Report of Activities in Engendering the Peace Process in Africa:
2000-2005
Table of Contents

Message from the Chair of the Executive Board
Message from the Executive Director
Vision
Mission
Strategies

FRONTLINE ADVOCACY
Solidarity Missions
Building an Agenda
Creation of a Platform
Women in Peace Negotiations
Transitional Period

CAPACITY BUILDING

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN PEACE: THE AFRICAN AGENDA
African Union
Other Regional Forums
Gender is My Agenda Campaign

MAINSTREAMING GENDER AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL
International Instruments/NGO Working Group on Peace
Working Group on Women, Peace and Security
UN Commission on the Status of Women
UN Commission on Human Rights
International Conferences

NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIP

PANAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development
First Phase: Preparatory Work
Second Phase: Launching of the Centre
Third Phase: Evaluation Study
Fourth Phase: Curriculum Development
Fifth Phase: Preparation

FAS Institutional
Executive and Advisory Board
International Secretariat
Dakar Regional Office
New York Liaison Office
Coordination and Communication

CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES: WAY FORWARD
Early Warning
Peacebuilding Phases
Monitoring and Evaluation

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Message from the Chair of the Executive Board

The conflicts that have raged in many parts of Africa over the years have torn apart the social fabric and weakened the solidarity and humanity characteristic of African society. The harmful effects of war on women, including their vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse, the massive displacement of populations resulting in disrupted families, the spread of pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and the culture of impunity, all collide and serve as a wake up call for action.

Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) believes that implementing plans and programmes both at the international and continental level is more than imperative to fully eliminate all forms of discrimination and gender-based violence against women. Surely, the effective implementation of legal and political instruments on the promotion and protection of women’s rights in Africa should allow us without contest, to reach our objectives of advancing women’s issues.


Created in 1996 further to the Dakar and Beijing Conferences, FAS aims to achieve the full attainment of women’s rights in a peaceful Africa. As an immediate response to the scourge of conflicts in Africa, FAS sought to bring new values of democratic governance by focusing on human rights, conflict resolution and the promotion of a culture of peace.

In so doing, the organization tries to raise awareness of the implementation of laws on women’s protection and promotion by putting in place networks of women leaders well versed in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa.

It is for this very reason that FAS considers it vital to implement plans of action and programmes adopted to re-establish and consolidate peace, particularly in favor of the most vulnerable populations, namely women.
The progress that has been achieved to date, most notably in the Mano River and Great Lakes regions, motivates FAS to persevere in its cause despite the formidable challenges to adequately addressing the needs of women, who continue to be victims of the African plague of injustice and impunity.

It is at this juncture that FAS finds itself, at once preparing to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its founding, its successes and accomplishments, while at the same time mindful of the challenges that lay ahead in advancing the status of women in all spheres of African society.

Mme Julienne Ondziel  
President of the Executive Board
Message from the Executive Director

In June 1996, African women leaders, lawyers, judges, academics and representatives of international organizations with a wealth of experience gathered in Geneva for a brainstorming session. We came together to respond to the needs of women in conflict. We were bound by the consensus that the peace initiatives of women and their best practices needed greater visibility and support to usher in a new era of conflict resolution with a human security agenda at its core. Durable peace—a peace that encompasses the human dimension of security—could not be achieved without the greater involvement and leadership by women. We were convinced that innovative action and institutional support was needed to bring forth new leadership, changed attitudes and new perspectives that would lead to peace and good governance.

Today, ten years after the first brainstorming session that brought FAS to life, we celebrate the wealth of successes it has accumulated over the years. Particularly, as part of its advocacy programme, FAS has been able to prioritize women’s needs and interests and build solidarity chains among different women’s groups. From mainstreaming gender into regional and international mechanisms to visiting refugee camps, FAS has worked hand in hand with local women’s peace groups to put into practice the universal concepts of human security, women and peace in the African context.

Recent developments in the women’s movement bring forth new hope and provide us with an international legal framework to better promote and advocate for a human security agenda. The Beijing Process, the seminal UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and most recently, the adoption of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa in July 2004 and entry into force of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in November 2005 testify to the dedication and commitment of our leaders to reinforcing the rights of women and mainstreaming the continent’s structures.

In recognizing our achievements over the years, I would like to salute the commitment of our members, particularly the members of the Advisory and Executive Board of FAS who have mobilized their resources and networks to support the women’s agenda for peace.

I also congratulate our partners with whose support we have succeeded in linking our programme for engendering peace process with similar initiatives at the regional and international level. It is only by nurturing deep partnerships that we can advance the cause of the African women’s peace movement.
Lastly, I would like to thank the staff of FAS in our three offices in Geneva, New York and Dakar and all the other volunteers and FAS champions who, by working with dedication and professionalism, have promoted and pushed forward FAS’s vision, mission and objectives.

Our study on the “Women’s Peace Movement in Africa: a study on 10 years of practice towards peace and security building in Africa” is a satisfying achievement as it allows us to revisit our founding principles, the case studies for lessons learnt, and the tools that allow us to monitor and evaluate our work.

To usher in a new era of durable peace and development in Africa, FAS is establishing a Centre for excellence in gender, peace and development. This Centre, the first of its kind, will provide training and mentoring to a new generation of young African women leaders and peacebuilders. The future of the African continent with greater prosperity and lasting peace is in all of our hands, and this bright future will only be achieved if women are an integral part of the solution.

Bineta Diop
Executive Director
**VISION**

*Engendering the peace process for the attainment of human security and durable peace in Africa.*

**MISSION**

- Promote and reinforce the critical role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa;
- Advocate for increased attention to the concerns of African women on issues of peace and security at the national, regional and international levels;
- Strengthen women’s leadership capacities for more effective participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and decision-making;
- Strengthen women’s influence in political processes and promote gender mainstreaming in peace and security programs at the national, regional and international level.

**STRATEGIES**

**Peace and solidarity mission**

FAS organizes missions of peace and evaluation to share experiences and evaluate the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in conflict-torn regions. FAS has conducted missions of peace in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

**Capacity Building**

- Conduct training workshops specifically adapted to address the needs of partners in reconciliation, civic education, conflict resolution, negotiation and leadership techniques;
- Develop advocacy platforms and favor the creation of networks and partners in these different programme areas.

**Democracy Promotion**

- Conduct workshops and training sessions in the area of civic education to promote the participation of women in the process of democratization.

**Advocacy**

- Work towards equity and gender equality in political institutions at the subregional and continental level;
- Ensure the full participation of women in the work of institutions at the subregional, regional and international level;
- Take measures to ensure that issues of gender equity and equality are addressed by the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations (UN) and their specialized institutions as well as by other international
organizations working in Africa;

• Advocate for the adoption of the “parity principle” within the AU and for its incorporation at the national level;

• Advocate for the adoption of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and for the translation of this text into law.
FRONTLINE ADVOCACY

Solidarity Missions

During a solidarity mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) organized in December 2001 and led by Ms Ruth Sando Perry, Ms Perry traveled to different regions of the country asking women she encountered if they had ever visited any of the camps for internally displaced people (IDPs). After they responded “no”, she urged them to return to their homes and collect food, clothes and any goods they could acquire to distribute in the camps and to sit and discuss with their fellow sisters. As a result of this gesture, women in the DRC began mobilizing themselves to give support to the women most affected by the conflict in their country—IDPs. It is through actions such as these that FAS spreads its message to people in the field.


Through its experience in numerous peace processes across Africa, FAS has recognized that achieving sustainable peace is a long and complex process that requires tenacity and long-term commitment. War is easier to create than it is to end due to the unfortunate fact that war sustains and nurtures itself over time. Innovative methods must be found whereby the end of war ushers in a culture of peace that sustains and nurtures itself over time. With this in mind, FAS has developed a multi-dimensional approach to enhancing women’s role in peace processes which takes advantage of their strengths, while at the same time recognizing the institutional and cultural obstacles that keep them from fully exercising these strengths.

Its long-term and rights-based approach to conflict resolution is carried out by solidarity missions to support women’s groups. The aim is to assess and evaluate the needs and priorities of women to acquire a clearer appreciation for the environment in which they operate and the strategies needed for their advancement. Through their very nature of solidarity, these missions also
encourage and give visibility to the efforts and initiatives of women engaged in alleviating the suffering of their communities.

In the past, FAS has organized solidarity missions in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ethiopia and Eritrea with high-level delegations. In addition to sensitizing different actors on the need to involve women in decision-making processes, these missions also provided opportunities to share experiences and practices on African women’s initiatives in conflict management and resolution.

Since then, building on past experiences, FAS organized several solidarity missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Led by Ms Ruth Sando Perry with the African Women’s Development Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD), and supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the mission of solidarity of December 2001 gave visibility to the grassroots initiatives of Congolese women. Its great achievement was helping Congolese women draft their agenda in preparation for the elections in the DRC.

In an effort to enhance the role of women from the DRC in the process of peace in their nation, in general, and to support their effective participation in the inter-Congolese Dialogue, in particular, a delegation composed of eminent African women members of the AWCPD as well as members of FAS, participated in a mission of peace and solidarity to the DRC in December 2001.

As a testament to its commitment to solidarity with the Congolese people, the mission visited camps of displaced persons, hospitals, the central prison and rebel-held territories in the east provinces of the DRC. It also met with the heads of rebel groups, representatives of the international community, ambassadors and the Head of State of the DRC, President Joseph Kabila. Bringing women from NGOs, CSOs and government together, the mission succeeded in gathering women from all facets of life to discuss and share their experiences.

In February 2004, a delegation of FAS members visited the three countries of the Great Lakes region, the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi in the context of the International Conference on the Great Lakes jointly organized by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). Serving as a follow-up to the different activities initiated in the Great Lakes region, the delegation visited FAS members and partners in the field including the Collectif des Associations et Organisations Féminines du Burundi (CAFOB) in Burundi and ProFemmes in Rwanda to assess the level of women’s participation in regional initiatives such as the AU/UN International Conference on the Great Lakes. It also allowed for an overall assessment of their needs and priorities. Consequently, FAS was able to support CAFOB’s preparation and participation in the AU/UN Conference.

Further building on its past successes, FAS has worked for the strengthened advocacy capacity of women’s groups at the national and subregional level to enable them to conduct peace missions. The advocacy network of the Mano River Women’s Peace Network (Marwopnet) benefited from training programmes and conflict resolution processes underway in the three countries of the subregion: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

Other advocacy networks included in these missions in support of Marwopnet also contributed to strengthening its capabilities, including the AWCPD, the Federation of African Women’s Peace
Networks (FERFAP) and the West African Women’s Association (WAWA). Since then, Marwopnet has become an instrumental force for change, advocating for the cessation of hostilities and the consolidation of peace in the subregion.

A Peace caravan of 350 women from Marwopnet and ECOWAS participating in the inauguration of Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as the first female President elect of Liberia, Monrovia, Liberia, January 2006.

The ambition behind the organization of these various solidarity missions is strengthening women and ultimately enabling them to put in place their strategies and build their conflict resolution agenda. FAS deliberately focuses on women as change agents rather than as victims. The gender-differentiated effects of conflict mean that women often have different experiences of war than men, which lead them to bring different concerns to conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes. Women’s strengths as peacebuilders also arise out of their existing communal roles and their extensive experience at practical problem solving and caring for real
people above abstract principles. Women are not mere victims of conflict but are key actors in knitting the shattered social fabric back together.

**Building an Agenda**

*THE NAIROBI DECLARATION*

**2002**

We, women of the Democratic Republic of Congo, representing the different components in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, that is, Government, the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), the political opposition and civil society, meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15th to 19th February 2002,

Considering of the fact that we represent 52 per cent of the Congolese population, which constitutes an inescapable force in the restoration and the maintenance of peace and the development of our country;

Considering the real impact of atrocities of the war on the entire population;

Considering women, children, the aged, the sick and the handicapped under their care, are the most vulnerable groups and victims of this war;

Profoundly pained by the blind violence against women and the girl child, such as rape, forced prostitution, abductions, mutilations, and the killings, looting, psychological and mental traumas, HIV/AIDS infections and sexually transmitted diseases;

Noting the tribal wars, massive dislocation of populations;

Deploiring the recruitment of child soldiers in the armed conflict and the difficulties related to their social and familial reintegration;

Considering the terrible consequences of the war on displaced and refugee populations, the growing number of orphans and children resulting from rape;

Convinced of our wish and determination to become active in peace-building in our country;

Convinced that, as mothers of the nation, we have a right, a duty and a responsibility towards the Congolese people;

Considering the innate capacities in mediation, as mothers and spouses, and as custodians of our traditions and our cultural values;

Reaffirming our total support for all initiatives geared to reestablishing total and sustainable peace in the DRC, and to its reconstruction and development;

Saluting the multidimensional efforts engaged by Congolese women themselves, the development partners and all those who have demonstrated their solidarity to these struggles (the African Women’s Peace Committee, Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), UNIFEM. the agencies of the United Nations, diplomatic missions);

Convinced that women's rights are human rights;

Considering about the under-representation of women in decision- making;
Convinced about the effective holding of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue;

We thus appeal to all parties involved in the Congo crisis to take account of the ardent wishes of Congolese women, expressed in this Declaration and the attached Action Plan;

We call for the immediate halt to the hostilities and the immediate and effective withdrawal of foreign troops from the Congolese territory;

We insist on the reunification of the country and respect for its territorial integrity;

We demand the application of good governance and the stability of the institutions;

We demand the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, ratified by the DRC, is mentioned in the preamble of the new constitution to be adopted by the DRC;

That access to land and resources for women be legislated and instituted;

That affirmative action, such as a 30 per cent quota recommended by the Beijing Platform of Action, be instituted as demonstration of good governance and democracy in order to guarantee significant representation of women in all instances of decision-making;

That gender-sensitivity be mainstreamed across the entire Inter-Congolese Dialogue and that its various components accept to take this into account.

We demand the institution of an emergency humanitarian programme, which should include women’s organizations at all levels of its implementation;

We demand the institution of an emergency humanitarian programme, which should include women’s organizations at all levels of its implementation;

We exhort all delegates to secure the reintegration and the rehabilitation of demobilized child soldiers, street children and orphans, and the care of women and girls victims of the atrocities described above;

We commit ourselves to address the priorities of women, children and other vulnerable groups in all points in the agenda of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, to ensure that there is no impunity for all criminal acts, and that rape is legislated as a crime against the humanity of women.

We ardently appeal to the international community to appropriately take charge of the Declaration and Action Plan of the women of the DRC, with budgets for its implementation.

We demand that the facilitator, His Excellency KETUMILE MASIRE, to incorporate the Declaration of Nairobi and the Action Plans of the Congolese women in the Agenda of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

Adopted in Nairobi: Tuesday, February 19, 2002
During their first visit with the facilitator of the Burundian Peace Talks in Arusha 1998, the women delegation present was asked the following question by the late President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere: “Are you Tutsi? Are you Hutu? If the answer (to both questions) is yes, then this is an incredible development in these negotiations, as this is the first time that a Tutsi and a Hutu have agreed on something here…”

Do women have an agenda? The question is often posed, even by women themselves, as it is usually rebel groups and militias armed with their weapons that are brought to negotiating tables, not women.

Women are often lumped together and thought of as a homogenous group. But they have different interests; they belong to different political parties and represent different ethnic groups and clans. Therefore, in order to work together effectively, these disparate groups of women need some form of third party intervention from a neutral and impartial mediator. Women’s groups often appeal to third parties to help them in this process so that they can overcome their differences, elaborate a common platform and present a united front.

The strategy of FAS is to assist in the process of building and solidifying the commonality of interests and needs amongst women, mobilizing them and providing the necessary conflict resolution tools. To be sure, despite its different causes and manifestations, conflict impacts all through its sheer destructiveness on the lives of communities.

More than anyone else, women can help bring a human rights based approach to conflict resolution. Durable peace must incorporate the human dimension of security, which focuses on issues crucial to people’s daily lives such as food, health, housing, education and employment. When they are organized, women can make a difference by bringing their human security agenda to negotiating tables. It is therefore essential that their priorities are identified through the creation of an agenda.

Under the facilitation of FAS, women in Burundi were able to come up with the Cape Town Declaration and the Déclaration de Arusha both of October 1998. These documents helped them to articulate their views during the negotiations and incorporate their needs into the country’s peace accord.

From its successful activities at the national level in the three countries of the Mano River region, FAS helped women in the subregion come up with a national plan of action that was presented and discussed in Abuja in 2000 and which led to the Abuja Declaration and Plan of Action adopted in 2000.

The process of creating the Marwopnet network gathered women leaders, representatives of the private sector and workers associations, UN agencies and various networks working on peace to make it as inclusive as possible. The mobilization and selection of representatives is key to
developing a consensual agenda as are the contributions of the networks and partners involved in similar agendas.

The Marwopnet Plan of Action, designed by all the participants in Abuja, aimed to engender the peace process in the Mano River Union area. It focused on peace mechanisms, security in the subregion, reconstruction and economic empowerment. With its common agenda in place, Marwopnet was subsequently instrumental in mainstreaming these issues in the Mano River Union and the agenda of ECOWAS as it was given observer status to its Summit meetings.

In the DRC, the developments of 2002 brought FAS to help the women in the provinces at the community level identify their issues that would later be discussed at the national level. Consultations were organized in the east and west provinces and culminated in the Nairobi Conference organized by FAS and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), supported by UNDP, AWCPD and the Governments of Switzerland and Canada and hosted by the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI). The meeting was attended by government officials, senators, ministers and parliamentarians and representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs), media and the private sector, totaling over 100 women.

The Nairobi Declaration and the Plan of Action were adopted with the help of FAS. Focusing on main issues of concern to Congolese women, the Nairobi Declaration was presented at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue of Sun City in 2002, during which women contributed to bringing mainstreaming issues into the peace accords.

FAS also participated in and contributed to the various meetings that helped formulate the Great Lakes women agenda as part of the AU/UN International Conference on the Great Lakes. Used as opportunities to share experiences, these included the Technical Meetings organized by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the UN in the Great Lakes region and UNIFEM and the Regional Gender Expert’s Strategy Workshop organized by the Gender Unit of the AU/UN Secretariat of the Great Lakes International Conference in 2004 and 2005.
Creation of a Platform

Putting in place an agenda must be developed as part of a long term and evolving process that is implemented at various stages. It must also be placed within the context of conflict to allow women to monitor, evaluate and assess conflict management, resolution and prevention strategies. It is therefore important to support grassroots women’s groups as they are the ones who give life to women’s agendas.

The creation of the Marwopnet platform was able to strengthen the network’s contribution to peace processes in the subregion. FAS supported the creation of the network up to the organization of teambuilding workshops and the transformation of their Plan of Action into a real programme of activities.

Marwopnet’s platform was created at its General Assembly meeting in Monrovia, Liberia in 2004 which elected its bureau and adopted its Constitution, which was later renewed at the Board meeting of 2005 in Guinea. The creation of its platform began at a meeting at the ECOWAS Secretariat which was facilitated by the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF). Marwopnet moved to open its Secretariat, its three national chapters and branches at the grassroots levels, and implement its Plan of Action and expand its work to reach out to local communities.

The delegates from the different provinces of the DRC at the setting up of the Cadre Permanent de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, Kinshasa, DRC, January 2006.

In the Great Lakes region, the creation of a platform first began in Burundi and was followed through with the same process in the DRC. In the DRC, under the initiative of Women as Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA) and FAS, the work of women’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs) supported the creation of the CAUCUS first established at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue of Sun City in 2002 as a mechanism to channel and amplify women’s voices. The Congolese women organized a CAUCUS to enable them to strategize, reflect and
analyze the issues discussed in the various commissions comprising the Dialogue. The CAUCUS has since been institutionalized as an NGO.

The CAUCUS became a space to discuss and develop strategies for effectively impacting the Dialogue, as well as ways to reach out to the public, through the national and international press, to raise awareness of the important role of women in the peace negotiations.

Follow up action organized by FAS and UNIFEM in 2004 with the support of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF) and the Ford Foundation, helped Congolese women to further identify priority needs such as the upcoming elections, create a national platform called the Cadre Permanent de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, that represented women branches from eleven provinces and elect their own national bureau and provincial branches.

**Women in Peace Negotiations**

FAS became involved in the DRC building on past experiences in Burundi where the determination of the women in a collective advocacy campaign and the support they received from FAS, UNIFEM and AWCPD resulted in the lifting of the embargo against Burundi.

In the DRC, FAS worked to support the women’s CAUCUS to obtain a greater number of official seats within the Inter-Congolese Dialogue by supporting its mobilization. In Sun City, the CAUCUS was able to organize press briefings and interviews that were disseminated in the country. They appealed to the women in the DRC at home for their support, demonstrating and mobilizing across the country. They appealed to the belligerents to negotiate, and they did not relent until the negotiations were completed. Among the most effective of their interventions was that made on International Women’s Day, March 8, 2002 during which they began their celebration by attending the Dialogue’s Plenary Session, at which they represented 30% of participants, all wearing the same dress.

With the support of FAS and UNIFEM, the women of the Congo were able to mainstream their concerns into the final documents of the peace accords, restoring the integrity of the DRC, and securing the removal of external forces and the protection of women’s rights.

Throughout the Dialogue, the CAUCUS held discussions with the various parties in the negotiations and with the negotiating team and played a mediating role among the various groups.

In the Mano River Union area and at the peak of the crisis between Guinea and Liberia just as the international community was pulling out of the region, the women of Marwopnet took the lead. Determined in their efforts to de-escalate the conflict, the women decided to attempt meetings with the Heads of State of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

Marwopnet succeeded in bringing the leaders back to the negotiation table by convincing them to meet at a three day summit in Rabat, Morocco in March 2002. This Herculean effort
demonstrated the determination and resourcefulness of Marwopnet members as there was previously a virtual deadlock in negotiations between the parties.

Ms Theresa-Leigh Sherman, President of Marwopnet at the signing of the Peace Accords, Akosombo, Ghana, June 2003.

In honor of its work in the Mano River region, the UN Secretary General, his Special Representative and the Security Council have publicly recognized the contributions of MARWOPNET and in December 2003 the network was awarded the UN Prize in the field of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly.

FAS also supported a delegation of women from Marwopnet Liberia during the June 2003 Akosombo Talks during which the leader of the delegation, Ms Theresa Leigh-Sherman, signed the peace accords as a witness. This subsequently brought the transitional government and transitional peace accord into fruition.

**Transitional Period**

It is important to accompany women in their transitional period and lend support to their causes and the democratization of their countries. With their boundless creativity, innovation, sensitivity and sense of justice, women can play an important role in the success of peace processes. In fact, they are possibly in the best position to mitigate conflicts and make peace. Indeed, the Secretary General of the UN in a statement to the UN Security Council meeting on Women, Peace and Security of 24 October 2000, declared that “women are better equipped than men to prevent or
resolve” conflicts. Yet their role and potential contribution to durable peace has yet to be fully recognised. The proportion of women involved in negotiations for the prevention or resolution of conflict is alarmingly low, even though women play a significant role in the reconstruction and transformation of war-torn areas.

Everything is in turmoil at the point of conflict transformation—past systems and structures are defunct and important decisions that will deeply affect the trajectory of the country are being made. It is vital that women’s voices are incorporated and championed throughout these processes—from the peace negotiation table to the revitalization of the economy. Given that social change requires both policy changes and attitudinal shifts, FAS and its partner organisations maintain a two-pronged approach. One aspect is to ensure women’s effective participation as leaders in their communities, countries, regions and continent. Women have been left out of decision-making structures in Africa for far too long. FAS also works towards gender mainstreaming so that gender issues are recognized and addressed when issues such as health, employment, education and human rights are tackled.

Thus there is a need to identify and push forward women leaders in war torn countries to allow them to participate effectively in transitional mechanisms of governance.

After the Akosombo Talks of June 2003, Liberian women formed part of the National Transitional Government of Liberia as per the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). Three women headed five of the newly created commissions including the Commission on Good Governance, Contracts and Monopolies and Elections; there were three female ministers out of the twenty-one member Cabinet; and four of the seventy-six members of the legislature were women.

FAS has helped bring visibility to the skills and competencies of women by organizing training workshops on leadership and compiling their biographies as well as increasing the awareness of women in UN fora including in the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights to lobby for the continued support of the international community for their democratic processes.

In 1997, it conducted an election observer mission in Liberia designed to assist the electoral reconstruction of the country. Carried out in four phases, the mission ensued from a training programme on civic education and preceded an evaluation programme on the promotion of gender issues in government policies and programmes.

Together with Marwopnet, an elections observation mission was organized for the national elections in Liberia in October 2005, which saw the appointment of Liberia’s and Africa’s first

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1 Speaking to the Security Council, UN Secretary General Kofi Anan said, “But women, who know the price of conflict so well, are also often better equipped than men to prevent or resolve it.” (United Nations Press Release SG/SM/7598, 24 October 2000).
female Head of State with the election of Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as President. Advocacy activities on women’s leadership were undertaken in Geneva by FAS and other partners.

H.E. Mrs Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia at the AU Summit meeting Khartoum, Sudan, January 2006.

The transitional period of the DRC saw the principle of gender parity enshrined in the country’s Constitution. As well, there were sixty women in the 560 transitional National Assembly for a total of 60% and three senators in the 120 member Senate. Unfortunately, the country’s electoral law does not refer to gender parity unlike in Rwanda whose affirmative action law brought 50% of women to parliament.
CAPACITY BUILDING

FAS is also active in organizing capacity building activities as a tool for women leaders to strengthen their advocacy role. With the support of NPI and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes ACCORD, FAS regularly carries out training programmes and workshops on leadership, conflict resolution, team building, and advocacy as well as workshops on the articulation of an agenda for peace and on the implementation of programmes.

Much work has gone into building the capacity and strengthening the institution of Marwopnet through numerous team-building workshops including two Marwopnet training activities in Liberia and two in Sierra Leone. FAS has also supported two of Marwopnet’s Board Meetings, in June 2004 and July 2005.

In the Great Lakes region, FAS helped CAFOB consolidate its involvement in Burundi’s democratization through the organization of advocacy missions and training workshops. It also funded CAFOB’s preparation and participation in the AU/UN International Conference on the Great Lakes in 2004.

Following its training in Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone, on the DRC, FAS organized three different workshops in Kinshasa, Bukavu/Goma, and Nairobi to help women identify their priority areas in preparation for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue at Sun City.

Other capacity building activities involve the building of networks among women to strengthen their capacities as a group and enable them to impact decision-making processes and institutional changes in international, regional and national bodies. In this regard, FAS has helped link Marwopnet with partners including UN agencies and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) during meetings held in Liberia in 2005.

The primary objective of FAS’s Great Lakes regional project is to develop a base of women leaders in the region who can effectively participate in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and create a subregional platform on which a lasting programme can be built.

Further to an institutionalization mission led by FAS’s external consultant in February 2006, the DRC now boasts the Cadre Permanent de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, a group that can advocate for women’s issues in the DRC’s democratization processes and set in motion the formation of a regional women’s network in the Great Lakes.
The setting up of the Cadre Permanent de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, Kinshasa, DRC, January 2006. From left to right: the UNDP Representative, Ms Augusta Angelucci, the former President of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ms Mariam Mukanda, the Minister of Women and Family of the DRC (CONDIFFA), H.E. Ms Faida Mwangilwa, the Executive Director of FAS, Ms Bineta Diop, the Representative of the AU, Ms Yetunde Teriba and the Gender Advisor of UNIFEM, DRC, Ms Miranda Tabifor.

Rendering a present to Ms Aminata Mbengue Ndiayen (left), FAS external Consultant by the newly elected President of the Cadre Permanent de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, Ms Rose Mutombo; seated in the middle, the former President of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ms Mariam Mukanda, Kinshasa, DRC, January 2006.

Over the course of the last few years, FAS has organised six workshop and training activities in the Mano River region which have included the participation of a total of approximately 700 participants. In the DRC, seven training workshops were held gathering at least 1000 people. In Burundi, forty civil society representatives convened for a workshop and training exercise led by FAS.

With regard to the regional mainstreaming agenda and the Consultative Meetings organized on the margin of AU Summit meetings, seven training workshops were held with a total of over 500 participants.

The Gender Forum and Award, events organized within the framework of the PanAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development both gathered 1300 people.
At the international level, through its involvement in the work of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the NGO Working Group on Peace in Geneva and the Working Group on Women, Peace and Security in New York, FAS organized approximately three workshop and panels per year which gathered at least 100 participants each. Thus, over the last six years, not less than 1800 have attended the training workshops.
MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN PEACE: THE AFRICAN AGENDA

African Union

Just as FAS works to build the capacity of women for advocacy, it is equally important that these women penetrate institutional systems at the regional level to push the African women’s gender agenda forward.

FAS first began working with AWCPD to ensure gendered policies and programmes formed part of the work of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). During the organization’s transition into the AU, and through the AWCPD, FAS campaigned for the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming programmes in its work, the overall development of a gender mainstreaming strategy at the regional level and the effective participation of women in the new organs. Through its observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR), FAS drafted and advocated for the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

The OAU’s transformation to the AU provided an excellent opportunity to initiate a new agenda. The AU’s vision specifically addresses building partnerships between governments and civil society, promoting solidarity, accelerating socio-economic development and focusing on peace, security and stability. From the very inception of the AU, FAS committed to seize the moment by pushing forward the “gender agenda” immediately so that it could become deeply integrated into the AU and, thereby, be transmitted to member States as a central priority. The AWCPD, with its position of coming from the OAU structure, was an ideal entry-point for FAS to enter the halls of the AU and have the voice of the African women’s movement heard at the highest levels. The women’s delegation met with key actors to seize the opportunity of the transitional process to advocate for the greater inclusion of women in AU policies, programmes and organs.

In 2002 prior to the AU Summit Meeting in Durban, FAS led a process that included African networks involved in gender issues to push forth an agenda to increase the inclusion of women in decision making processes. These efforts resulted in the annual organization of Consultative Meetings on Gender Mainstreaming in the AU in preparation for AU Summit meetings and made possible with the assistance of the Government of the Netherlands.

Organized in Durban June 2002 and facilitated by ACCORD, the 1st Consultative Meeting saw the adoption of the Durban Declaration on Mainstreaming Gender and Women’s Effective Participation in the AU. This key document paved the way for the adoption of the principle of gender parity and the creation the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate located at the Office of the Chairperson.
The 2nd Consultative Meeting in Dakar April 2003 adopted the Dakar Strategy. As a follow up to the Durban Declaration, this strategic planning conference brought together the network created in Durban in order to devise strategies for the institutionalization of a coordinating mechanism to further the goals of the gender mainstreaming campaign. The Dakar Strategy was subsequently presented to President Wade, the Head of State of Senegal, in a high level women advocacy mission.

The 3rd Consultative Meeting held in Maputo June 2003 and led by Ms Graça Machel, President of the Foundation for Community Development, adopted the Maputo Declaration. The meeting also lobbied for the election of five female AU Commissioners out of ten and furthered the advancement of women’s rights in Africa through the adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.
The 4th Consultative Meeting in Addis June 2004 adopted the *African Women’s Contribution to the Declaration on Mainstreaming Gender in the African Union*. Providing women the opportunity to perfect their strategies for the AU Heads of State Gender Debate, the meeting was instrumental in the subsequent adoption of the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

The 5th Consultative Meeting in Abuja January 2005, co-organized by the ALF, adopted the *Abuja Recommendations for Civil Society Monitoring and Evaluation of the Solemn Declaration* whose deliberations initiated discussions on the Gender is My Agenda Campaign, a campaign aimed at coordinating the monitoring of States’ implementation of the Declaration.

At the 6th Consultative Meeting in Tripoli July 2005, Women Ministers adopted the *Tripoli Commitment* and launched the *Gender is My Agenda Campaign*. The meeting resulted in agreement on a framework of monitoring implementation of the Solemn Declaration through the drafting and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among networks present.

The 7th Consultative Meeting in Dakar October 2005 adopted the *Dakar Strategic Partnership*. Supported by FAS and the Minister of Women of the Government of Senegal, the meeting finalized the civil society framework for monitoring and evaluating the Declaration and obtained a solemn commitment from AU States to involve civil society organizations in monitoring processes.

### Other Regional Forums

Other seminal activities that occurred at the regional level include the inauguration of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) and the election of Ms Gertrude Mongella, a member of FAS, as its President. As well, at least two women from each delegation were also elected at the inaugural event in Addis Ababa, March 2004 which FAS attended.

One year later, FAS played a role in the launching of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) of the AU in March 2005 and the election of Africa’s first women Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Wangari Maathai, as its President.

As well, significant progress has been made over the years in mainstreaming gender in the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). FAS attended the first meeting of NEPAD to organize the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in Johannesburg, South Africa in July 2005, particularly at the national level. The APRM was launched with the election of Ms Marie Angelique Savane as its Chair.

Just as the AU created a Women, Gender and Development Directorate with Ms Winnie Byanyima as its Director, NEPAD opened its Gender and CSOs Unit headed by Ms Litha Musyimi-Ogana.
A Panel of the Wise was also launched with the participation of eminent personalities including Ms Graça Machel.

![NEPAD banner at the African Gender Award, Dakar, Senegal, May 2005.](image)

NEPAD also launched the Gender Task Force at its first meeting. As a member of the NEPAD Task Force, FAS actively participated in the session with the mandate of following up on the integration of gender in NEPAD’s programmes in the Gender and Peace cluster.

As well, while the decision of the Chairperson of the AU Commission to transform the AWCPD into the AU Women’s Committee had been taken, it was also welcomed by Heads of State in the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. FAS supported the evaluation of the AWCDP, an initiative funded by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women and the Government of the Netherlands.

FAS was invited to participate in the discussions of a follow up meeting to the 6th Consultative Meeting held with women parliamentarians in Sirte, Libya in September 2005 which linked PAP with women members of the PAP Caucus.

**Gender is My Agenda Campaign**

Further to the 6th Consultative Meetings on Gender Mainstreaming in the AU organized in Tripoli July 2005, African women’s groups put in place a campaign to ensure full implementation of the Solemn Declaration. As a testament to their commitment to the African women’s movement, CSOs agreed to divide the provisions of the Declaration into regional and thematic clusters whose implementation they are designated to monitor. As the initiator of the process, FAS was asked to lead the coordination of the Campaign.

This year will mark the *Gender is My Agenda* Campaign designed to ensure proper implementation of the gender mainstreaming agenda at the regional level.
Gender is My Agenda Campaign

**Thematic Focal Points:**

**Governance:** Africa Leadership Forum (ALF)

**Peace and Security:** Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)

**Human Rights:** Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF); African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRs)

**Health:** the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA); the Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA)

**Education:** Forum for Africa Women Educationalists (FAWE)

**Economic Empowerment:** African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF)

**Regional Focal Points:**

**Western Africa:** West African Women Association (WAWA)

**Northern Africa:** Tunisian Mothers’ Association (TMA)

**Southern Africa:** Foundation for Community Development (FDC)

**Eastern Africa:** Advocacy for Women in Africa (AWA)

**Central Africa:** Association de Luttre contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes (ACOLVF)

**Other organizations participating in the campaign:**

ABANTU for Development; Akina Mama Wa Africa; African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET); Centre for Human Rights – University of Pretoria; Equality Now; Comité National Femmes et Développement (CONAFED); Mano River Women’s Peace Network (MARWOPNET); Commission on Gender Equality (CGE); Pan African Movement; Collectif des associations et Organisations Féminines du Burundi (CAFOB); REPERES; Egyptian Business Women Association (EBWA); Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD); Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI); Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC); Association Nationale de Soutien aux Enfants en Difficulté en Institution (ANSEDI); Women’s Society of Alfateh University, Tripoli.
MAINSTREAMING GENDER AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

FAS’s engagement at the international level complements its regional advocacy programme on peace, development and women’s rights. Its activities are aimed at linking the concerns of African women with the international agenda on peace and realizing the gains of the African women’s peace movement at the international level.

Through the location of its International Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland and its Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), FAS is well placed to participate in the various international mechanisms on women’s rights. It has been at the forefront advocating for the creation and adoption of instruments guaranteeing their rights and development, including the Millennium Development Goals and UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

International Instruments

NGO Working Group on Peace

As the convener of the Geneva NGO Working Group on Peace, FAS promotes implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the Millennium Development Goals (2000) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), the monitoring of which it contributes to through its position as chair of the Working Group, which is part of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW).

FAS has lobbied for the adoption of the seminal Security Council Resolution1325 by contributing its experiences of the effects of war on women in the Mano River and Great Lakes regions to the Security Council debate on Women, Peace and Security that led its adoption.

Over the years, it has participated in the twenty-three meetings organized by the Working Group since 2000 to study questions on gender and peace related to Security Council Resolution 1325 and CEDAW, arranged annual March 8 celebration events with Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) aimed at linking with the Special Rapporteur on Women’s Human Rights, organized panels during the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and drafted joint statements for the CHR and its Sub-Commission.

Through the Working Group on Peace, a member and substantive Committee of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CONGO), FAS also brings international awareness to the plight and needs of African women. CONGO is an independent, international, not-for-profit membership association of NGOs that facilitates the participation of NGOs in UN debates and decisions. FAS regularly participates in the meetings of
the CONGO. FAS has attended its General Assembly Meetings organized in Vienna and Geneva and its Board meetings in New York and Geneva.

**Working Group on Women, Peace and Security**

FAS also participates, as a member, in the meetings of the Working Group on Women, Peace and Security of New York which monitors Resolution 1325. The Working Group is composed of the Hague Appeal for Peace, International Alert, Women’s Action for New Directions, Women’s Division, General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Amnesty International, Boston Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, International Women’s Tribune Centre, Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children and Women’s Environment and Development Organization. On the occasion of the Working Group’s anniversary event of Resolution 1325, the FAS New York Representative participated and shared experiences on peace processes in the Mano River and Great Lakes regions and its approach for better implementation of the Resolution. As well, FAS contributed to the compilation of a booklet on the occasion of the anniversary event of the Resolution.

![Training session on Resolution 1325](image)

*Training session on Resolution 1325 organized by the New York Working Group on Women, Peace and Security during the 50th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2006.*

**UN Commission on the Status of Women**

FAS also attends the annual sessions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) whose main activities are the monitoring of the Beijing +10 process. The CSW organizes panels, training and conferences with the Working Group in Geneva and contributes to debates on peace. CSW is an important annual opportunity for FAS to connect with women’s organizations from around the world as well as to be heard by leading decision-makers in governments and UN bodies. FAS regularly sponsors its members to attend so that they can share their experiences with the hundreds of other NGOs who attend CSW. This ensures that best practices are disseminated to a wide international audience. FAS takes every opportunity to
advocate for the needs of African women as well as greater implementation of the Solemn Declaration. It has lobbied for and had the rare opportunity to address the entire Assembly in plenary sessions, where the FAS Executive Director and FAS partners have given greater visibility to the on-ground reality, struggles and triumphs of women living in conflict zones in Africa.

In its March 2004 session, the CSW Division on the Advancement of Women (DAW) highlighted the case of Marwopnet as an effective network for the advancement of peace in the Mano River region and invited FAS to participate in its meeting.

From left to right: Ms Johanna Foster, Gender Advisor, UN Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Ms Rosalie Lo, FAS Programme Officer at the Dakar Office and Mr Papa Ndaw, FAS Representative in New York at a panel on “Empowering African Women in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding” organized during the Fiftieth Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2006.

**UN Commission on Human Rights**

It further participates in the regular sessions of the UN Commission on the Human Rights (CHR) as well as its Sub-Commission for the Promotion of Human Rights. These sessions allow FAS to co-organize events where African women working in conflict resolution and peacebuilding testify to the reality of what is happening in their countries and communities. In 2005 and in partnership with the Women International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), FAS organized a Panel to share experiences and report on human rights violations. It is vital that women’s voices are heard at these high-level international venues where the dialogue is too often dominated by diplomats and government officials.

Related to this is FAS’s regular interaction and work with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women.

**International Conferences**
At the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa in 2001, FAS promoted the role of African women and undertook high level advocacy activities including at the AU Summit in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2001 to lobby for the adoption, ratification and implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

As an NGO working to strengthen women’s participation in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa, FAS recognizes the need for women’s proficiency in communication technology as a tool for networking and sharing of information. FAS actively participates in the preparatory Committees and Annual Meetings of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) organized by the UN. Its involvement in the WSIS process over the years is aimed at lobbying for African women’s rights in the information society.

FAS organized a preparatory meeting in Dakar prior to the WSIS meeting to bring together African women’s position and to advocate for the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. To further advance the Protocol, FAS attended meetings organized by the Tunisian Mothers’ Association (TMA).

The first part of the Summit meeting was held in Geneva in February 2005 and the second in November in Tunis during which FAS co-organized events with CONGO and the NGOCSW to highlight gender and peace issues in WSIS activities.
The development of strong networking relations with civil society organizations implicated in women’s issues is key to the work of FAS. Networking with organizations and institutions that share FAS’s goals in furthering the African women’s peace movement ensures the maximum use of resources, avoidance of duplication and overlap and allows for every opportunity for action to be seized.

As well, FAS relies on strong partnerships with institutions and their programmes involved in peacebuilding, reconstruction and development to strengthen its agenda for the benefit of women. Strategic partnerships have been fostered with stakeholders, including policy makers, implementers within governments and UN agencies including the Regional Gender Programme of UNDP.

Over the years, the organization has been able to amplify its networks and partnerships by attending meetings and events in support of women’s issues for peace. It has also partnered with a substantial network of women’s civil society organizations in order to move forward the gender mainstreaming agenda on the African continent, as part of the Gender is My Agenda Campaign.
In addition to the NGOs comprising the NGO Working Group on Peace in Geneva, the Working Group on Women, Peace and Security in New York and the organizations that form part of its membership, associate membership and partners within the Gender is My Agenda Campaign, FAS works with the following main networks and partners:


Another significant partnership recently established by FAS is the PanAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development. Created with the purpose of improving FAS’s institutionalization and financial autonomy, the Centre will allow FAS to reinforce its programme for capacity development and advocacy in support of women’s issues while also expanding knowledge to a new generation of thinkers.

Further to the generous support and commitment of various partners, including UNDP and the Government of Senegal which provided the land for its premises, the Centre was established to provide advanced training and research in peacebuilding and development issues with an emphasis on gender.

Using FAS’s existing partnerships with other institutions, the Centre’s programmes are targeted at key peacebuilding practitioners, women entrepreneurs and social development actors from all parts of Africa. Participants are recruited from governments, inter-governmental organisations, NGOs and civil society.

The Centre’s training modules focus on three programmatic areas to be developed in partnership with different academic and training institutes. The first programme in “Gender and Peacebuilding” is being developed in partnership with the UN affiliated University for Peace (UPEACE). The second programme is in “Leadership and Governance” and the third in “Economic Empowerment of Women and Development”.

**PANAFRICAN CENTRE FOR GENDER, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**
First Phase: Preparatory Work

The preparatory work for the Centre saw the creation of a Coordinating Committee composed of FAS members and partners, delegates from the AU and the UN, officials from the Senegalese Government and representatives from the private sector.

Tasked with examining the Centre project, the Coordinating Committee devised best strategies for its implementation, developed strategies for fundraising and partnership and provided advice on the construction and design of the programmes. Since its creation, the Coordinating Committee has met four times.

The preparatory phase also designed the Centre’s Business Plan, Project Proposal and Resource Mobilisation further to the assistance provided by UNDP, UNFPA, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

The Centre has also received technical assistance from the Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy of UNITAR in Geneva on issues related to its conceptualisation and development as well as the implementation of its programmes.

List of the Members of the Coordinating Committee for the PanAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development

- **Mr. Paulo Gomes**, World Bank Executive Administrator;
- **Mr. Abdoulie Janneh**, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa;
Second Phase: Launching of the Centre

In May 2005, FAS organized the Forum on Dialogue between Arab Women on Economic and Political Issues in partnership with the Arab International Women’s Forum in Dakar, Senegal. Held in connection with the African Gender Award, the forum provided a platform for the exchange of ideas and experiences between women from Africa and other regions of the world.

The event was attended by eminent personalities including the First Lady of the Republic of Senegal, the Vice President of Republic of the Gambia, the First Lady of the Republic of Egypt, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa and the President of the PAP. In addition over 300 other participants attended the forum, chief among them Arab CSOs and FAS members, partners and friends from different parts of the world.

• General Khalil Fall, Chef d’Etat Major Général des Forces Armées du Senegal;
• Mr. Germain Baricako, Secretary of ACHPR;
• Mr. Tim Muruthi, Programme Officer, UNITAR;
• Mr. Hassan Ba, Advisor to the President of the Republic of Senegal;
• Mr. Cheikh Mbacké Kébé, Administratore-Director, Holding Kébé S.A. Investissement;
• Mr. Mansour Kama, President, la Confédération Nationale des Employeurs du Sénégal;
• Ms Eugénie Aw, Gender Specialist; Director of Centre d’études des sciences et techniques de l’information (CESTI);
• Ms Awa Marie Coll-Seck, former Minister of Health, Senegal.
From left to right: H.E. Vice President of the Gambia, Ms Isatou Njie Said, Mrs Wade, First Lady of Senegal and H.E. Dr Mongella, President of the PAP, and the Foreign Minister of South Africa, H.E. Ms Dlamini Zuma at the African Gender Forum, Dakar, Senegal, May 2005.
Organized on the heels of the forum, the *African Gender Award* was convened to award individuals for their contributions to gender issues. A biennial gathering to be next launched in 2007, the 2005 inaugural edition of the event awarded Presidents Wade and Mbeki of Senegal and South Africa respectively in honor of their initiatives to the gender agenda.

The award forum was attended by over 1300 participants including the President of the Republic of Senegal and other members of the Government of Senegal, the First Lady of Senegal, the Vice President of the Republic of the Gambia and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa.

As well, the forum was used to officially launch the PanAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development with the laying of its first stone.
Third Phase: Evaluation Study

FAS recently entrusted four external consultants with expertise in peace and security issues to conduct field research in FAS’s priority areas as part of its study on “Women’s Peace Movement in Africa: a study on 10 years of practice towards peace and security building in Africa”.

The aim of the study is to examine FAS’s ten years of practice in the larger African women’s peace movement and evaluate its achievements and constraints.

The four components of the study elaborated by the consultants are conceptual analyses; case studies on the countries visited; the development of a leadership bank; and the formulation of impact assessment evaluation tools. Recently returned from their field missions, the consultants are currently preparing their reports.

Debriefing on the study on Women’s Peace Movement in Africa; a Study on 10 years of practice towards peace and security building in Africa with the consultants and FAS staff at the FAS Regional Office in Dakar, Senegal, February 2006.

The findings of the study will be used as the basis for the training modules of the PanAfrican Centre, with the case studies used to illustrate concepts to be developed by the Centre. As well, the work submitted by the consultant responsible for impact assessment and evaluation will permit the Centre to better target the needs and expectations of women with a view to providing them with appropriate training.

Fourth Phase: Curriculum Development

To further their partnership in the development of the programme on Gender and Peacebuilding, FAS and UPEACE signed an MOU in November 2005.
Fifth Phase: Preparation

FAS is preparing a sequence of activities to move the agenda of the Centre and its programmes forward. This includes the organization of a Seminar on the Harmonization of Curriculum by FAS and UPEACE in March 2006 in Dakar to develop a common understanding of the curriculum and provide an overview of the joint programme. As well, FAS will focus on the mobilization of the Centre’s programmes to encourage the participation of African women in its different programme modules. A subsequent activity will be to test the Centre’s final curriculum in several workshops prior to the launching of its first course at the end of 2006. The long term ambition of the Centre is to create a MA degree programme in partnership with UPEACE in Gender and Peacebuilding.
FAS INSTITUTIONAL

The FAS team is assisted in its work through the dedication and commitment of its staff, members of both its Executive and Advisory Boards and the commonality of vision of its members and partner institutions. Its Members and associate Members represent twenty-seven different countries.

Executive and Advisory Board

FAS has an Executive Board of eight members and an Advisory Board of seven members.

Selected in accordance to their outstanding achievements in the promotion of peace and the attainment of women’s rights in Africa, FAS Board members contribute voluntarily to the implementation of FAS’s programmes in the field and represent FAS at events essential for the fulfillment of its objectives.

FAS’s Executive Board and Advisory Board members meet at a General Assembly every three years in a plenary session where Board members are nominated and general policies and activities are reviewed and planned. The previous General Assembly meeting took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2000. The most recent meeting of the Board convened in May 2005.

FAS members at the brainstorming session, Geneva, Switzerland, 1996.
Current Members of the Advisory Board

**Mrs. Graça Simbine Machel** (Mozambique), President of the Foundation for Community Development;

**Mrs. Lisbet Palme** (Sweden), Former member of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child;

**Mrs. Ruth Sando Perry** (Liberia), Former President of Liberia;

**His Excellency Ambassador Mohammed Sahoun** (Algeria), Special Representative of the Secretary General for Africa, UN;

**His Excellency Amadou Toumani Touré** (Mali), President of the Republic of Mali;

**Mrs. Elisabeth Rehn** (Finland), Former Finnish Minister of Defense, Former Secretary-General of the UN Special Representative of the UN in Bosnia-Herzegovina;

**Mrs. Vivian Lowery Derryck** (USA), Senior Vice President and Director of Public-Private Partnership at the Academy for Educational Development.

Current Members of the Executive Board

**Mrs. Shirin Aumeeruddy-Cziffra** (Mauritius), Ombuds-person for the Rights of the Child;

**Mrs. Marie-Louise Baricako** (Burundi), International War Crimes Tribunal of Rwanda, Arusha;

**Mrs. Julienne Ondziel** (Congo), Lawyer, Former Special Rapporteur on the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women;

**Mrs. Thandi Orleyn** (South Africa), Lawyer, Former National Director of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), Director, Routledge-Modise Attorneys;

**Mrs. Yasmine Yusu-Sheriff** (Sierra Leone), Lawyer, Former Executive Secretary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone;

**Mrs. Esi Sutherland-Addy** (Ghana), Research Fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana;

**Mr. Hassan Ba**. (Senegal), Advisor to the President of the Republic of Senegal, Treasurer;
Mrs. Bineta Diop (Senegal), Founder and Executive Director of FAS, Former Programme Coordinator of International Commission of Jurists.

International Secretariat

The International Secretariat, based in Geneva, Switzerland, coordinates FAS’s programmes and serves as a contact point for international organizations, NGOs and donor agencies. The Secretariat is based in Geneva to facilitate efforts in resource mobilization and maximize the visibility of African women’s initiatives at the international level.

The staff at the Secretariat consists of the Executive Director, a Coordination Officer, a part time Accountant and the following posts: Administration and Finance; Advocacy and Networking; Documentation, Information and Communication; Fundraising and Partnership; Monitoring and Evaluation; a Gender Award/Forum focal point, and interns, volunteers and external employees.

FAS staff at the International Secretariat, Geneva, Switzerland.

FAS’s International Secretariat is assisted by the Geneva Task Force, a group of professionals experienced in FAS’s priority areas. First set up further to a FAS Team Building Workshop, the Task Force builds FAS’s institutional support by providing input and advice on programmatic and strategic direction. Many team-building workshops have been held with the Task Force since its creation in January 2004.

Members of the Geneva Task Force

Mr. Pape Diouf, Professor, Institut Universitaire d’Etudes du Développement, Geneva;
Dakar Regional Office

FAS’s Regional Office in Dakar, Senegal was established in May 2003 and operational by March 2005. Following the signing of an agreement with the Government of Senegal providing it with its premises, the Dakar Office has been able to strengthen its institutional support including assuming an increasing amount of operational activities transferred from the Secretariat. The Office has successfully organized the four meetings of the Coordinating Committee and the inaugural Gender Award and Forum events. In addition, the Dakar team established and launched the PanAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development.
FAS staff at the Regional Office, Dakar, Senegal.

The Regional Office consists of a Programme Officer, an Information and Communication Officer, an Administration and Finance Officer, a Coordination Officer, a Coordinator for the PanAfrican Centre, an Administrative Support Officer and other support staff and interns.

**New York Liaison Office**

FAS’s Liaison Office in New York was first set up in late 2004 to provide FAS with permanent representation in New York and at the deliberations of the organs and agencies of the UN system. The New York Office has been located since March 2005 in close proximity to the UN and NGOs working in the same field, in the Church Centre of the United Nations Plaza.

**Coordination and Communication**

FAS works diligently to strengthen the capacities of its three offices as a strong mechanism for effective coordination. It also ensures that members of its team work coherently with the same vision.

The transfer of knowledge, institutional systems and internal protocols is carried out from the Geneva Secretariat to the Dakar Office as the latter takes over an increasing amount of operational activities.

With its Regional Office in Dakar and Liaison Office in New York institutional and operational, the FAS team now communicates daily through the use of internet telephony technologies, email and fax.

Additionally, FAS conducts numerous activities including workshops and trainings aimed at strengthening its institutional building. These programmes further aim to reinforce communication and capacity building internally and between the three FAS offices.

As well, research, documentation and information dissemination activities are regularly carried out to improve the effectiveness of its work. Position papers are drafted on priority areas to keep abreast of latest developments and measure progress and publications are prepared to document and share best practices. FAS produced in English and French two issues on Marwopnet, a booklet on Burundi and the DRC, an AWCPD evaluation and a booklet on racism. FAS’s website is also constantly updated including with press releases on FAS’s latest activities. Strong ties have also been formed with the press, whereby FAS has maintained a compilation of press cuttings as well as an extensive media contact list.
CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES: WAY FORWARD

Early Warning

While FAS is fully engaged in activities in support of creating durable peace in conflict-torn countries of the Mano River and Great Lakes regions, it must consolidate its involvement in early warning mechanisms for conflict prevention.

Its meaningful contribution to the engenderment of peace and development in the African continent must begin as a first step with the ability to detect the eruption of conflict and contribute to its timely prevention. This entails the ability on the part of FAS to regularly monitor precursors to violence and conflict indicators through research, documentation and monitoring and evaluation.

To meet this aim, the organization must build its research and documentation capacities at its three offices and liaise with its partners on conflict prevention programmes.

Peacebuilding Phases

Similarly, it must build its repertoire of activities in post-election phases of conflict, particularly peacebuilding and reconstruction initiatives.

Recognizing the impact of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR) programmes on the needs of women especially their political, economical, human and health related rights, FAS must work towards the development of programmes on women’s economic empowerment and healing and reconciliation.

Part of this goal will focus on developing the post-conflict reconstruction fund it launched in with the assistance of Ms Graça Simbine Machel, President of the Foundation for Community Development and member of FAS’s Advisory Board during a meeting attended by FAS Advisory Board members Mrs Lisbet Palme and Ambassador Mohammed Sahnoun on Investing in our Future in Geneva in 2000.
Another hope is the setting up five years prior of the UN Peacebuilding Commission. As well, the UN Peace and Security Fund in support of human security can also be used as an aspiration to further FAS’s work in engendering peace processes.

Most important is the mobilization, mentoring and transmission of knowledge and skills to younger generations so they can assume leadership roles in gender mainstreaming and conflict prevention. The hope is that the PanAfrican Centre will be able to fulfill this gap by empowering young women with the necessary skills and knowledge.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

FAS has employed several techniques to monitor and evaluate the implementation of its programmes. These include monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools that will emanate from the ten year study, a range of impact assessment tools designed within the African Centre for Women of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the distribution of forms and questionnaires to participants to its activities and events and evaluation field missions conducted by its members and partners to assess the effectiveness of its work. As well, in 2005 a Monitoring and Evaluation Function was created at FAS’s Secretariat to design, document and establish a formal M&E framework for its activities and functions.

Despite these measures, FAS must work harder to ensure proper documentation and evaluation of its activities and programmes if it is to learn and work towards progress and change. This is particularly true as it is difficult to measure the impact of its work. Peace is fragile and difficult to measure. As such, the evaluation of peace is a process which precludes the use and development of lessons learnt indicators. Programmes at times succeed in which case capacitaces are learnt and adapted accordingly.

“The evaluation process…should be seen less as a validation or invalidation exercise pegged only to credibility, and more as a process where learning is extracted from practice and incorporated in new planning and thinking…this is the evaluation as a learning paradigm”.

---

*From left to right: Mrs Lisbet Palm and Mrs. Graça Simbine Machel at the Investing in our Future meeting, Geneva, Switzerland, 2000.*
As well, the positioning of FAS between local grassroots organizations and subregional bodies for gender issues poses another challenge when attempting to assess the impact of its programme. FAS faces the additional challenge of not being recognized as a strategic partner by grassroots organizations beyond the initial intervention in conflict phases.

“People are doing great work around conflict. But the question that everyone has is how they do translate this into something usable. So that process we are talking about (evaluation) is how to gather best practices. There has to be a framework of evaluation, but if we are just talking about evaluation, we are missing… the picture”.

Susan Collin Marks

To respond to these shortcomings, FAS is in the process of putting in place a management system for use at its three offices to better facilitate the coherence, coordination and the exchange of information. This is particularly important as the International Secretariat continues decentralizing more and more of FAS’s programmes to the Regional Office in Dakar. As well, the management system will help with the storage of archival and information folders.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

To carry out its work, FAS relies on voluntary contributions as well as funding from Governments, private foundations and UN agencies, including the continued support of the Governments of the Netherlands, Finland, Norway and Luxembourg and the Ford Foundation. The following diagram charts out FAS’s major contributors over the last five years.

FAS gratefully acknowledges the financial support from the following key partners:

The Ford Foundation
The Government of Finland
The Government of Luxembourg
The Government of Norway
The Government of the Netherlands
The Government of Senegal
The Government of Switzerland
The Government of Canada
The African Union (AU)
The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
The Conference of NGOs (CONGO)
Cordaid
The Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)
The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)
The African Women Development Fund (AWDF)
The United Nations:
Regional Programme for Africa of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA)
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The financial statements for the years 2000-2004 were audited by the Accounting Office, JCP, based in Geneva. The statements for 2005 are currently being audited and will therefore be subject to further scrutiny.

The summarized accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of FAS. For further information on the audited accounts, the Auditor’s reports should be consulted. Copies can be obtained upon request.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

I – Basic of accounting
The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Geneva Accounting Standards.

II – Functional currency
The functional currency is the Swiss francs (CHF).

III – Foreign currencies
Transactions in foreign currencies during the years are converted into CHF at the exchange rate ruling at the date of transactions. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies at the balance sheet are translated at the rate of exchange ruling at that date.

IV – The general account of MME DIOP
Mme DIOP Bineta, the Executive Director up financially, from her own money, the operating losses of the FAS Foundation from 1996 to December 2004 as follows:

From 1996 –
1998 .... 185 805.68
-866 478.89
<#>80 936.64
2001 .... 20 854.65
2004 13 368.57 367 444.43

Conversely, in 2001 and 2003 she took as a share of costs:

<#>- 17 858.84
2003 .... - 25 870.32 (43 729.16)

At 31.12/2004, Mme B. DIOP had advanced FAS the total sum of 323 715.27.

The following is the latest report letter for the year 2004.
The undersigned have audited the accounting records and the financial statements (balance sheet, income and expenditure statements) of FEMMES AFRICA SOLIDARITE for the year ended 31st December 2004.

We have found the figures in accordance with the books and supported by vouchers and receipts in the proper form. We confirm that we meet the legal requirements concerning professional qualification and independence.

In our opinion, the accounting records and financial statements comply with the law and are in perfect order.

We recommend that the financial statements submitted to you be approved.

Geneva, 11 May 2005

Encl: Balance Sheet
    Statements of Income and Expenditure
    Contributions
    Details Contributions Mme Diop
### INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

All figures expressed in Swiss Francs (CHF)

## INCOME

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
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<td>774 631.65</td>
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<td>1 538 584.13</td>
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<td>250 465.61</td>
<td>434 185.65</td>
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<td>2 514.00</td>
<td>16 050.00</td>
<td>2 682.00</td>
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<td>12 798.63</td>
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<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>132 112.12</td>
<td>279 024.85</td>
<td>123 585.00</td>
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<td>Economic Commission for Africa</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34 090.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
<td>56 623.92</td>
<td>34 866.30</td>
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<td>1 025.00</td>
<td>6 288.54</td>
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<td>Private Sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47 717.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>13 893.62</td>
<td>52 908.00</td>
<td>33 492.00</td>
<td>76 748.45</td>
<td>81 786.09</td>
<td>13 222.94</td>
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<td>1,544,521.86</td>
<td>2,684,164.65</td>
<td>1,687,909.27</td>
<td>2,290,370.55</td>
<td>3,125,175.66</td>
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**Total Income from 2000-2005**

- Funding Agencies: 73%
- Governments: 5%
- African Union: 5%
- International Organizations: 1%
- United Nations: 0%
- Economic Commission for Africa: 0%
- Non-Governmental Organizations: 0%
- Private Sector: 0%
- Other Income: 1%
## EXPENDITURE

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<td>304,347.08</td>
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<td>210,302.57</td>
<td>112,987.42</td>
<td>145,893.3</td>
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<td>324,633.29</td>
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<td>INTERNATIONAL</td>
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<td>15,046.00</td>
<td>76,759.45</td>
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<td>INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING*</td>
<td>44,299.71</td>
<td>50,224.96</td>
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<td>101,395.57</td>
<td>529,644.56</td>
<td>358,342.96</td>
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<td><strong>679,205.33</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,128,647.18</strong></td>
<td><strong>573,450.79</strong></td>
<td><strong>886,519.71</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,130,741.87</strong></td>
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* Building advocacy capacity, partnership, networking relations, research and documentation, communication programme, team building, monitoring and evaluation and institutional support.

**EXPENDITURE from 2000 - 2005**

- REGIONAL LEVEL: 64%
- SUB-REGIONAL LEVEL: 8%
- INTERNATIONAL: 28%
- INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING: 0%
### BALANCE SHEET

All figures expressed in Swiss Francs (CHF)

#### ASSETS

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>2005</th>
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<td>Cash and Bank Balance</td>
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<td>Debtors</td>
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<td>1,604.30</td>
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<td>Non-current assets</td>
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<td>26,550.05</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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<td>46,364.96</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,764.09</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,804.66</strong></td>
<td><strong>91,805.06</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,978.27</strong></td>
<td><strong>82,357.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>133,808.32</strong></td>
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#### LIABILITIES

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<td>Creditors</td>
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<td>Grants payable</td>
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<td>Legal &amp; Financial consultant</td>
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<td>Accrued Expenses</td>
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<td>-2,005.00</td>
<td>-2,005.00</td>
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<td>-190,730.61</td>
<td>-190,730.61</td>
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<td>Deficit / Surplus</td>
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<td>63,850.18</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>199,978.27</strong></td>
<td><strong>82,357.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>133,808.32</strong></td>
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