



WOMEN'S
GLOBAL NETWORK
FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

WGNRR
AFRICA

Championing Rights Based
Approach for SRHR from the
Grassroots to national/regional
levels in Restrictive Settings.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

2019 AT A GLANCE

INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

The team of our board members was re-elected for a new term of 3 years and our regional staff team grew from 4 to 8 operations and programmes staff. We maintained a stable foundation and management of financial resources that enabled WGNRR Africa to continue the core operations, laid down the foundation for the 2020-2023 strategic frameworks, and developed and maintained relations with funders. We also managed to review some internal policies and develop a new one related to safeguarding children and young people targeted with our actions. This reflects the institutional growth in 2019.

STRENGTHENED ENGAGEMENT WITH GRASSROOTS CSOs

We directly engaged with 249 representatives of 31 grassroot member/partners CSOs in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, DRC and Nigeria. This engagement consisted of strengthening their capacity on a range of skills including – policy analysis and rights based advocacy, - Values Clarification for Attitude Transformation facilitation, - Frameworks and holistic and inclusive approach to advance SRHR of women and girls, - Risks assessment and security protection and, - disability, sexuality and reproductive health and rights. With these skills, grassroots have been strongly championing the right-based approach engaging more than 5 million people in influencing policy and attitudes change for SRHR of marginalized communities.

INFLUENCED NATIONAL AND GLOBAL SRHR POLICIES

We worked closely with local partners and the government to directly influence the development of the first ever disability inclusive and gender sensitive code of ethics for public and private healthcare; while supporting 10 local organizations to influence the domestication of Maputo protocol in Tanzania; Members of Parliament (MPs), journalists and members of the Tanzania Legal Support Network were supported to visit Rwanda to learn from the Rwandese experience on decriminalization of abortion in case of incest and rape and domesticating the Maputo protocol. We finally amplified the voice of grassroots advocates to influence abortion right agenda during the ICPD+25 conference in Nairobi/Kenya.

REGIONAL MOBILIZATION AROUND SRHR

Communities around the world were mobilized to support women's health and access to safe and legal abortion through May 28 and September 28 – global days of actions for women's health and for access to safe abortion campaigns. WGNRR Africa and partners' digital activism including tweet chats around May 28 reached 32,481 accounts with 106,348 impressions while mobilization around September 28 reached 273,294 accounts with 5,196,029 impressions. More than 20 offline events were organized in more than 15 African countries to mobilize communities around women's health and access to safe and legal abortion as human rights.

NETWORKING AND MOVEMENT STRENGTHENING

We established two Alliances in one year:

1. Advancing SRHR of Women with Disabilities (ASWoD) Alliance, a platform of Disabled People Organizations (DPOs), youth led organisation health service providers, human rights activists and CSOs working on GBV prevention was established to support the development of the first ever disability inclusive and gender sensitive code of ethics to uphold SRHR of women and girls with disabilities in Tanzania
2. Strong, Harmonized and Empowered Advocacy Actions (SHE ACTs) Acts Alliance, a platform of grassroots CSOs working on most marginalized SRHR issues to amplify and coordinate their voices in influencing regional SRHR policy frameworks, and addressing social barriers to access SRHR services for marginalized communities in East Africa.

We also collaborated with regional partners such as the Africa Coalition for Safe Abortion (ACSA) and the MenEngage Alliance to strengthen the SRHR movement in Africa.



MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL COORDINATION OFFICE

It is a great honour and privilege to be the Regional Coordinator of WGNRR Africa, a small organisation that represents a large network of grassroots activists who are fighting for sexual and reproductive rights and justice in Africa. *WGNRR Africa continues to be a critical voice in a region that is ever changing, where all over the year, the gains that many of our members and partners advocate for, are eroded by conservative and fundamentalist leaders.*

Reflecting on our year of work for 2019 seems surreal. WGNRR Africa has proved to be a strong network championing the right-based approach on SRH including abortion; connecting, strengthening capacity and supporting local organizations working at community level to implement strategies to advance SRHR; influencing policy change for SRHR of marginalized communities such as people with disabilities; amplifying the voice of grassroots organizations in regional and international policy platforms. Specifically - We consolidated and strengthened our internal capacity by doubling the number of staff, putting in place sustainable systems and ways of working; - We increased our engagement at the grassroots level supporting our members and partners in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda to make great strides in our joint efforts to realize the unmet sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of marginalized communities and counter related stigma at national level; - We mobilized and reached an audience of over 5 million with our May28 and September 28 campaign actions and; - We built and strengthened national and regional alliances with key stakeholders to support SRHR of marginalized groups and influence abortion right agenda in regional and global policy spaces.

Considering the 2019 achievement and its context, it is therefore important to keep the network going and make sure that it is a space where grassroots organizations, who often work in silo in their communities, counties and countries, can connect and have a sense of solidarity with others to sustain the gains obtained in 2019. Despite the challenges we face regionally and globally, WGNRR Africa is also a reminder of what brave and fierce grassroots advocates can achieve when they continue challenging the conservative rhetoric.

At the Regional Coordination Office, we are committed to serving WGNRR Africa and invite members and partners to give us ideas of how better WGNRR Africa can serve them and the marginalized communities they serve.

We look forward to continuing to advocate for sexual and reproductive rights and justice with you all.

Nondo E. Ejano
Africa Regional Coordinator

ABOUT WGNRR AFRICA

Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights Africa (WGNRR AFRICA) is an independent grassroots-led regional network of more than 200 grassroots based organizations established under the auspices of WGNRR, and registered in Tanzania under the Tanzania NGO Act 2002 in 2016.

The Agenda of WGNRR Africa is the full realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, with emphasis on those who most lack economic, social and political power. We are a feminist organization that uses women-centered human rights and social justice approaches to address legal, policy and social norms barriers that affect negatively access to sexual and reproductive health services and information for marginalized communities, such women, young people, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, and poor people. Through critical analysis and strategic actions, we connect members, partners and allies, build knowledge, share resources, and organize campaigns and advocacy actions.

WGNRR Africa directly supports grassroots organizations to create and strengthen national advocacy networks, whilst simultaneously connecting in-country community mobilization to national policy level advocacy efforts, and connecting national advocacy efforts to regional and global advocacy and campaigns. The focus throughout is to support grassroots organizations to address restrictive laws and practices that limit access to SRHR for women, girls, and young people. We have particular expertise in working with the most marginalized communities to build a global community for effective advocacy and campaigning efforts on critical SRHR and justice issues.

MISSION

We are a grassroots-led feminist network that connects and strengthens movements for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and justice.

Our work is grounded in the realities of those who most lack economic, social and political power with particular focus on women in all their diversities. We believe that achieving this goal requires transformative social change.

VISION

We envisage an Africa where all people can fulfill their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Our strength in 2019 was in our ability to - champion the right-based approach on SRH issues including abortion; - connect, strengthen capacity and support local organizations working at community level to implement strategies to advance SRHR; - influence policy change for SRHR of marginalized communities such as people with disabilities; and - amplify the voice of grassroots organizations in regional and international policy platforms.

HOW DO WE WORK TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION AND GOALS

Our programmatic approach means all activities and actions are strategically focused on specific aspects of SRHR which are priorities for WGNRR AFRICA. We ensure full integration of youth perspectives and youth specific SRHR issues into all our activities. Our strategies include:

CAMPAIGN

Provide leadership in articulating and seeking strategic ways to address critical SRHR and justice issues via analysis, campaigns and actions to support those of our members and allies.

ADVOCACY

Ensuring policy making is informed by the realities of grassroots communities and that the voices of those who lack political, economic and social power are included in decisions that affect them. We do this through policy analysis, information dissemination and direct advocacy with community leaders, policy makers, governments, regional and international bodies such as the Africa Union and the UN.

NETWORK AND MOVEMENT STRENGTHENING

We continue to build a community of members with shared SRHR goals to increase connectivity, active and meaningful participation of grassroots organisations and enhance strategic alliances and partnership.

COMMUNICATIONS & CAPACITY BUILDING

Communications and capacity building cut across these WGNRR Africa's strategies where we engage in internal and external capacity development and provide a range of communication mediums. We utilize strategic skills sharing and capacity building of our members to enable them to undertake rights-based advocacy on SRHR, at all levels.

Internally, WGNRR Africa develops strategies to enhance its operations, systems and procedures, fundraising and human resources. We provide a range of communication mediums including web sites, social media, mobile apps, SMS and face to face activities, for information and resource sharing, advocacy and campaigning, and networking and movement strengthening.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

In general, 2019 was another year of important achievements including significant institutional growth, strong engagement with grassroots member and partner organizations, communities' mobilization, policy influencing and movement strengthening.

INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

WGNRR Africa strives to be an organisation with strong institutional and financial sustainability in order to maintain its core mission, vision and values. Over the ended year the organization has grown in leadership and staffing.

OUR BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

Under the chairpersonship of Mrs. Martha Jerome, the 5 board members of WGNRR have accomplished their duty of ensuring that the vision, mission and core values are fulfilled and have overseen the effective implementation of decisions, resolutions, policies, directives and annual work plan by the staff members. They observed all statutory meetings and hosted the first ever WGNRR international board meeting in Dar-es-salaam in August 2019. Also, the board members reviewed and updated some of the existing policies to comply with the recommendations of the Auditors for the fiscal year 2018, and developed the first ever "Child & Young people Safeguarding Policy" to ensure that WGNRR have a framework to ensure safety and protection of vulnerable groups in its work. Due to their proven commitment and valuable contributions over the year, their governance term of 3 years which was ending in 2019 was extended for more 3 years up to 2022.



**Easter
Mwanjessa**



**Martha
Jerome**



**Eunice
Maringo**



**Elinaqueenity
Mushi**



**Jeanette
Sloodbeek**

OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Under the strong leadership of the Africa Regional Coordinator, the staff team worked tirelessly to ensure the effective implementation of the annual workplan. Starting with a number of 4 operating personnel, the staff team was doubled up to 8 personnel in the course of the year. This increase in number has also strengthened efficiency and effectiveness in implementing programmatic and operations activities. The proved collaboration among the staff team has enabled the accomplishment of the key programmatic achievements highlighted in this report. The Operations and finance officers ensured the WGNRR Africa comply with all legal and statutory requirements such as submitting annual returns, paying mandatory taxes, complying with requirements of its expatriate staff; and have led the process of conducting the first ever Africa based financial audit for the year ended December 2018.



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Regional Coordinator



Dorice Tesha
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Advocacy programme
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Matilda Deus
Youth SRHR Project
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Catherine Swai
Finance Officer



Devotha Sanga
Operations Assistant



Rhoda Remy
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Executive Director

Benily Valerio Dimabuyu
Finance Manager

ENGAGEMENT WITH GRASSROOTS CSOs

We engaged with our membership through a variety of activities. Capacity building workshops were the key activities that increased our engagement with our member and partner organizations at the grassroots level. Workshops were conducted on a variety of skills including the right based advocacy for SRHR, policy analysis, organizational management, facilitation of abortion Values Clarification and Attitudes Transformation (VCAT), risk assessment and protection mechanism, and disability, sexuality and reproductive rights.

Specifically, a total of 249 representatives from 31 grassroots partner/member CSOs in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, DRC and Nigeria were trained as follows:

- 15 representatives of 7 community based organizations members of the Coalition to Address Maternal Mortality due to unsafe Abortion and its Complications (CAMMAC) were taken through a refresher VCAT training of Trainers in Mwanza and Kigoma regions of Tanzania. They increased their capacity on addressing stigma around abortion in their communities
- 22 representatives of 11 organizations members of CAMMAC increased their capacity on risk assessment and protection mechanism through a security management for WHRDs workshop in Morogoro
- Through a policy analysis and rights based advocacy workshop in Dar-es-salaam, 18 experts from the Tanzania government & CSOs analysed the existing codes of ethics in relation to SRHR of women with disabilities in Tanzania.
- 36 representatives from partner CSOs in Tanzania were trained on rights based advocacy through an advocacy skills building workshop in Dar-es-salaam
- 22 representatives from 10 organizations/groups on women with disabilities in Tanzania were trained on organizational management and SRHR issues in Dar-es-salaam. They effectively participated in the advocacy for the development and submission of the first ever disability inclusive and gender sensitive code of ethics for public and private health care in Tanzania.
- 127 Young people aged 15 – 21 years were reached with a baseline survey conducted by WGNRR Africa to assess their capacity needs on SRHR. 14 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in 7 districts, namely Kigamboni and Temeke (Dar-es-salaam region), Dodoma municipality (Dodoma region), Illemela and Magu (Mwanza region) and Kigoma Municipal and Kasulu Town Council (Kigoma region) and the baseline knowledge, skills and attitudes on SRHR were assessed in relation to their SRHR, human rights, gender and sexuality. This exercise resulted in a baseline survey report detailing the gaps in knowledge, skills and attitude among young people and key recommendations for the achievement of youth SRHR. Also, 60 Young people were selected as potential trainees to champion youth SRHR in their respective districts.
- 21 grassroots advocates for safe abortion and allies Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, DRC and Nigeria were trained on human right framework, holistic and inclusive approaches and strategic communications for advancing SRHR of women and girls. This activity resulted in enhanced skills and ability to use holistic and inclusive approach and strategic communications in advancing SRHR.

INFLUENCING NATIONAL AND GLOBAL SRHR POLICIES

Policy engagement reached a total of 74 policy and decision makers at national level in Tanzania. We directly supported grassroots organizations to create and strengthen national advocacy efforts, whilst simultaneously connecting in-country advocacy efforts to regional and global policy influencing efforts through ICPD+25 platforms. Our advocacy focus in 2019 was mainly to influence the implementation of national, regional and global human rights commitments toward SRHR for women with disabilities, and the large community of women and young people. Specifically, we created and supported advocacy networks in Tanzania that were able to achieve the following:

- 4 Advocacy sessions were conducted with 27 national policy influencers including 22 members of the National Advisory council for persons with Disabilities, officials from the Ministry of Labor, Youth, Employment and people with Disabilities, (MoLYED), Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC) and the President Office – Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG). These advocacy efforts resulted into the development and submission for approval of the first ever disability inclusive and gender sensitive “CODE OF ETHICS FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.
- 3 advocacy sessions were conducted with 35 Members of Parliament (MPs), officials from MoHCDGEC and PO-RALG to influence the domestication of Maputo protocol so to extend grounds for access to safe abortion in Tanzania. These efforts resulted in increased awareness of the magnitude of unsafe abortion in the country; opened dialogue around the most sensitive and controversial topic and reduction of stigma around abortion among policy and decision makers.
- 12 key influencers including MPs, journalists and member for the Tanzania Legal Support Network were support to visit Rwanda for cross-country learning sessions about the Rwandese experience on decriminalizing abortion and domesticating the Maputo protocol. MPs who participated in this visit promised to question at the parliament level reasons behind the delayed domestication of Maputo protocol though they also expressed the need of more capacity in terms of human right framework in supporting access to safe abortion.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL MOBILIZATION AROUND SRHR

In 2019 WGNRR Africa worked closely with partners in mobilizing communities locally, nationally and regionally to respond to the struggles for SRHR, justice and dignity globally. We connected members, partners and allies for coordinated campaign actions around May 28 – International day of actions for women’s health and September 28 – Global day for Access to safe and legal abortion. These campaign efforts reached directly over 1,575 community members and an estimated over 5 million people were reached through online activism. Specifically:

- 5 community based members of CAMMAC were financially supported to conduct abortion stigma campaigns via video screening, storytelling, and policy brief dissemination in Tanzania. This opened up dialogue around abortion in 12 wards of 4 districts of Kigoma and Mwanza regions, reaching more than 1,575 health workers, community and religious leaders, People with Disabilities (PwDs), activists and community workers.
- 10 organizations/groups of women with disabilities were financially supported to replicate the SRHR training and dismantle stigma and discrimination around SRHR, sexuality and disability in their respective communities. This resulted in increased awareness of sexuality and reproductive health issues of women and girls with disability among community members
- We organized a strategic meeting with 46 representatives of the health workers community from 15 public health facilities, journalists, CSOs and government officials for the reduction of Maternal Mortality Rate in Dar-es-salaam, Tanzania on September 28 – global day of action for access to safe and legal abortion.
- WGNRR Africa’s digital activism including tweet chats around May 28 – Day of action for women’s health reached 32,481 accounts with 106,348 impressions while mobilization around September 28 reached 273,294 accounts with 5,196,029 impressions. Both campaigns have registered more than 20 offline activities in more than 15 African countries.



NETWORKING AND MOVEMENT STRENGTHENING

Networking has been one of the key strategies to strengthen movement around SRHR. WGNRR Africa has worked with partners to strengthen and amplify the voice in the struggle for SRHR for all in Africa. In 2019, this was achieved through:

- Establishment of two new alliances in Africa:
 - 1) Advancing SRHR of Women with Disabilities (ASWOD) Alliance in Tanzania, an alliance of DPOs, SRHR and Human Rights CSOs, health service providers, lawyers and members of the National Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities launched to support the implementation of “Advancing SRHR of women and girls with disabilities project” in Tanzania; and
 - 2) Strong, Harmonized and Empowered Advocacy Actions (SHE ACT) Alliance, an African Alliance launched in the margin of the Nairobi Summit on ICPD+25 by the leaders of grassroots SRHR and abortion right organizations from Africa to foster stronger collaboration and partnership among grassroots-led CSOs and activists, and between the alliance and regional global partner networks and platforms with the aim of amplifying the voice of grassroots in influencing the implementation of the ICPD PoA.

These alliances were platforms for mutual learning and sharing of knowledge and experiences in advancing SRHR across countries and contexts.
- WGNRR Africa has provided technical and financial support on a quarterly basis to members of CAMMAC to review their advocacy strategies to influence the domestication of Maputo protocol.
- 21 grassroots advocates for safe abortion and allies from 5 Africa, Asia and Latine America were brought together to share in-country learnings, experiences, best practices, challenges and strategies in influencing the fulfillment of abortion rights; and to influence the abortion agenda during the ICPD+25 summit in Nairobi/Kenya. This resulted into the establishment of SHE ACTs ALLIANCE.
- Signed two strategic MoUs with the Tanzania Parliamentarian’s Voice for Disability Rights (TPDVR)/Tanzania and Women’s Spaces Africa (WSA)/Kenya which resulted in submission of two joint proposals to AmplifyChange.
- WGNRR Africa networked with sister coalitions in Africa and has attended the 3rd annual members’ meeting of the Africa Coalition for Safe Abortion (ACSA) in Kampala/Uganda and at the MenEngage Alliance’s SRHR for All project kick off meeting in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia.
- WGNRR Africa was also a key member of the Tanzania Medicine Transparency Alliance (META) led by UMATI sharing learning and sharing knowledge and experiences on advocacy strategy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

The year 2019 has not ended without challenges. The key challenges faced during the reporting year were at contextual, operation and financial levels.

CONTEXTUAL

The constraining political context of Tanzania was not friendly to SRHR during the ended year. It was merely characterized by regressive statements, crackdowns, constraining regulations, etc... that have consolidated bureaucracy in state agents' offices and have increased threats and fears among SRHR actors impacting negatively the implementation of our different activities over the year.

OPERATIONAL

Operating in Tanzania has been challenged with so many constraining administrative procedures that have affected our work in 2019. We have gone through hard and costly processes of obtaining work and residence permits for our expatriates which resulted in placing one of our staff in Nairobi instead of working from Tanzania. Our staff team was also left by one of its members who left the organization toward the end of the year for personal reasons. This has left the burden of her task to the rest of the team, affecting thus some staff' work plans.

FINANCIAL

Although our funding has increased by 29% in 2019 comparatively to 2018, our funding landscape is still weak as the organization relies on a project based funding system and all its funds for 2019 were coming mostly from one Donor – AmplifyChange. MenEngage also came in with a small fund on a sub-granting model. Such a funding context does not promise sustainability of our actions and the gains obtained in the past three years. There is an acute need of a strong base of funds to ensure sustainability of the organization for the coming years.

A WORD TO OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

Dismantling systemic and structural barriers to SRHR in Africa, particularly from a reproductive justice approach and human right lens, will take time and needs an integral and inclusive approach and long-term ongoing support.

We thank all donors and partners, particularly AmpligChange and MenEngage, who have supported our work in 2019. Your financial and technical support was instrumental in achieving the milestones outlined in this report. It's our sincere hope that your commitment to SRHR for all will continue and that you will not hesitate to land us another hand of support in a sustainable way in a new future.

We would like to use this opportunity to reiterate our commitment to SRHR of marginalized groups, and that your financial and technical support is needed more than ever to achieve this. Please support us to sustain the gains obtained in 2019 and to implement new programmes for the fulfillment of unmet SRHR for all in Africa!

