management committees of the five women's groups to enhance women's participation in decision-making bodies. Participants learned about: Key concepts in gender and development; access and control of resources; the division of labor; and negotiation and communication techniques. PEJELF also conducted women's rights awareness-raising sessions at the five women's groups, with 120 women participating in discussions on the risks and consequences of the following topics: educating of girls; Hygiene and sanitation; STDs / HIV / AIDS; Early Marriages; Malnutrition; Female genital mutilation; and Violence against women. Women then participated in identifying measures and appropriate prevention systems to overcome these problems.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

The objectives of this project were successfully met with the creation of a women-led structure to raise awareness of women's rights and support women's socio-economic activities. According to PEJELF, women are able to meet their needs and are increasingly involved in decision-making bodies. The various training and awareness-raising activities have educated women on the multiple factors that hinder their development. This is a significant change for women who exist in a context where most organizations are led by men and many women have neither access to nor control of products and services, decision-making power, and are unaware of their civil rights. Another significant achievement is that women were able to come together, learn about their rights, and identify measures to prevent and counter rights abuses. Based on sharing the successful results of this project, PEJELF secured CAD 140,000 of funding from DESI - a Canadian organization - to support 80 women in two villages in the development of their socio-economic activities for three years.

### Lessons Learned

In their report to AWID, PEJELF expressed the importance of creating a space for women to listen and share, and that raising women's awareness of the factors that hinder their development strengthens their capacities. They have found that increasing women's cash income by supporting income-generating activities improves women's participation in development activities. The author of PEJELF's report to AWID shared her personal reflection:

*"I would like to share that the 2012 Forum changed my professional life and that of several colleagues. It helped me become aware of the marginalization we face, it motivated me to begin the process of creating a women's organization to helping women and as if by magic this grant became our first project and contributed to the achievement of further financing activities that are proceeding well. And we can safely say without fear that grant has allowed us to exist and nurture our emergence in the community to advance women's rights and contribute to their empowerment."*

## 11. Creating Leaders in Feminist Economies on the Road to the 2013 National Feminist Encounter, Mexico

### Seed Grant Partner

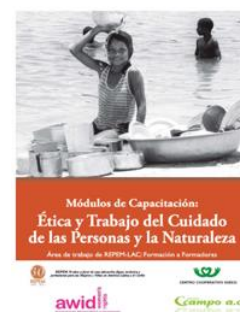
This seed grant was implemented by the *Centro de Apoyo para el Movimiento Popular de Occidente*, (Support Center for Grassroots Movement in Western Mexico, CAMPO) in coordination with REPEM (*Red de Educación Popular entre Mujeres de Latinoamérica y el Caribe*, Latin American and Caribbean Network of Popular Education among Women). Founded 23 years ago, CAMPO's mission is to strengthen the strategies of organized women and their families in western Mexico in order to ensure stronger food sovereignty and the creation of spaces of local power. Their goal is to promote greater dignity and more sustainable ways of life to improve women's engagement and the exercise of their rights.

### Objectives:

CAMPO's main goal for this seed grant was to strengthen the capacity of rural Mexican women leaders and their organizations' for critical analysis via the development of a training manual on feminist economics and a series of workshops that deepened reflection about the impact of current economic policy on their lives.

### Activities and Outputs

Development of a **training manual** entitled the ***Ethics and Care Work of People and the Environment***. This was adapted from a REPEM resource by a team from CAMPO with expertise in public policies with a gender perspective and in political empowerment processes for rural women. These were distributed at the following three events.



Participation at the **2013 National Feminist Gathering** (Oct. 25-27, 2013, Guadalajara, Mexico). In coordination with the National Network on Gender and Economics, CAMPO A.C organized a workshop attended by 59 participants to analyze gendered economic inequality, concluding that economic domination is a patriarchal practice that impoverishes women and that employment relies on the commodification of women's labor or bodies.

Participation at the **Municipal Forum on Public Policy for Equality in Zapopan** (Nov. 7, 2013) through presentation of a paper on "*Feminist Economics, the Economics of Care: Foundations toward the Economic Empowerment of Women*" (attended by 40 participants) and coordination of a discussion on work and the care economy involving 13 women from different sectors (entrepreneurs, indigenous, urban-rural and public officials).

Organization of **three workshops on feminist economics and care work** with women leaders in the municipalities of Tuxpan, Atoyac and Zapotitlan de Vadillo, Guadalajara state, with a total of 30 participants.

### Key Achievements & Impact

According to CAMPO the top five achievements of this seed grant were:

1. Incorporation of "feminist economics" into the agenda of the 2013 National Feminist Gathering in Guadalajara. CAMPO addressed how state policies have neglected care work and how women continue to contribute to the care economy as the sector readjusts. Participants from different states across Mexico shared an analysis of the inequality resulting from the abandonment of care services, and of the significant contribution of women to the work of caring for people and the environment.
2. Successful incorporation of the issue of the care economy to the agenda of the Municipal Forum on Public Policy for Equality in Zapopan which had previously been totally absent. As the metropolitan area of Guadalajara has experienced rapid business development through transnational companies, it was important to address increasing challenges in working conditions, especially for care work. CAMPO introduced a feminist economics policy proposal advocating for well-paid services within the care economy.
3. Fostered discussions on feminist economic perspectives with women grassroots leaders, economists, public officials, entrepreneurs and academics through use of the training manual on **Ethics and Care Work of People and the Environment**.
4. The Women's Municipal Institute of the City of Guadalajara accepted the training manual as part of its thematic toolkit.
5. Four rural women's organizations discussed feminist economics and care work and made a commitment to value women's work as an economic contribution to family and community and to recognize it as such even if not salaried. Most of the participants were able to name the micro and macro-economic value of care work, and gained a more critical perspective on processes attempting to commodify women's labour and bodies, and added this perspective to their advocacy strategies.

### Lessons Learned

These activities represent a step forward institutionally for CAMPO A.C. as it is the first time they undertook a collective analysis on feminist economics and care work, and it is now part of their planning and training resources. CAMPO A.C. concludes that "*feminist economics is an alternative, liberating and humanist perspective and as a feminist standpoint it seeks to critique, challenge and make demands...It highlights and promotes alternate modes of economic organization to the market economy as it names women's contributions, as part of a diverse economy toward greater economic justice; as well as strengthens women's ability to be proactive and their political capacity in economic discussions and policy-making.*"

## 12. “Food Sovereignty and the Care Economy: Gender Strategies to Confront Income and Time Poverty” implemented by the Centro de Estudios para la Mujer CEDEM (Center for Women's Studies), Chile.

### Seed Grant Partner

This seed grant was implemented by the Chilean NGO CEDEM, in coordination with grassroots organizations from the National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI). CEDEM contributes to strengthening democracy, overcoming social exclusion and transforming gender relations by creating knowledge, participating in critical debates and promoting active citizenship. Its work includes providing advice to peasant and indigenous women's organizations in Chile and Latin America, training in leadership and research on food sovereignty, work and care economy.

### Objectives

The key seed grant objectives were to:

1. Generate specific knowledge on concrete practices in the implementation of the food sovereignty model at the family and community level, leading to co-responsibility and a shared care economy (between genders and generations), in the food production system in all its phases.
2. Produce written and audio campaign materials to show how food sovereignty contributes to co-responsibility, in order to share concepts and cultural values as strategies to promote gender justice and transform economic power (in partner relationships, families, communities, and society)
3. Debate and analyze food sovereignty, gender justice, and co-responsibility with grassroots women members of ANAMURI.

### Activities and Outputs

Two case studies were conducted on concrete food sovereignty practices in the field related to gender, co-responsibility and the care economy, in farming areas within the Bío Bío (Southern region of Chile), involving women farming unions.

Systematization of practices related to food sovereignty and its relationship to gender justice and equal rights between men and women at all levels. ANAMURI representatives were responsible for gathering information among the local farming community. To ensure fair representation and inclusiveness, they conducted site visits; conversations with women, men, community leaders and authorities; visits to seed exchanges and events promoting the food sovereignty model; as well farmer's markets.

Preparation and dissemination of written and radio outreach materials: Based on the systematization of the case study research CEDEM developed two popular education materials (radio broadcasts and an [educational booklet](#)) to promote a food sovereignty model that incorporates women's rights and gender equality. Since the farming communities have little access to new technologies, radio is an important medium for disseminating information and transmitting new ideas to the rural population. The educational booklet was presented for discussion at ANAMURI's regular meetings. The outreach campaign reached local communities including female producers, youth from rural communities, students in urban areas, and male producers and farmers markets.

### Key Achievements & Impact

According to CEDEM the most significant **achievements** of this seed grant were:

1. Important qualitative information was collected that led to the identification of concrete practices implemented within the food sovereignty model, both at the family and community level.

2. Awareness raising on food sovereignty as an approach to development among women and men small-scale farmers, who recognize that it's possible to advance equal rights and gender equality through the practice of food sovereignty. Communities know more about the women farmer organizations that advocate for food sovereignty. Community-level authorities (mayors and council representatives) know and are committed to the principles of food sovereignty, and public support has been expressed for seed exchanges where men and women participate in equal conditions.
3. Increased knowledge of concrete practices for implementing the food sovereignty model at the family and community levels (including the El Carmen commune's seed exchange, farmers' markets, and communication between farmers and students in urban areas.)
4. Increased understanding of the gender- and generation-based barriers and obstacles in the farming world obstructing co-responsibility and development of a family model of sharing care work.
5. One unexpected achievement was the high level of engagement by the student movement who have become strategically aligned with the farmers' movement, including ANAMURI.

### Lessons Learned

According to CEDEM, the most important lessons to highlight is that in farming communities of Chile, traditional, culturally-based attitudes regarding gender roles and identities persist, yet they can be changed through individual and collective reflection processes. There is an urgent need to continue identifying and addressing cultural obstacles to gender equality in families and communities, to ensure progress in implementing the food sovereignty model, but most importantly for the realization of women's human rights.

## 13. Opening a bank account to save money, Aids Myanmar Association National Sex Workers Network (AMA NSWN), Myanmar

### Seed Grant Partner

This project was implemented by the Aids Myanmar Association National Sex Workers Network (AMA NSWN), a community based group representing various organizations working to mobilize sex workers to protect human rights, promote public understanding that sex work is work and that sex workers obtain the status of worker. AMA NSWN also works to increase the capacity of sex workers to solve their own health, social, political and economic problems, and provides information and referrals on sexual and reproductive health, HIV and STI; accommodation for HIV positive sex workers from outlying areas undergoing antiretroviral therapy and support imprisoned sex workers with food and connection to family and friends.



### Objectives

With this seed grant AMA NSWN aimed to help at least 150 female sex workers in Myanmar to save money by opening bank accounts and thus have funds available to improve their nutrition and defend their legal rights if arrested. AMA NSWN believes that by saving money, female sex workers will have more power and will become less involved in risky sex and avoid high interest loans when they need money in emergency situations. In Myanmar, banks are only just starting to open after a long period of military rule and international sanctions. Many people are suspicious of banks due to bad experiences in the past with the government seizing funds from bank accounts. Within this context, sex workers generally consider themselves as an excluded class from these kinds of activities.

### Activities & Outputs

Workshops on banking and budgeting: AMA NSWN held five workshops with a total of 113 sex workers that focused on how to open and manage a bank account, covering bank processes such as deposits, withdrawals,

interest payments, confidentiality and budgeting. The first workshop in March 2013 was attended by 25 sex workers (20 female, 3 transgender, 2 male); the second workshop held in April 2013 had 17 female sex worker participants; the third workshop was in May 2013 with 23 sex workers, including 2 males and 3 transgender, and the fourth workshop took place in June with 19 sex workers. The fifth and final workshop in October 2013 was attended by sex workers from across the country and in addition to information on banking, participants received training on national laws and advocacy. From those workshops a total of 43 sex workers have opened a savings account and 12 of them have received their national identity card. The other participants have not been able to open an account because they are yet to obtain national identity cards.

### **Key Achievements and Impact**

AMA NSWN shared with AWID that they believe their project was highly successful, as it not only provided participants with fundamental information about bank accounts and helped sex workers to open a bank account and start saving money but was about “breaking the silence”. Apart from banking, the workshops focused on social justice principles and sex workers are becoming aware of and developing an interest in advocating around human rights. This seed grant opened a window for sex workers who are now much more socially and economically empowered. When the project started, banking was a new concept for sex workers and now AMA says it is the most popular ways of managing money. Even though the project is over, the impact is ongoing as sex workers continue to open bank accounts in other cities, are getting their national identity card and many are even getting passports and visiting neighboring countries.

Other concrete achievements include:

- Through the advocacy and leadership training, sex workers have enhanced skills and feel socially empowered to engage with different institutions to defend sex worker interests. Sex workers’ opinions are now sought when decisions are made for them. Now more than ever, sex workers see themselves as playing a viable role in Burmese society as it undergoes big changes.
- The AWID seed grant was the first grant from an international organization ever received by a sex worker organization in the country, as previously the Myanmar government did not allow sex worker-run programs. As the year progressed, government tension eased about sex worker run activities, and by the end of the year, other sex workers were inspired by this project and started to form community-based organizations and run their own programs, with support from the government, UN and donors. AMA believes the government is becoming more tolerant.
- The seed grant opened doors for AMA to secure funding from other donors – such as UNFPA for sexual and reproductive health services and services for the prevention for HIV and from the Red Umbrella Fund. It is also pursuing funding interest expressed by other donors.

### **Lessons Learned**

According to AMA, one of the key learnings from their project has been that economic power is an important part of life and self-determination is a critical part of economic empowerment. When sex workers know their economic power, they are better able to prevent contracting HIV and are reduce the risk of violence. With economic savings sex workers can avoid risky sexual behavior when they need emergency funds, and feel more empowered to negotiate safer sex with clients. Many workshop participants became interested in budgeting and developed household budgets for themselves, even in cases where sex workers were unable to open a bank account. Community strengthening has been enhanced through this project as sex workers express interest in becoming more involved in their community. According to AMA, some sex workers are now working as volunteers for the organization. Looking forward, AMA has discussed setting up a banking co-operative for sex workers. They wish to model it on the USHA banking cooperative in Kolkata India.



More broadly speaking, AMA NSW expressed to AWID in their report that they believe *“the 2012 AWID Forum had a huge impact for sex workers globally. APNSW Chair and former AMA NSW coordinator Kay Thi Win delivered a plenary that was very well received by the audience. The topic of her speech was economic empowerment. Shortly after the forum, we were awarded the seed grant by AWID. In December 2012 Kay Thi was elected to the International Board of AWID. This signaled a turning point in the relationship between sex workers and the broader feminist movement.”*

#### 14. Red Umbrella Diaries Memoir Storytelling Workshop, Red Umbrella Project, USA

##### Seed Grant Partner

This project was implemented by the Red Umbrella Project ([RedUP](#)), based in New York City, which works to amplify the voices of people who end up in the sex trade by coercion, circumstance, or choice by engaging them in media, advocacy, and storytelling programs. The organization is run by and for people in the sex trades. RedUP believes *“storytelling is the building block of movement building and that it can empower individuals and by extension our communities.”*



##### Objectives

The goal of this project was to create a space where people in the sex trades living in New York City are heard and their experiences respected, through involvement in a cultural project that gives them a creative outlet to express themselves, document their experiences, and make social change. The story telling workshops aimed to empower individuals to advance their own rights and create a greater platform for people in the sex industry to share their stories in both informal and advocacy settings and challenge the stigma and discrimination that are barriers to accessing rights and justice.

##### Activities & Outputs

Memoir Storytelling Writing Workshops: RedUP's eight-week long memoir writing workshops involved 15 current and former sex workers with very different experiences. Participants created a space to share stories while providing supportive feedback and working toward the goal of publishing a piece in RedUP's literary journal: *Prose & Lore: Memoir Stories about Sex Work*. Issue 2, released July 2013, and included 20 stories from storytellers in spring 2013 program, Issue 3, released January 2014, and included 27 stories from the fall 2013 program. RedUP were also requested to hold drop-in workshops over the summer, and consequently offered two drop-in workshops per month.

Improv Storytelling Workshops: RedUP ran a five-week pilot series of theatre based or storytelling workshops to be more accessible to people with literacy challenges. This series was offered to trans women only, mostly women of colour who are impacted by HIV and have unstable housing situations. After the conclusion of the pilot, RedUP conducted an evaluation and needs assessment with the group, who said they wanted to have drop-in sessions and also work towards creating a troupe and doing a public performance. Realizing this would require more funds than what the AWID Seed Grant provided, RedUP sought further funding and secured a USD 10,000 grant from the Sparkplug Foundation to help them build on the Seed Grant and scale up their work.

Storytelling Production, Documentary & Short Film: Discussions about the opportunity for members to audition for an ensemble group, create a theatre piece and perform it at Joe's Pub - a historical 200-person venue in Manhattan, led to the establishment of the new Trans Women's Theatre Ensemble. During 2013 RedUP produced two readings, five small storytelling events, and worked to create the gala storytelling and theatre event at Joe's Pub, which involved seven storytellers and the newly created Trans Women's Theatre Ensemble. In October RedUP ran a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign, raising almost USD 25,000 (they had a USD 15,000 goal) to produce a feature documentary of this process - [“The Red Umbrella Diaries”](#) about seven of their

storytellers, and [“In My Skin”](#) – a short film about the Trans Women’s Theatre Ensemble. “The Red Umbrella Diaries” is currently in post-production with a premiere planned for spring 2015. “In My Skin” premiered at the Boston LGBT Film Festival April 12, 2014, and will be launched online soon. They are also working with some of the ensemble leaders to produce a discussion guide to accompany the online film launch.

### Key Achievements and Impact

According to RedUP, this project was highly successful. The storytelling and production of their own published work and theatre events provided participants with an important, self-determined space where they control their stories, unlike in political and media spaces. Participants have flourished while creating dramatic scenes expressing issues they deal with as transgender women; engaging in dialogue about these issues; and reflecting critically on the art-making process and products. Some of the most powerful moments happened while participants showed support and concern for each other’s success, and practiced communication and leadership skills. The Seed Grant also enabled RedUP to experiment with their storytelling program and find a workshop model that works and will be replicable in the future. Other significant achievements include:

- 2013 was RedUP’s first full year of funded (at least partially) programming. The combination of the AWID Seed Grant, the Sparkplug Foundation grant and the Kickstarter funds made it possible for them to produce their work, have a bigger impact and document it with a skilled film crew. RedUp are also extremely motivated about a successful application for a USD 13,500 grant from the Red Umbrella Fund for 2014, and said they believe that being a recipient of an AWID Seed Grant played a role in securing the funding.
- RedUP were able to produce high quality media and performances showcasing stories that are not authentically being told elsewhere, and use those stories as a springboard for discussing economic inequality, facilitating community organizing and social change. They were able to reach a significant audience of 400 attendees at their various performances and have garnered a social media presence on Facebook (1500 likes) and Tumblr (400 followers). Press coverage included:

[The Red Umbrella Diaries: A Show and a Documentary About Sex Work \(and really about healing\)](#). October 2013.

[Sex Workers Tell Tricks of the Trade](#), ABC News, July 12, 2013. Feature article about RedUP’s storytelling work, centered on the release of Issue 2 of *Prose & Lore*.

[Bitch In: Red Umbrella Project](#), *Bitch Magazine*, Winter 2013. Full page spotlight on the Red Umbrella Project.

### Lessons Learned

Some of the lessons learned from this project, in RedUP’s own words, include: *“There is a bigger gap between personal storytelling and the leap to doing political advocacy than we expected. Our members feel compelled to tell their personal stories and connect with others who share some of their circumstances. However, there is a lot more work that needs to be done to connect individual experiences with the larger issues of violence, stigma, and discrimination that affect sex workers.”*

*“Storytelling and creative programming are not “luxury” programming, but rather an important way of respecting and caring for people in a holistic way. The reality is that many members of our community will never “solve” the problems that face them, and restricting their access to art and community building does them a great disservice.”*

## 15. Sex, Fun and Money, Debolina Dutta, India

### Seed Grant Partner

This project was implemented by Debolina Dutta from India, a human rights lawyer, researcher and documentary filmmaker and PhD student at the University of Melbourne focusing on transnational sex workers' organizing and the politics of anti-trafficking funding. The project was implemented in close collaboration with two sex worker collectives in India: Durbar Mahila Samanyaya Committee (DMSC) based in Kolkata, West Bengal and Veshya Anyay Mukti Parishad (VAMP) based in Sangli, Maharashtra.

### Objectives

Through a collection of oral narratives this project aimed to look at 'fun as the politics of economic transformation' in the lives of sex workers from Sonagachi and Sangli in India. The project's objective was to invert what is otherwise understood as frivolous, but in reality is a deeply subversive practice in the life of sex workers: the role that humor plays in their everyday lives, and how it contributes to making their work more exciting, ensuring financial security, and keeping them and their clients happy.

### Activities & Outputs

'Conversations' with 24 sex workers in India: After conducting a number of group interviews, Debolina selected 21 female sex-workers and 3 sex-working transwomen for this project. 10 were members of the DMSC, and 14 were members of VAMP. The sex workers represented a range of caste and religious backgrounds and at every step, ideas were developed in conversations with the sex workers' collectives and the individual sex workers Debolina spoke with.

Book production: In her original proposal, Debolina said there would be two products to emerge from the project: 1) an online video archive, and 2) a photo book. However, the sex workers expressed that they did not want the videos of their conversations to be made public. The project was then altered into the production of a text-illustration combined book, co-authored by Debolina, DMSC and VAMP.

To date, the book is a work in progress and is expected as part of the 'sexuality series' of the independent publishing house, Yoda Press. The book will include an introduction by Debolina, which will connect the issue of fun with sex workers' economic power, as well as situate the book within a larger pool of scholarship on sex work in India. There will be two other pieces by DMSC and VAMP that will talk about the journey of their collectives as part of a larger global sex workers' movement. These texts will be followed by 13 illustrated stories based on Debolina's conversations with sex workers. There will also be a centerspread illustrated representation of the journey of the sex workers' movement, and the evolution of its assertion of the right to sex work. Illustrations will accompany the text throughout.

### Key Achievements and Impact

Debolina describes the project as a highly successful research project on economic justice, in which the questions of fun and pleasure were central to its framing and politics. A key achievement was the development of a method of engaging with sex workers that consciously breaks away from producing knowledge through a hierarchical researcher-researched relationship. Rather, this book was produced as through co-creative conversations with sex worker activists about their life stories of fun that integrally connect with their livelihood. The production of an illustrated book that retains the element of fun in conveying the stories, as well as makes them widely accessible, was another achievement according to Debolina. There is planning for the publication to be used as a tool for advocacy and pedagogy, by the sex workers' movement, and other activists.

### Lessons Learned

Debolina indicated that she has learned that transforming economic power is not just about legislating on human rights, or reforming law, or changing politics: it is as much about collectivization and community building in occupations that are heavily gendered, like sex work. In terms of transformative research, a focus on the everyday and ordinary forms of resistance and negotiation can provide extremely powerful insights into how women, individually and collectively, work to secure their own rights.

Economic injustice can also be challenged if attention is paid to the politics of knowledge production, especially by ‘experts’ about the lives of subaltern women like sex workers. In the name of producing compassionate representations of the lives of sex workers, such knowledge keeps in place the very inequalities that it claims to challenge. It is for this reason that different forms of collaborative work needs to be evolved that enables a sharing of ideas, products and resources with the communities that a researcher works with. For example, in this project the book will be co-authored by Debolina, DMSC and VAMP. The royalties, if any, earned by book sales, will also be shared equally.

A significant personal learning from the project shared by Debolina was the transformation of her own understanding of ‘fun’. She says: *“I began the project with a pre-conceived notion of what fun is to me, and an understanding that was informed by my own locations of privilege (class, caste, education etc). But through the conversations with sex workers, the idea of fun that emerged was very closely connected to that of community. Every sex worker I spoke with had stories of friendship to narrate. For them the community of friends in other sex workers allowed them the safe space to have fun. The idea of this fun was about being able to be with their friends, take care of each other, and that would in turn make their workplace a fun place to be in. It was love in the community of friendship that connected their idea of fun to economic security.”*

## **16. Sex workers rights are human rights, Association of Hungarian Sex Workers (SZEXE), Hungary**

### **Seed Grant Partner**

The Association of Hungarian Sex Workers (SZEXE) aims to serve the interests and needs of sex workers in Hungary and Hungarian sex workers abroad. Building on the needs of various sex worker groups, SZEXE aims at protecting their human rights, increasing their access to quality health, social, and drug treatment services, and lobbying for a more appropriate legal environment. At the same time, it attempts to help those sex workers who wish to quit, to spend as little time in sex work as possible. SZEXE also works to sensitize the media and the general population to change attitudes towards sex workers.

### **Objectives**

Within Hungary there is a climate of violence, stigma and discrimination towards sex workers, which prevents them from accessing relevant services and contributes to their vulnerability and exclusion. The specific objectives of this project were:

1. To organize in depth training on human rights; existing mechanisms for protection (national and international); monitoring and documenting human rights abuses; possible tools to expose violations; and transforming the sex workers' community in a safe and secure way.
2. To ensure that human rights defenders from sex workers' community are better skilled and are able to actively engage in exposing issues that directly affect their lives and health, and demand positive changes for own communities.

### **Activities & Outputs**

Recruitment and awareness raising: SZEXE first undertook recruitment and awareness raising activities among the Hungarian sex worker community, offering support in developing their capacity as human rights defenders. Over 40 sex workers were contacted during this process. In preparation for the in-depth training sessions, SZEXE developed training materials on the following topics:

1. The human rights context of sex work in Hungary;
2. International human rights organizations’ structure and mechanisms, with a focus on the UN CEDAW mechanism and the organization’s 2013 submission;

3. Follow-up and strategies to mobilize against the Honeyball report, which supports criminalization of clients as a policy solution in sex work;
4. Strategies to carry out monitoring, in cooperation with the sex worker community, of hate crimes against sex workers.

Three one-day training sessions were held with 10 participants who were either former or practicing sex workers, all female, 10% from the LGBTIQ community, 20% Roma. SZEXE reported that during the meetings, sex workers were empowered to come up with solutions for their existing concerns, such as a lack of information and sharing of information when a potential abuse of rights threatens them. The human rights aspect of the trainings also received positive feedback from participants, a majority of whom were discussing sex work within the frame of labor rights and women's rights for the first time.

Knowledge production and dissemination: In addition to the training, SZEXE distributed three newsletters, *Heterae*, to approximately 4000 sex workers.

### Key Achievements & Impact

SZEXE's project was highly successful. It strengthened 10 sex workers' skills in media representation and increased their legal literacy. The training series was also a very powerful tool for networking among sex workers and to share experiences. An important achievement was SZEXE's successful application to the Norway Grants scheme in Hungary for a further EUR 10,000 for the implementation of an empowerment project, including a photo portrait series and exhibition by a photo journalist with a high reputation for working with sex workers, and the organization of a sex-worker led conference to take place in 2014, which was an idea generated by the participants themselves. Other significant achievements of the project were:

- Mobilization in the sex worker community: The 10 active sex workers involved in this project can play a multiplier role in their community.
- Enhanced knowledge on human rights: Participants were empowered to represent sex work issues in the media with increased awareness on international and national human rights frameworks surrounding sex work.
- Increased presence of the Association of Hungarian Sex Workers: Based on participant feedback, SZEXE took steps to increase their presence in online forums popular among sex workers so they can provide advice online to those in need of social counselling or assistance with legal matters.

### Lessons Learned

SZEXE reported that these training sessions were truly unique in their organization's history and that due to their success in creating a space for sex workers to network and share experiences, they will continue these activities and organize similar gatherings in the future. SZEXE also expressed that in order to show the abuses sex workers face from various state and non-state actors, sex workers emphasize the importance of initiatives that are driven by sex workers themselves and show the different facets of sex worker realities. SZEXE emphasized that drawing linkages with sex workers' issues is crucial in terms of creating and maintaining a more inclusive women's movement.

## 17. "Where's the Money for Women's Rights?: A Kosovo Case Study", implemented by Kosova Women's Network (KWN), and Alter Habitus (AH), Kosovo

### Seed Grant Partner Description

This joint research initiative was implemented by the [Kosova Women's Network](#) (KWN) representing 103 member



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organizations, and [Alter Habitus- Institute for Studies in Culture and Society](#) (AH), one of KWN's members.

### Objectives

Together KWN and AH sought to provide crucial information to KWN members on funding for women's organizations within Kosovo and in particular on resources available for grassroots and vulnerable women's groups. With data from the survey, KWN and AH aim to produce user-friendly tools and materials about current funding trends and feminist resource mobilization strategies in the Kosovo context that can contribute knowledge and a potential advocacy platform to support increased financing /resources for women's groups locally and internationally. The research also constitutes an in-depth case study that will supplement AWID's 2012-2013 "*Where Is the Money for Women's Rights? (WITM)*" global research, providing more specific information about the challenges faced by grassroots groups that do not have access to internet and/or do not speak English, and may face a different situation than other organizations who participated in the AWID global research. It is particularly relevant to make a Kosovo Case Study given the country's specific history in donor interventions since 2000 and their impacts on women's rights organizing.

### Activities and Outputs

Research Preparation: KWN and Alter Habitus began by preparing the research framing, which determined the methodology that was going to be adopted throughout. They shared their own experiences with the AWID WITM team in regards to feminist research methods, and prepared the Survey for Women's Organizations based on AWID's global survey. This was then revised and finalized in close consultation with the AWID WITM team, as was the interview guide for donors. Following its finalization, the survey was translated into Albanian. The team developed a research work plan as well as an outreach strategy for the NGO and donor community.

Research Implementation: The research team launched outreach activities in the form of sending out e-mails, conducting personal phone calls, and arranging meetings to generate awareness of and interest in participating in the research. They conducted the survey with 83 women's NGOs in Kosovo, and interviewed 27 donor organizations. Throughout the research, on-the-job, day-to-day mentoring was provided for young feminist researchers at KWN and AH on conducting semi-structured interviews, interviewing techniques, and data analysis. KWN and Alter Habitus conducted both qualitative and quantitative analyses on the collected data, and then proceeded to draft a report interpreting the consolidated information. The research findings were then shared with the AWID WITM team, to also discuss the potential for future joint advocacy.

Dissemination and Awareness-Raising: In hopes of raising awareness on the issue, KWN and Alter Habitus used their bimonthly newsletter *Kosovar Women's Voice* to disseminate the research findings in January 2013, which reaches an audience of 150 subscribers. KWN also presented the findings in their bimonthly meeting, during which more than 50 KWN members (women's organizations) from throughout Kosovo were present, and used social media - particularly their Facebook page with more than 1,500 followers and a weekly reach of 324 - to publicise their research. [Where's the Money for Women's Rights? : A Kosovo Case Study](#) was published in 2013.

Pending Activities: This seed grant fed into an ambitious and substantial piece of research that took some time to complete due to donors' and activists' busy schedules and travels. Therefore, in discussion with AWID, the public release, circulation and advocacy was undertaken in the latter half of 2014. This includes: Public discussion of the initial findings with research participants ("participant checks"), towards validity; Public release in Kosovo of the findings involving research participants (donors and women's NGOs); and circulation of findings through AWID as a specific country case study related to the "Where is the Money?" research. KWN and AH are working to establish advocacy strategies based on the research findings for more efficient spending on women's rights, which can be used to encourage better donor funding practices in financing women's organizations seeking to advance women's rights.

### Key Achievements & Impact



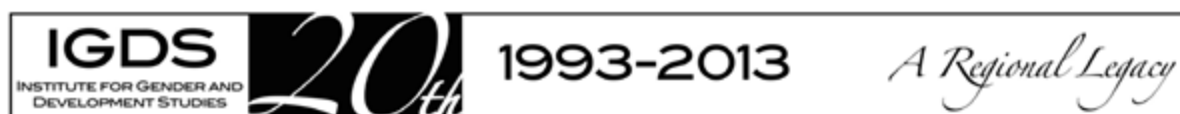
According to KWN and AH an important achievement of this seed grant is that the research has informed the development of the KWN Kosovo Women's Fund, established in 2012. Conversations with donors through this initiative have provided vital information regarding trends in donor funding and various donors' funding policies and priorities. This information is useful in assessing future potential donors for the fund, which provides micro-grants to women's organizations that lack access to other types of funding. This project also further developed the capacities of young women feminist researchers: four young women have improved skills for carrying out such research, which they can put to use in their future careers. The research enhanced information sharing among donors and CSOs: Kosovo is notorious for poor coordination, particularly among donors. The research findings can foster conversations and better coordination among donors, which will lead to greater resources to sustain women's rights organizing in the region and foster greater access to economic power. Finally, the research complements AWID's broader research initiative "Where's the Money for Women's Rights" by providing an in-depth case study. This includes information about grassroots organizations and how international funding trends/policies trickle down to be implemented by donors in a given country (Kosovo). This will add knowledge and produce strategies of use to AWID and other women's organizations around the world.

### Lessons Learned

The research shed light on the perceptions that donors have about women's organizations in Kosovo, including several myths and truths. This information is important for women's organizations, many of which rarely interact with donors, in better understanding how they are perceived by donors in Kosovo, as well as strategies that they could use to improve these perceptions.

## 18. Centering Economic Justice for Caribbean Women: An Intensive Training Programme, The Institute for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit (IGDS:NBU), Barbados.

### Seed Grant Partner



The project was implemented by the Institute for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit (IGDS:NBU), which has been offering an intensive biennial training program on Gender and Development since 1992.

### Objectives

The objective was to hold the 10<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Institute in Gender and Development: An Intensive Training Programme (CIGAD) at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus from 1 July – 26 September 2013 - developed to meet IGDS: NBU's objective of strengthening academic and outreach programmes in the non-campus territories. CIGAD introduces participants to the theoretical and methodological approaches to the issue of gender relations. It examines the differential impact of gender relations on women and men, and how these relations affect the process of social change. It seeks to empower participants to improve their social situations and to enhance their capacity to contribute to the process of changing their societies.

### Activities and Outputs

CIGAD 2013 attracted 62 applicants from across the Caribbean and also from countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Pakistan and Ethiopia. In total, 28 Caribbean men and women were admitted to the programme. These individuals came from diverse educational, employment and social backgrounds which enriched the classroom learning environment. The gender composition of the group was 23 females and five males. Both full and partial scholarships were awarded to participants.

**Course Structure and Content:** The program was divided into three phases, with participants registering under two options. Four persons registered under Option 1, which entailed completion of the course requirements in the four-week teaching period. 24 persons registered under Option 2, which entailed that after the four-week period of training participants conducted research in their home country towards the development of their projects.

Phase 1 was comprised of an intensive 4-week program that ran from 1 to 26 July 2013 in Barbados, with sessions falling under the following six course units:

Unit 1: FEMINIST THEORIES AND PRACTICES

Unit 2: GENDER ANALYSIS AND CARIBBEAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Unit 3: CREATING AND COMMUNICATING KNOWLEDGE

Unit 4: IDEOLOGIES AND INSTITUTIONS IN CARIBBEAN SOCIETIES

Unit 5: GENDER, TRADE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Unit 6: GENDER, HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

During Phase 2 (27 July – 8 September 2013), Option 2 participants conducted fieldwork in their home countries and prepared their final research projects on gender and/or development-based areas of their choice. Participants were in regular communication with the course coordinator for support, guidance, and information, and then returned to Barbados to submit and present their projects. Option 1 participants submitted their completed projects at the end of Phase 1.

The majority of the projects comprised of written reports, however; five participants presented short documentaries alongside a report that summarized their findings. Two participants used poems in their final presentations. One participant in the Option 1 cohort presented their findings as a poetry anthology. The projects covered a range of topics, for example, exploring issues relating to gender-based violence and teenage parenting; gender in the workplace; gender and education; women in leadership roles; male parenting; women in agriculture; women in the private sphere; and gender and youth.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

According to IGDS:NBU, based on participants' projects, written evaluations and video testimonies it can be inferred that the programme had a positive impact. The projects submitted demonstrated the incorporation of new knowledge by participants as well as the use of gender analysis and/or feminist theories to examine social issues. By and large, participants stated that they gained new and diverse knowledge that should help them to advance their personal and professional development and to assist in the growth of their respective organisations. The research undertaken demonstrated that participants thoughtfully applied the tools of gender analyses and feminist theoretical paradigms to their projects resulting in nuanced examinations of gender-based issues. Participants' projects also demonstrated important contributions to Caribbean research development.

27 participants completed the final evaluation survey, and expressed feelings of empowerment and commitment to change and action as a result of the intense multidisciplinary training in gender and development that they received.

Ten Caribbean countries were represented in the program and for the first time the program welcomed one participant from Montserrat. The organizing committee also made a concerted effort to target Haitian participants, and a total of nine persons applied. However, the Curriculum and Development Planning Committee was unable to procure interpretation services for Haitian applicants who did not speak fluent English. In total three Haitian participants attended. The other countries represented were Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago.

## Lessons Learned

The following recommendations come from the Course Coordinator, the participants, resource persons, and members of the Curriculum and Development Planning Committee:

- Facilitate greater inclusion from Francophone Caribbean islands (e.g. Haiti, Martinique and Guadeloupe) and Hispanophone Caribbean islands (e.g. Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Cuba).
- Applicants' grassroots and community work or their potential community reach should factor more significantly into the selection process. There is a need to target more women and men from Caribbean grassroots organizations to apply and attend. More outreach should be conducted to individuals working in non-governmental organizations and agencies.
- Small funding awards should be awarded for the top five project proposals to facilitate the research projects. Many research topics present innovative ways to address gender or development issues in Caribbean countries. Providing small funding awards could assist participants to carry out their projects and create a bigger impact.

The IGDS: NBU is committed to the ongoing delivery of this unique program: firstly it is the only major ongoing outreach activity of the University of the West Indies and the Institute of Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit that seeks to build sustainable communities by imparting knowledge, skills and tools of gender analysis to women and men in the Caribbean region. Secondly, through this outreach programme, the IGDS:NBU distils the knowledge and skills from its academic research and teaching programme into a popular education format, thus spreading the University's reach and impact to the Caribbean community.

## 19. Gender, Extractive Industries and Livelihood in the Pacific Islands with initial focus on Fiji and Papua New Guinea

### Seed Grant Partner

The [Pacific Network on Globalisation](#) (PANG) is a Pacific regional network promoting economic justice in globalization with specific attention to: accountability and transparency in economic and trade policy processes; poverty eradication; equitable development and sustainable livelihoods (opportunity, access, impact); and food sovereignty and environmental sustainability. PANG works across the island countries of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat – Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu and has strong links with fair trade campaigning organizations in Australia, New Zealand and the European Union. The PANG regional network comprises Pacific Civil Society Organizations, workers' organizations, educators, students, and fair trade campaigners.



### Objectives

This seed grant fits within PANG's overall priorities of determining a locally appropriate economic and development model and also supporting alternative development models that already exist in the region. The first objective was to investigate, document and expose the impacts of extractive industries with a longer term view to advocate for the need to integrate gender perspectives into extractive industry policy making, purpose and implementation in the Pacific Islands. The second objective was to hold a forum at the University of the South Pacific (USP) to discuss Gender, Extractive Industries and Livelihoods in the Pacific Islands.

### Activities & Outputs

Investigate, document and expose extractive industry impacts: Working in partnership with the Social Education Empowerment Program (SEEP), Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), Bua Urban Youth Movement and the

Bismarck Ramu Group (BRG), eight villages were visited in two districts of Bua in PNG. While sustainable development and usage of resources discussed by SEEP, PANG contributed in the area of globalization and its impacts whilst a PNG community facilitator presented a local view on the impacts of extractive industries on indigenous communities. His presentation was translated into the local dialect by the Bua Urban Youth Movement representative. PANG interviewed one or two women in each village, depending on the numbers present and who wanted to be interviewed, to understand how women are integrated into the community. Questions focused on what structures are used to include women and what is their function and contribution to development individually, in a family setting and a traditional setting as well.

USP Forum on Gender, Extractive Industries and Livelihoods: The panelists consisted of USP Associate Professor in Marine Affairs; a PNG community facilitator; the Bua Youth representative; and a young women's project officer from the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, moderated by a post-graduate student of the School of Government and International Affairs. Panel discussions went on for an hour with participants mostly comprised of students engaged in a lively debate with the panelists. Discussions centered on mineral ownership, the constitution, the role of researchers on extractive industries, the impact of extraction industries on the community and environment; and the role of international NGOs in their support of local communities facing the challenges of extractive industries. Journalism students attended the panel and filmed the presentations, posting them on YouTube. The links are below:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjbGRNfBWSs>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhMvAB6E4z8>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnuillifezPM>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOQzRWK0lxU>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KaQKZgtCVc>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BpaunxWwno>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hZB2H8n3zk>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpNRD6034bE>

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

According to PANG, the seed grant helped them to understand traditional community contexts, structures and functions and to begin looking at some other areas of economic and social justice where mining and significant profit margins are not the focus, but rather where the people can decide for themselves the type of development that is appropriate for them.

A major achievement was the mapping and investigating of the various extractive industries in the designated area, as well as understanding each community context, structure and functions. Another key achievement was that PANG was able to bring in an experienced community facilitator from PNG to talk about the impacts of extractive industries in PNG both at the local and academic level. Being able to hold a lively panel discussion at the University with academics, young feminists, young professionals and students on the impacts of extractive industries and sustainable livelihoods and gender raised awareness of these issues, although one of the challenges faced during the discussion round of the panel was that gender did not feature as much as PANG had hoped it would.

### **Lessons Learned**

PANG learned that an understanding of the community context is helpful because a one-size-fits-all approach does not work in all villages, even with their close proximity. As a result of their project, PANG also believes that a thorough gender analysis and impact assessment of extractive industries should be considered. A key learning was on the advantages that already exist in the traditional setting, in terms of its organization and function. Women, men and youth have their own committees, which serve to develop and give people of their own

villages a broadened sense of responsibility, for example, division of labor, community resources, assets and strengths. Additionally, PANG felt that economic power can be strengthened by mapping the available resources that communities have and the way that community members can utilize them in order to progress their standard of living economically. Communities could also map how the market influences their daily lives and use that to their advantage.

## **20. Young Women Workers Trade Union for Economic Sustainability, Serene Secular Social Service Society (SSSSS), Tamil Nadu, India.**

### **Seed Grant Partner**

[Serene Secular Social Service Society \(SSSSS\)](#) is a non-profit, non-political and secular voluntary organization, with the aim of facilitating the process of social change and economic empowerment of rural poor. The organization is a response to the growing marginalization of women's rights with the goal to find possible solutions to practices that adversely affect the rights of women. Since its inception the organization has been working among the women, girl children and adolescent girls belonging to the Dalits and Tribal communities. Now SSSSS is engaged in women empowerment programs by providing rights education, health education and livelihood support.



### **Objectives**

The main goal of this seed grant was to create and register a Trade Union for young women labourers in the textile industries for their economic sustainability. Tamil Nadu is the largest cotton yarn producing state in India, and many young, unmarried women are tied to their employers in a system of bonded labour under schemes like Sumangali. "Sumangali" in Tamil refers to a happily married woman. In Sumangali employment schemes, young, unmarried, predominantly Dalit women are employed in garment manufacturing units to enable their families to pay their dowries. In reality, schemes such as this translate to bonded labour. Wages are paid only when workers complete a 3-5 year contract period.

### **Activities and Outputs**

The activities carried out during this seed grant by SSSSS were as follows:

Registration of the Trade Union: SSSSS created and registered the Tamil Nadu Textile and Common Labour Union (TTCU), pertaining to the laws of India, and facilitated the formation of trade unions at state level, covering 32 districts in Tamil Nadu. Bylaws and Memorandum of Association have also been developed in consultation with the beneficiaries and advocates.

Enrolment of members and election of office bearers to the Trade Union: The existing SSSSS data base of beneficiaries was utilized in the enrolment of members of the trade union, and a democratic election process was also used to elect the office bearers.

Capacity building training to the elected office bearers: A training session was conducted covering issues such as: i) General functioning of a trade union; ii) Legal and moral support to victims of abuse in the textile and garment industries; iii) Counselling and guidance; iv) Lobbying and advocacy strategies; v) Understanding labour laws and government social security measures; vi) Group coherence and group dynamics; vii) Personality development and leadership qualities; viii) Human rights and labour rights; ix) Gender discrimination and challenges.



Exposure visits to other trade unions: Visits to the Quarry Workers, Sea Based Workers and to the Workers in the Food Processing Unit were organized to equip women leaders with knowledge on general functioning of trade unions and the responsibilities of office bearers. The representatives of the women trade union both at state and central level now have a better understanding of movement building for economic and social empowerment of women.

SSSS have planned to produce documentary film on the project. They have also initiated the process of writing a novel (story) portraying women labourers as heroines.

### Key Achievements & Impact

SSSS rate their project as completely successful. The key achievement has been the formation and registration of the Tamil Nadu Textile and Common Labour Union (TTCU), which is registered to work across the state, and that over 250 workers have become members. The union is based in Dindigul known for being a hub of textile mills in the district, and is the only state level trade union which has a flag of its own. The TTCU is lobbying with government, buyers and mill owners for the economic empowerment and development of rural labour women. It renders legal support to women labourers and in addition, legal cases are being filed in the courts.



This is the first textile trade union in Tamil Nadu exclusively for women and the first of its kind in the history of Tamil Nadu for working women folk. SSSS have said that because of the Seed grant, they have now become social activists and raise their voices when and where needed. Also, rural young women labourers have importantly learned to become members of a labour movement. During their state conference, the TTCU passed a set of resolutions. They demanded the state government to scrap the camp labour schemes such as Sumangali, because the schemes, in guise of marriage assistance, have exploited women with extended working hours, unhygienic food and sanitation facilities, and oppressive labour practices. Moreover, the repayment of the promised amount at the end of the 3 to 6 year scheme is erratic, with only 26% of women repaid while 30% of them are not paid at all.

SSSS have filed as many as 127 labour cases, both in the district and state level labour courts. Out of these 127 cases SSSS have won 21 cases - and now all of these cases are being looked after by the TTCU. All the cases are related to rural poor women who have never entered the premises of a court before. As a result of the exposure visits to Quarry Workers, Sea Based Workers and to Workers in the Food Processing Unit, the women from TTCU had a chance to learn about lobbying and advocacy. As a result they have formulated a manifesto.

### Lessons Learned

Rural women workers in the textile industry have learned about becoming members of and forming a Trade Union. They have started to tap in to government welfare schemes (social, economic, cultural and educational), for the women workforce. This is now the platform that future generations of working women can build upon. In their own words, SSSS say: *“they have also learned to raise their voice for a common cause by knowing well ‘united we stand and divided we fall’*. In their report to AWID, SSSS shared that the driving force that motivated them to march forward in their mission, was that while other trade unions are dominated by men, on the contrary, the TTCU has all-women office bearers and works for the overall development of down-trodden women labourers.

According to SSSS, they had no collaboration from other registered bodies and as a result workers hesitated to join the TTCU initially. However, after a lot of committed counselling, SSSS managed to gain their willingness and confidence. SSSS said that during this project they received threatening phone calls and messages from



the employers who have money and muscle power at their disposal. That they overcame this obstacle, demonstrates the huge step forward that this project has accomplished for women workers.

## **21. Building a Political Voice for Women Living with HIV to Demand Increased Funding for Women's Human Rights and Social Justice, International Community of Women living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa (ICWEA).**

### **Seed Grant Partner**

This project was implemented by the [International Community of Women living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa \(ICWEA\)](#), a regional advocacy network and membership based organization giving visibility to women living with HIV & AIDS in Eastern Africa. ICWEA believes that gender inequalities and the lack of sexual & reproductive health & rights for women are at the heart of the HIV epidemic.

### **Objectives**

Working with a group of 16 women living with HIV, this project focused on a campaign that analyzes and challenges funding trends that ignore women's organizations and issues including economic empowerment, human rights and social justice programs. The project aimed to document funding flows from the Civil Society Fund (CSF) (a fund through which all funding to CSOs in the country goes through) to women's rights organizations and activities for the past five years in Uganda by 2014; this can then empower women with advocacy and lobbying skills for increased funding for women's rights organizations and activities geared towards enhancing access to rights and social justice.

### **Activities and Outputs**

Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) Training: 16 young women living with HIV from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda received SRHR training in Uganda, covering the SRHR landscape/country situations; elimination of mother to child HIV transmission (eMTCT); the role of young women living with HIV; documentation and evidence-based advocacy; and working with the media and policy makers. The young women identified their barriers to access to services and it was recommended that young women living with HIV be empowered with leadership and documentation skills, media and public speaking skills.

Advocacy and engagement for increased resource allocation: The seed grant enabled increased advocacy and campaigning on funding for women's rights organizations, through ICWEA's membership in the Civil Society Coalition for Health. For example, the Coalition engaged in advocacy for increased funding for women's issues and maternal health and advocated to parliament to ensure resources reach target beneficiaries. ICWEA advocated for funding for women living with HIV (WLHIV) to meaningfully participate in implementation and monitoring of eMTCT programs.

Research and documentation: ICWEA conducted a situation analysis aimed at analyzing funding flows to organizations of WLHIV and other women and girls' rights organizations. The study looked at establishing the current status of access to funding by selecting a sample of 40 organizations and key informants from a directory of women's organizations developed by the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET). The research established that although significant amounts of funds were mobilized and spent for HIV & AIDS responses in Uganda, increased funding nationally did not match access by women's organizations. Where external multilateral funding sources are accessed by some women's rights organizations, findings revealed that a significant number of women's organizations aren't accessing adequate funding for their work, which is partly attributed to their limited capacity to afford funding requirements. The report is awaiting validation and will be disseminated during the July 2014 International AIDS Conference in Australia and other policy fora.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

Sixteen young women living with HIV from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania were empowered with skills in advocacy, lobbying and human rights including SRHR. These women are already registering advocacy success stories, for instance, one beneficiary attended the African Union meeting in Senegal (2013) on human rights violations in the region which specifically raised issues of coerced sterilization of women living with HIV registered in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. One of the outcomes of the meeting was the resolution on the involuntary sterilization of women living with HIV which was adopted by the African Commission. ICWEA's research provided a deeper understanding of funding flows and their report: "Access to funding by organizations of women living with HIV (WLHIV) and women's rights in Uganda" provides evidence for their advocacy work to increase funding for women and women issues. The research enabled the development of a key recommendation - to ensure affirmative action for women's organizations in providing conducive funding opportunities while developing their capacity to compete for generic and competitive opportunities. This could be in the form of providing core, strategic and sustainable funding.

### Lessons Learned

ICWEA rated this seed grant as 'highly successful'. They reflected that as a result of the trainings, when empowered with knowledge and skills, young women living with HIV are great advocates. While the set goals of the project were successful, according to ICWEA the outcomes will only be realized when the findings of the research are used and also when the young women living with HIV that were trained in advocacy begin reporting on further successes.

ICWEA's research found that the funding environment is very competitive, yet women's organizations are not adequately empowered to compete. They also learned that while women's rights organizations in their context are focused on advocacy and activism for women's rights, this isn't prioritized by funding organizations that mainly want to support service delivery. The bulk of the available funding is channeled through government influenced mechanisms that are difficult for women's rights organizations to access. ICWEA feels that given this context, women's organizations should comply with the current constrained funding environment and develop resource mobilization partnerships to fulfill their funding requirements.

## 22. Using Comics for Economic, Social and Gender Justice, Alliances for Africa

### Seed Grant Partner

Alliances for Africa (AfA) is an African-led international non-governmental human rights, peace, and sustainable development organization with offices in the United Kingdom and Lagos, Nigeria. AfA works with partners in, around and beyond the continent of Africa. AfA was created to enhance and reconstruct the interface between human rights and development with a vision to contributing innovatively to the task of tackling causes of endemic poverty and exclusion in Africa.

### Objectives

Through this Seed Grant AfA was driven to create an engaging, eye-catching and educative tool for advocating for economic empowerment for women and calling for an end to violence against women. According to Iheoma Obibi, Executive Director at AfA; *"The aim is to raise awareness about the link between the economy and violence against women and girls as well as drive support for gender equality and women's human rights."* "The idea of comic advocacy for gender justice is in response to the need to explore newer and accessible tools to present social and often sensitive human rights issues in an engaging way", explained Osai Ojigho, AfA's Deputy Director and initiator of the project.



AfA sought to share resources and information with CSOs, policy makers, women and the public on key national and international economic policies such as the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union & Africa, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), Nigeria's Fiscal Policy, etc. By reviewing these policies within the Gender, Economic, Social and Cultural rights human rights framework, AfA will be better equipped to use evidence to address the impact of current policies and practices on women's rights and justice. AfA is also hoping to disseminate information in an easy to read, accessible and interesting format by using comics to present technical topics like economics. They intend to stimulate discussion on the effect of economic policies on women's rights and livelihoods which lead to economic empowerment and freedom from poverty. The resources will provide a basis for advocacy for governments to develop gender-sensitive policies and ensure full participation of women in the development, decision making and implementation of economic and social policies, from which they have generally been excluded.

### Activities and Outputs

- 1) Research on economic policies including legal and policy frameworks and development of a policy brief.
- 2) Production of Comics publication, The Breadwinner – an original Comic book published under its new publication, “Grab the Chance Comic Series.” The Breadwinner comic is set in a town in Africa and follows a family’s struggle as the effect of the global economic meltdown hits their country and threatens their livelihood. It explores various sub-themes including issues of domestic roles of men and women, child marriage, violence against women, economic power and empowerment, agriculture, gender equality and social justice.



Relevant international and regional human rights treaties, such as CEDAW, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) are introduced using simple language in a fun, easy-to-use format.

Activities included working with Revolution Media on the design, story lines, drawings, artistic impressions, and comic layouts of the publication. AfA printed 2,000 copies for distribution both at the regional and international levels. It is also available to [download](#) in PDF format and on the website at [www.alliancesforafrica.org](http://www.alliancesforafrica.org). The comic book was aimed to be primarily distributed in Africa to the following target groups: a) Policy makers at national and regional level including the African Union; b) Students in secondary school and higher education institutions; c) NGOs particularly women groups; and d) Corporate organizations who have an influence on economic policies.

- 3) Press conference/media launch/interviews to publicize the availability of the comic. AfA launched the Breadwinner to commemorate Africa Day 2014, on May 27th in Lagos, Nigeria. In her presentation, Osai Ojigbo eloquently stated: *“Economic independence for women makes sense. Africa has been ravaged by wars, incessant conflicts, poverty, food insecurity and health challenges which all hamper development and makes it difficult for families to feed and live a fulfilling life. Involving women in economic activities ensures that women with men cooperate to break the cycle of poverty in our communities, improve gender equality and improve development in Africa and the world as a whole. Given the difficult, unpredictable global economic climate, it is pertinent to understand that women are not only girls, daughters, mothers, wives, sisters but can contribute to the economy when empowered.”*

Online and social media readership is still being monitored, but AfA report that 561 people were reached on Facebook within 24 hours after the comic book was posted online. AfA also sent copies to about 600 e-newsletter subscribers and network members. As at 2 June 2014, AfA had 247 followers on Facebook. Their twitter handle is @AfAfrica and they use the hashtag #TheBreadwinner as they post items on the comic book.

- 4) Policy Engagement with policy makers at the national and regional levels. Policy makers working on the economy, agriculture, women, trade and industry in Nigeria and at the African Union (AU) were targeted. The next AU Summit takes place from 20 – 27 June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, with the theme 'Agriculture and Food Security'. Prior to the summit, copies have been sent to the 10 Commissioners, the Deputy-Chairperson and Chairperson of the AUC (AU Commission) to drive discussions on how policies affect women differently from men and to call for greater representation of women's issues in policymaking. Other copies are targeted for knowledge sharing with students in schools and universities in Nigeria and to sensitize the public on the importance of supporting women's economic power.

### Key Achievements & Impact

AfA have rated their project as highly successful in meeting most of their objectives. Their key achievements include:

- Producing an engaging and colourful advocacy tool in the form of a comic book that reaches people of different age groups and conveys multiple messages;
- Realizing that a comic book format was an easier and more interesting way to explain the connection between economic dependence and violence against women, which is important because economic policies affect families and can lead to abuse, particularly spousal abuse;
- Increasing the capacity of AfA staff to discuss economic policies, the importance of economic power for women and its links to sexual and gender based violence;
- Building new relationships and collaborations with partners outside of the development sector such as art foundations and graphic artists;
- Increased access to policy makers as they are more interested to listen and exchange information in order to advance women's rights and economic power; and
- Giving AfA a new platform to raise funds and sustain activities under their Gender Justice programmes.

AfA also reported that they were able to successfully mitigate and deal with subtle gender stereotypes that appeared in early scripts of the story and in the representation of women in the comics. AfA wanted women and girls to be portrayed as individuals and not as sexual objects. The creative company they worked with was male dominated and some of their earlier characterizations had a lot of masculine representation of women, which although were not overtly negative, could have drawn attention from the intended objective of the comic. AfA were able to produce an innovative tool that is engaging, attractive and informative about women's human rights in a non-threatening way.

### Lessons Learned

AfA encountered a few challenges during implementation such as delays with the creative company at the start of the project resulting in an extension that affected their ability to deliver on time; and also understanding how creative organizations work and providing them with enough information to produce the kind of drawings and characters they wanted. Several specific learnings emerged from this process including: time management – monitoring schedules more closely to ensure that all partners are meeting milestones to prevent delay; not compromising on quality and gender representation even when it appears that several edits are required; and teamwork – all staff and partners working on the project were actively involved and decision making was participatory.

### **23. Agricultural Community Warehouse and Agricultural Activities for Women and Girl Victims of Sexual Violence and Other Vulnerable Women and Girls of Kamanyola/Walungu”. Implemented by Action pour le Développement Intégral de la Jeunesse et de la Femme (ADIJF), Action for Integrated Development of Youth and Women), Democratic Republic of Congo.**

#### **Seed Grant Partner**

This grant was implemented by members of Action for Integrated Development of Youth and Women (ADIJF) who trained community leaders to implement Local Development Initiatives (LDIs) such as women’s agricultural cooperatives in the Kamanyola/Walungu region with grassroots women.

#### **Objectives**

Women’s poverty is the main cause of their social rejection and the abuse of their rights in the Kamanyola/Walungu region of the DRC. Through this seed grant ADIJF aimed to increase agricultural production and thus the income and economic empowerment of women and girls, in particular survivors of sexual violence. It also aimed to unite women in an economic interest social mobilization group and increase community awareness of the fight against gender-based violence

#### **Activities and Outputs**

Training activities: Agricultural Cooperatives Training sessions were held with 30 local women on management of revenue generating activities and agricultural cooperatives. Awareness-raising sessions on women’s rights were conducted with 50 local women who in turn were active in sensitizing the larger community on women’s rights and gender equality.

Agricultural cooperative activities: ADIJF procured two breeding pigs to start piglet distribution among 41 women co-operative members. This is a rapid way to increase income and nutrition as each pig gives birth twice a year to roughly 15 piglets. The seed grant enabled the leasing of communal fields, purchase of equipment and materials, leasing of a warehouse facility that stores more than 10 tonnes of crops per each of the two harvesting seasons, and construction of a pig sty for use by cooperative members. A cassava mill was also refurbished to reduce the burden for women who previously, after working in the fields, crossed the border to grind cassava in neighboring countries which was both time consuming and a safety risk.



#### **Key Achievements & Impact**

According to ADIJF, the main achievements of this seed grant were:

1. Agricultural Production and Income Generation: The storage warehouse now enables women coop members to sell their products in a structured manner and at affordable prices. The pig sty is operational with 4 pigs. Piglets were distributed among 41 coop members, who have in turn increased their income through selling the piglets and have improved their families’ nutrition. Coop members are using the communal field and individual plots to increase production. The second harvest of the communal field took place in February 2014, and operations for the new season were financed by the funds acquired via the sale of harvested maize and beans. A portion has been sold and the rest was saved as seed. Working together in an agricultural cooperative has helped local women strengthen their



social cohesion. It also helps victims of gender-based violence as it provides an informal space for them to interact. Coop members feel that their participation in agricultural activities have resulted in being better appreciated by their families. They are being consulted by other members of the community on various issues to improve the living conditions of other families.

2. Establishment of a monitoring committee for sexual assault alerts and for women's leadership initiatives: The trained community facilitator and other community members are actively involved in supporting women and fighting against sexual violence. They have come together as a *Cadre d'écoute et d'alerte* (CADEAL - Watchdog and Counselling Committee). Community members refer victims of sexual violence to CADEAL and sometimes report suspicious cases of violence in their villages. The women's group is becoming a formal association and meet every Sunday around issues that affect their daily lives.

### Lessons Learned

Several lessons were learned as a result of this seed grant. ADIJF sees a need for better facilitator training as well as more intensive community awareness raising on women's leadership and rights, stereotypes and prejudices and gender-sensitive management. They also learned that in their context the development of microcredit programs (whether cash and/or livestock) is a strategy for the economic empowerment of women and pig farming is profitable and quickly improves women's economic situation. A further important learning is that women share experiences in group work or meetings and need a space to talk about their problems - their place is not just the kitchen.

## 24. Awareness Raising and Education to Promote a Culture of Peace as a Means of Recognizing the Work of Women as Economic Operators and Not as Instruments of the Economy, Women Peace Initiatives, Cameroon.

### Seed Grant Partner

Women Peace Initiatives (WPI), or WANET, consists of six women's organizations in Cameroon working on various issues to advance women's rights. Women represent almost 80% of the economy through the informal sector, but their work is neither recognized, respected, nor compensated and most women seem to underestimate their potential. WPI's participation at different sessions on peace at the AWID 2012 Forum inspired them to better understand the need to build a culture of peace in Cameroon in order to guarantee the recognition and strengthening of women's economic power.



### Objectives

This seed grant aimed to share information and key experiences learned about peace, including bringing women together to explore the nature, principles and role of cultures of peace as a tool for transformation of the economic power of women in Cameroon.

### Activities and Outputs

Briefing Workshop on learnings from the 2012 AWID Forum: This workshop briefed a number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from ten regions of Cameroon, with a focus on women's peace and security. The workshop gathered 26 participants (19 women and 7 men), 13 of which identified as youth. The Cameroonian Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Famille - MINPROFF) also attended. The workshop was an opportunity to share key information on peace and experiences from the 2012 AWID Forum. It also showcased the proposed study's scope of work and a working group was established.



Study on the status of a culture of peace in Cameroon: Using a sample of 960 men and women in 10 regions of Cameroon, a study was undertaken to determine the status quo of a culture of peace geared towards valuing women's work as economic agents. The main finding was that knowledge of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 was very low, and that there is little interest in women's work and their roles as economic agents.

UN Resolution 1325 Workshop: An information workshop on Resolution 1325 was conducted as a result of the research findings. This workshop was led by experts from the DRC Chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and attended by 20 people, 70% women and 30% men. The specific objectives were to increase participants' knowledge of Resolution 1325; encourage action around peace-building initiatives; and encourage a reflection process towards a national action plan around Resolution 1325.

Peace messages broadcast during elections: WPI contributed to messages of peace to all parties during simultaneous elections (parliamentary and municipal) in Cameroon on September 30 2013.

International Day of Peace Celebration: A celebration of the International Day of Peace (September 21, 2013) was held on the theme "Education for Peace" thanks to a strong involvement from the Women Speak Out for Peace Campaign launched by the Global Network of Women Peace builders (GNWP). WPI led a regional awareness-raising campaign on building a culture of peace through the involvement of women in peace processes as a guarantee of sustainable development. This took place through social and traditional media, conferences and educational lectures and field missions.

### **Key Achievements & Impact**

According to WPI, the project went beyond expectations to the extent that monitoring activities continue to be conducted by various project participants. Diverse groups were involved in activities, including the media, which contributed to a heightened awareness. WPI specifically reached out to youth for the Briefing Workshop and as a result, 50% of participants were youth. One successful aspect was getting women to value and understand that even if their work is not paid, they are nonetheless economic actors and should be mobilized to require a formal recognition of their contributions to the economy. Workshop participants were better able to define the relationship between a culture of peace and valuing women's work. WPI have established a permanent working group to facilitate reflection on building a culture of peace for economic transformation.

Messages for peace during the elections contributed to the conduct of peaceful elections in Cameroon and the recognition of WPI as a reference on peace and security. As a result WPI is regularly consulted for expertise in peace and security. The UNSCR 1325 workshop not only raised awareness but contributed to a deepened understanding of the crucial role of women as actors in peace processes at all levels and especially the link between valuing women and the culture of peace.

The greatest successes have been holding keynote feedback workshops on the AWID Forum and on Resolution 1325; media involvement, the remarkable celebration of various commemorative days but especially the research allowed WPI to grasp and in the most remote areas women and men's fears about the future of Cameroon due to the lack of value accorded to women's work and especially the lack of attention to the issue of peace by republican institutions.

### **Lessons Learned**

According to WPI, throughout the implementation of their seed grant they faced some challenges that impacted their work, for example, the promotion of women's domestic work within a Family Code that is currently under development; and the isolation of certain regions. WPI shared that the environment in Cameroon is not conducive to human rights advocates in general and women in particular, who continue to suffer many violations, even death. Hence there is an urgent need for a mechanism for protection of women human rights

advocates, otherwise the efforts to advance women's rights will be in vain. WPI believe it is essential to advocate for the integration of women's housework into the Family Code, which is currently under development, entrenching women's domestic work as a valued and quantifiable personal contribution. There is also a need to understand the types of conflicts, their root causes and their sustainable management while planning actions for the transformation of economic power and the advancement of women's rights and justice. In their report to AWID, WPI included the following recognition: *"We also salute the spirit of cooperation and sacrifice of many people involved in the project who have made enormous sacrifices despite limited resources to carry out this project."*