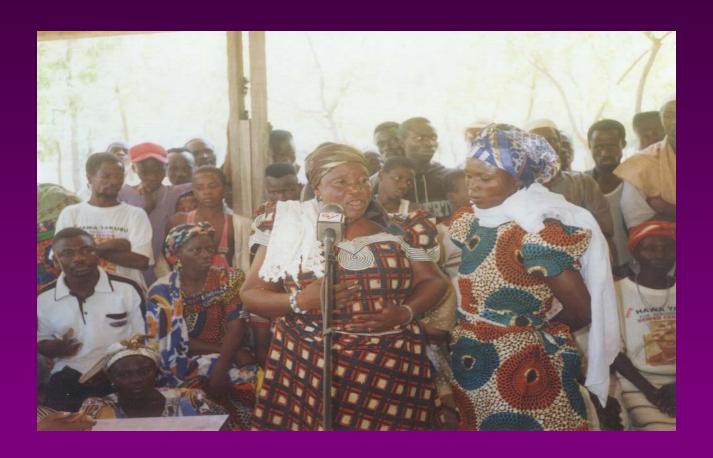
## THE CRITICAL ROLE OF AUTONOMOUS WOMEN'S FUNDS IN STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS



### **INVESTING IN WOMEN**

### What is a Women's Fund?

A social change organisation established by and for women to mobilise resources and award grants in support of of women's rights initiatives and strengthening women's movements.

### FEATURES OF WOMEN'S FUNDS

• Explicit social change/feminist philanthropy agenda

• Leadership and management closely aligned with the grantee constituencies

 Additional support to grantee partners such as capacity building and peer learning

• Investments in movement building

### FEATURES OF WOMEN'S FUNDS

• Thematic/programmatic priorities shaped by grantees

• Focus on marginalised groups of women such as commercial sex workers, LGBT, refugees, migrant women, etc

• Public fundraising using diverse strategies

### THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT FUND

### **VISION**

For African women to live in a transformed world in peace and with integrity.

### **Mission**

To mobilise financial, material, and human resources to support initiatives for transformation led by African women.

### Sources of income

 We raise our funding from private foundations, funding agencies, bi/multilaterals, corporations, and individuals within and outside Africa

Current annual budget of app. US\$3.6m

### EXAMPLES OF RECENT AWDF FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

- Establishment of a HIV/AIDS Fund with support from The Nelson Mandela Foundation (\$1m), SRT, UNAIDS, HIVOS, OSI, etc
- Comic Relief (UK) direct funding partnership of \$2.5m over three years
- DANIDA grant of €1m for grantmaking
- African Capacity Building Foundation grant of \$1m for grantee capacity building
- Ford Foundation lead gift of \$3m for an Endowment Fund

### **Profile of AWDF Grantees**

 Women's organisations working at local, national and international level

 Projects which enable women address structural challenges (law reforms, economic policies, etc)

Community based initiatives led by women

Projects aimed at empowering women and increasing women's access to resources

### AWDF'S GRANTMAKING STRATEGY

- Grantmaking in six thematic areas
- Main Grants Program (Africa Wide)
- Special Projects (Solidarity Fund, Legacy Fund, Small grants, etc)
- Capacity Building Unit
- HIV/AIDS Fund
- Fund for African Women's Leadership (New)

Since October 2001, AWDF has awarded U\$5m to app. 400 women's organisations in 41 African countries

### CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN'S FUNDS

Demand exceeds supply

• The idea of Women's Funds is still quite new, many people do not know about them

Limited fundraising capacity

Limited grantmaking capacity

#### CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN'S FUNDS

Sustainability issues

Operating in environments with a weak infrastructure

Ambivalence towards non-profits locally

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

• Significant investments in Women's Funds

 Investments in movement building as well as organisations and projects

 Developing conceptual clarity around the need for women's spaces to exist and for their voices to be heard

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

• Donors should support existing local philanthropic initiatives, and be supportive of the establishment of new ones. Please refrain from using local NGOs as grantmakers.

We need a Sustainability Compact

• Support for the architecture and infrastructure of the Women's Movement

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

 Develop mechanisms for channeling funding direct to women's organisations, movements and Funds in the South

• Help develop a business case for supporting women's rights to the corporate community

Listen to women

# PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR HEART IS