



The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), headquartered in Nairobi and founded in 1988, is one of Africa's most established and influential pan-African feminist networks. With over 800 member organisations across 46 African countries, FEMNET has spent nearly four decades connecting African women's rights organisations to each other, to their governments, and to the regional and global processes that shape their lives — from the African Union and the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD) to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), HLPF and COP.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Memory Kachambwa, FEMNET has been a founding regional partner of the Equal Measures 2030 (EM2030) coalition since its earliest years, representing the African voice in Equal Measures' governance, advocacy and gender data work. FEMNET's role is twofold: an Africa-wide advocate using Equal Measures' SDG Gender Index in the continent's most influential policy spaces, and a regional capacity-builder strengthening national partners across Africa, including GROOTS Kenya and Réseau Siggil Jigéen in Senegal.

3136

advocates engaged in
Beijing+30 consultations

704

advocates using data in
policy and budget
advocacy

967

women and girls reporting
greater data confidence

202

African WROs engaging
policymakers with data

THE JOURNEY

From founding partner to continental gender data leader

FEMNET joined the Equal Measures partnership at its outset, as one of the coalition's founding regional and global partners alongside ARROW, CLADEM, Data2X, ONE Campaign, Plan International, Tableau Foundation, Women Deliver and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. From the start, FEMNET's role was distinctive: to ensure that the SDG Gender Index and Equal Measures' data tools landed in the policy spaces where African gender-equality decisions are made and to push back when those spaces ignored African women's realities.

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“Without data, issues relating to women and girls will not count.”

- Memory Kachambwa, Executive Director, FEMNET



That conviction has shaped FEMNET's use of Equal Measures tools across every major regional moment of the partnership. The 2019 SDG Gender Index was cited multiple times in the Africa Women's Rights Organizations' Beijing+25 Parallel Report to highlight best and worst performers on gender equality in Africa, and to draw continental attention to the gender data gap itself as a barrier to equality. At the 2019 Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting, FEMNET presented the Index at a civil society roundtable; Index data was then referenced in the final declaration signed by approximately 40 civil society representatives and government ministers.

During COVID-19, FEMNET demonstrated the kind of adaptive feminist leadership that defines the Equal Measures partnership at its best. Within weeks of the pandemic's onset, FEMNET launched the Pan-African Women's COVID-19 platform and three continental campaigns: #InclusiveLockdown, #DignifiedResponse and #JustRecoveryAfrica. The campaigns positioned FEMNET as one of the first pan-African civil society organizations to mobilize a large online feminist constituency during the pandemic. Equal Measures' flexible partnership model allowed FEMNET to pivot resources to this work ensuring that African women's realities stayed visible in regional and global SDG accountability spaces despite movement and connectivity restrictions.

Between 2019 and 2022, FEMNET delivered Equal Measures' Data-Driven Advocacy (DDA) curriculum at a continental scale. A February 2020 in-person regional training reached 51 advocates from 12 African countries before COVID forced a pivot to virtual delivery. Local partners then cascaded that training to a further 444 women and girls — nearly double the original project target of 250. By the end of the project, 967 women and girls reported increased confidence using data for advocacy, and 704 advocates — including 42 persons with disabilities — were actively applying data-driven skills to influence policy and budget discussions at national and sub-national levels.

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We cannot emphasize enough just how political and necessary data is in transforming lives in Africa. Data helps those who are invisible, visible. It may direct attention to crises which powerful actors may prefer remains hidden; this is what prevents women and girls from being counted and therefore accounted for. Their lives can never transform unless they are counted. What is not counted cannot be accounted for and what is accounted for must count for women and girls!”

- Memory Kachambwa, Executive Director, FEMNET

Leading the African Feminist Voice on Beijing+30

Across 2024 and into 2025, FEMNET led one of the most consequential pieces of EM2030 coalition advocacy of the partnership's history: ensuring that African women's voices shaped the Beijing+30 review process. In partnership with NGO CSW Africa and UN Women, FEMNET organised 13 sub-regional consultations across all five African subregions, engaging over 3,100 participants; women's rights organisations, youth groups, INGOs, UN agencies and other partners drawn from the entire continent.

The Beijing+30 Africa Regional CSO Consultations brought together 208 women drawn from women's rights advocates and civil society organizations, from 41 countries across five sub regions in Africa to develop a position statement spanning six critical areas: inclusive development, poverty eradication, freedom from violence, institutional accountability, peaceful societies, and environmental sustainability. The statement carried directly into the African Group negotiating position at CSW69 in March 2025, making FEMNET one of the most influential civil society shapers of the Beijing+30 review.

FEMNET subsequently convened the Africa Disrupt CSW69 gathering in Gaborone, Botswana, in partnership with Sustain 267, bringing African feminist leaders, activists and advocates together to take stock of where African girls and young women actually stand thirty years on from Beijing. EM2030's coalition platforms, data tools and Beijing+30 communications work detailed [in this blog from March 2025](#), amplified FEMNET's leadership in this continental process.

THE COALITION EFFECT

The Equal Measures 2030 partnership equipped FEMNET with the tools, platforms, financing and coalition infrastructure to translate African feminist priorities into measurable policy influence at continental and global scale:

→ **A continental evidence base.** The SDG Gender Index, Bending the Curve reports, Africa regional factsheets, and thematic infographics on economic justice and workplace equality gave FEMNET a credible, comparable evidence base across 46 African countries. These were disseminated through websites, social media, listservs, mainstream media and hybrid/virtual events, then taken into AU, ARFSD, CSW, HLPF and COP processes.



→ **DDA at continental scale.** Equal Measures 2030's DDA curriculum and FEMNET's convening power combined to reach 51 advocates directly across 12 African countries, then cascade to 444 more through local partners. The most durable outcome is institutional: women-led CSOs across Africa now hold the data literacy that positions them as credible interlocutors with governments and duty-bearers — not just as protesters.

→ **Regional support to EM2030's national partners.** FEMNET worked directly with GROOTS Kenya and RSJ Senegal to localize Index data, develop national gender factsheets, and identify the policy spaces where data could move decisions. This regional-to-national connective tissue is one of the partnership's most under-recognized assets: it is what allows a global tool to land in a Kitui county budget meeting or a Dakar ministry briefing.

→ **Flexible financing for adaptive leadership.** The partnership's flexible funding model allowed FEMNET to pivot quickly when COVID-19 hit — launching the Pan-African Women's COVID-19 platform, the #InclusiveLockdown / #DignifiedResponse / #JustRecoveryAfrica campaigns, and continuing capacity building virtually. Few funder relationships permit that kind of mid-flight reorientation.

→ **Co-creation of EM2030's coalition governance.** FEMNET has shaped EM2030's new coalition model from the inside — participating in coalition-wide consultations, working groups on advocacy, communications and capacity building, and the co-creation of EM2030's anti-racist, feminist, values-based partnership design. The partnership is what it is in part because FEMNET helped define it.

→ **Global platforms for African feminist leadership.** Through the EM2030 coalition, FEMNET secured visibility at CSW66 (Nairobi), Generation Equality Forum (Mexico and Paris), HLPF, the SDG Global Festival of Action, COP27 and CSW69 — ensuring African feminist analysis travelled with the data, not as a footnote to it.

LOOKING AHEAD

Equal Measures' 2024 SDG Gender Index found that 91 countries still have 'poor' or 'very poor' scores on personal autonomy, individual rights and freedom from discrimination, and that women's right to discuss political issues openly has declined globally since 2015. Africa is part of that picture, but it is also where some of the most determined feminist organizing in the world is now happening and FEMNET is at the heart of it.

FEMNET has been explicit with Equal Measures about what comes next: deepening use of Equal Measures' tools; ongoing coaching and peer learning across the African feminist ecosystem; and direct involvement in Index development from planning stages, so that African priorities shape the framework, not only the findings. FEMNET also intends to feature the next Index in its annual State of Women in Africa report, aligned with the Maputo Protocol anniversary.

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We can no longer operate on presumptions and approximations. Gaps of inequalities must be marked, counted and recorded so that the trail of implementation is clear and decision makers are held to account.”

- Memory Kachambwa, Executive Director, FEMNET

Across nearly four decades, FEMNET has remained what its founders dreamed of: an African women's machinery keeping African women connected to each other. The Equal Measures partnership has been one of the most productive expressions of that vision over the past five years — turning a global gender data tool into continental policy influence and ensuring African women's priorities remain central to Beijing+30 and beyond.

Learn more about FEMNET's work:



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