

Spring 2019

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WOMANKIND

WORLDWIDE EQUAL RESPECTED PROUD

Great gains
for the women's
movement
in Kenya



Welcome



I am proud to introduce this year's Spring newsletter, the first publication of 2019 ahead of Womankind Worldwide's 30th anniversary in March.

Since 1989, Womankind has been working tirelessly **in support and in partnership** with women and girls across the globe. The last six months at Womankind have been no different so I do hope you'll enjoy reading our latest updates.

In October, we celebrated **International Day of the Girl**, a global day of awareness and recognition of the challenges that millions of girls around the world continue to face. Many of you got together with friends and held coffee mornings or dinner parties to mark this important day and raise funds for Womankind. **Thank you for your support!**

In November, we joined the global women's movement to mark the **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence** campaign. Womankind and partner organisations around the world called for **an end to all forms of discrimination and violence against women**

and girls, wherever they live or work. As well as promoting our partner activities, Womankind published a policy briefing on online violence and abuse which you can read about on page 5.

On pages 8 & 9, read how far your donations have gone in **strengthening community based responses to violence against women and girls** in Kenya. Womankind's Policy and Programme Officer Louise reflects as a three-year project with **FIDA Kenya** nears completion.

To supporters old and new, I hope this newsletter gives you a flavour of the difference Womankind is making in the lives of women around the world. We thank you for joining us on our journey to ensuring the rights of women and girls are respected, valued and realised.

Caroline Haworth
Chief Executive, Womankind Worldwide

WOMANKIND
WORLDWIDE EQUAL RESPECTED PROUD

Womankind Worldwide's vision is of a just world where the rights of all women are respected, valued and realised. We work in partnership with women's movements around the world to bring about lasting change in women's lives.

Aims:

- An end to all forms of violence against women and girls
- Women's economic rights and control over resources
- Women's equal influence in decision making and ability to exercise political power

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Young activists come together in Kenya

Change happens when women come together in movements, to organise and mobilise. In countries such as Kenya, where young feminists are often on the margins of the women’s movement, it’s crucial that young women have a supportive safe-space to share their vision for women’s rights.

Responding to this need, we held our Young Feminist Convening in Kenya on 28-29th November 2018. The first of its kind, the event brought together 50 young women between the ages 16 and 30 from across Kenya, who represent a range of diverse backgrounds, including lesbian and bisexual women and

“[The Young Feminists Convening] is very important because it shows the young feminists that someone recognizes what they do, that they’re not working alone. It’s a moment of opening up and talking about the challenges they go through in the line of duty. It’s a healing space and a learning space and a networking space.”
– Frida Monah, chairperson of Women and Realities of Disability (WARD)

Above left: Frida Monah
Above right: Ruth Nekura

“Young feminists coming together strengthens their voice as a collective. It is important for young feminists to know the different initiatives that they are involved in, so they can support each other.”
– Ruth Nekura, feminist activist

women with disabilities. Participants attended sessions that included tracing the history of women’s movements, highlighting the work being done by young feminists in Kenya and mapping out ways of working together.

Diversity and the strengths of inclusive movement-building were championed at the convening, empowering young feminists to assert themselves in women’s rights movements. **“It has given me the fire, and energy to continue doing what I do”**, said Catherine Kandie, a proud, black feminist with a disability. The event will be followed up with a series of activities to maintain momentum and continue to grow the young feminist movement in Kenya.

Independent futures for women with disabilities



Women across Zimbabwe face discrimination in almost every part of their lives. Forced to live at the margins of society, many women with disabilities feel that they are not citizens of their own country. Women with hearing or visual impairments face barriers accessing health care, education, employment and participating in elections due to a lack of awareness of their needs.

Tatenda Shumba, a Zimbabwean woman with a hearing impairment, explains ***“My husband passed HIV on to me and later died in 2008. Every time I go to the hospital, there is no one to communicate with me. Because I cannot hear, I will just be seeing what is happening, trying to make sense of what is going on.”***

Deaf Women Included (DWI) is a grassroots organisation that works with women with hearing impairments across Zimbabwe. It has also now extended its work to include women with visual impairments. Since 2014, DWI has been working to eliminate the barriers that women with disabilities face and to build networks with other members of the community.

One of DWI's main activities is travelling the length and breadth of Zimbabwe, delivering workshops on empowerment and disability rights for women with all types of disability.

Above: Women with hearing impairments taking part in a workshop in Mutare, Zimbabwe

Each workshop includes drama, info-graphics and videos to ensure that the content is accessible for all.

Recently, during a crucial time as the country geared up for its national elections, DWI conducted workshops encouraging participants, especially those often overlooked due to their impairments, to use their voices and vote.

Dzosai Chenjerai, a woman with a visual impairment, benefited from the Braille and audio versions of electoral information created by DWI. She said ***“DWI has provided me with the necessary information to enable me to go and vote in the election. I feel happy that this year I am voting, but prior to that I always felt I was not a full citizen.”***

We are confident that through the support of DWI, not only will more women with hearing and visual impairments be casting their votes but also standing for election in greater numbers too.



Support our work

£157 could fund sign language and Braille translations of electoral information so that women with hearing or visual impairments can be fully informed of their rights as citizens.



A global voice breaks the silence

As one of the most widespread human rights violations, violence against women and girls permeates all areas of women's lives—at home, at work, in schools and universities—but now violence and abuse against women is increasingly happening online.

Last November, as part of the 16 Days of Activism, Womankind launched a new policy briefing which draws particular attention to the issue of **online violence and abuse against women's rights activists** in three of our focus countries: Zimbabwe, Nepal and Kenya. We partnered with the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) at the University of Leeds on a new piece of research with Womankind partners and activists to gain insight into their unique experiences of discrimination online. The research found that women experience high levels of online violence and abuse, which is resulting in their silencing. **50% of women surveyed had personally experienced online violence and abuse** and 89% had witnessed another woman being subjected to it.

"I have noticed from Facebook that when women post something especially if they are known feminists, they get a backlash" – women and disability rights

activist, Zimbabwe.

The full findings and series of policy recommendations are compiled in *'Breaking the Silence: Ending online violence and abuse against women's rights activists'*, a policy briefing shedding light on the silencing of women rights activists through online violence and abuse – and the crucial need to address it in any pursuit for gender equality.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

When: Every year from the 25th November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10th December (Human Rights Day)

Who: Women's rights activists and organisations from 160+ countries

Why: It focuses attention and demands action on eliminating GBV against women and girls.



Read the full report

Visit www.womankind.org.uk/breakingthesilence

Womankind Worldwide Policy and Programme Officer Louise Hemfrey shares her reflections at the end of a three year project with the Federation of Women Lawyers – FIDA Kenya.



Policy and Programme Officer Louise Hemfrey

Strengthening responses to violence against women and girls

This September marked my 2nd anniversary of working at Womankind and I spent it, fittingly with one of the partners that I have been working with from my first weeks: FIDA Kenya.

From the UK, I have coordinated the monitoring and reporting of our UK Aid Match Project ‘Community Responses to Violence against Women and Girls’. The project ended in September 2018 after three years of successful interventions that built upon the individual needs and resources in two counties in Kenya: Kajiado and Trans Nzoia.

On my final visit, the FIDA team and I reflected upon both the accomplishments, as well as unexpected challenges, that we have overcome

to enable the project’s success.

These successes have included;

- 1. Healthcare professionals adapting their treatment plan for patients once they have been trained on women’s rights and how to combat FGM and child, early and forced marriage**

“The training and follow-up meetings have been a great benefit to me personally, learning about gender-based violence and FGM has gone a long way to helping me handle the cases that come to me, as well as more general hospital work.”

– Catherine, Head of Maternal & Child Health Ngong Hills Hospital

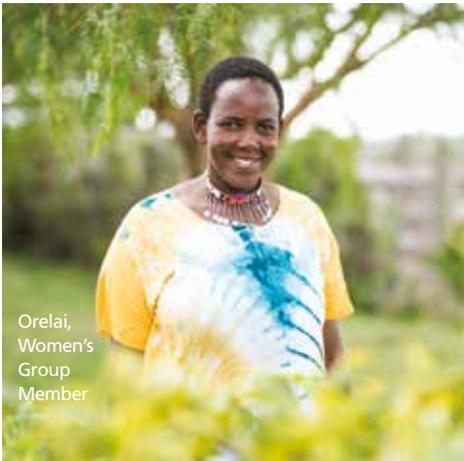
2. Women who have survived violence are more able to seek social security and economic empowerment.

"I started attending the group therapy. It gave me the confidence to get my livelihood back and work on myself. Now I'm strong." – Lizzie, Client

3. Women and girls are more able to speak about child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), and to communicate these issues to others in their community

"With support from FIDA Kenya, no man can force me to have sex with them. I have the knowledge which means I have the power, I know my principles and my rights. My body is my body; no man will take it for himself."

– Olerai, Women's Group Member



Orelai,
Women's
Group
Member



This project is kindly funded by the UK Government's Department for International Development through the UK Aid Match scheme.

Of course, no project that covers such a historically ingrained and socially complex issue comes without its challenges. For our colleagues at FIDA Kenya and the pioneering community members who have seen the changes taking shape, they know that there is still work to be done.

Sammy, Chair of
Council of Elders



"The main problem I see is culture; issues such as rape cases are considered normal, forced marriage – normal. There still needs to be education to let people know it is not right." – Sammy, Chair of Council of Elders, Ongata Rongai

For myself, going forward, the rich experience I have gained improved my understanding of the importance of community leadership in realising a project's goals. I am also incredibly excited to move forward with Womankind in realising our organisational goal of **empowering women and building solidarity with the women's movement**, so that traditional harmful practices, like FGM, will be targeted not only at a community level, but a national and international level as well.



Support our work

£160 could train a community volunteer to assist 10 girl survivors of violence.



Nepalese women speak loud and proud

Above: A 'One Under a Tree' meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal

Over the last decade, the lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) community in Nepal have been on a rocky road to equality.

Today, Nepal is often celebrated as a LBT haven in the South-Asian region, as gay sex and marriage is legal. In addition, trans people can change their gender on their passport and in census data, as well as the option to identify using a third gender in the census.

Unfortunately, these legal advances have not translated to change in the social treatment of LBT women across the country. To transform a culture where queer and trans people were considered "social pollutants" to one of acceptance does not happen overnight.

Womankind partner Mitini is a LBT organisation, working to empower women to feel proud of their identity. Laxmi Ghalan, the founder of Mitini, was one

of the first outwardly lesbian women in Nepal. At 16, her community found out about her relationship with another woman, Meera. As discrimination from their community grew, and their families became increasingly violent, they decided to run away. Whilst in Kathmandu, they received continuous threats from their families and spiralled into deep depression. Rather than succumbing to pressures of hiding their identity, they founded Mitini.

Today Mitini works to empower LBT women across Nepal. Their varied work includes counselling, social care and LBT advocacy as well as legal work in cases and areas that disproportionately affect the LBT community.

“The discrimination of LBT women is sadly very common in Nepalese society” says Mitini secretary Sarita.

“Unemployment and homelessness are big problems for the women that seek Mitini’s help”. To combat unemployment and the inevitable poverty that comes with it, Mitini trains members in new skills such as incense making in the hope they can generate an independent income.

Mitini also provides networks for LBT women to meet up, discuss their experiences and come to terms with their identity. Following an old Nepalese tradition of coming together to raise issues under a tree, Mitini have organised their ‘One Under a Tree’ series of meet-ups for LBT women.



Sarita (left) and Laxmi (right) at CEDAW meetings in the UN in Geneva, Switzerland

LBT women are coming together across four Nepalese provinces to make a stand against the stigma in their community.

“Many people do not understand our community” Sarita

explains. ***“They say we are prostitutes. One Under***

a Tree is encouraging LBT

women to speak up and be confident.”

A recent highlight for Mitini Nepal was representing the LBT Nepalese community at The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) meetings in at the UN in Geneva, Switzerland in 2018. ***“It was a great opportunity to take our advocacy from the local to the global and meet other civil society organisations working in the same space.”***

Womankind is proud to work with Mitini to ensure their work can continue to support and strengthen the LBT community in Nepal. Seeing how women in all their diversity, including lesbian, bisexual and trans women, are able to be outwardly proud of their identity and reconnect with their communities has proven that Nepal’s social culture can follow the legal change.



Support our work

£22 could train one woman as an ambassador for LBT rights in Nepal.

Our impact in 2017-2018: supporting over 100,000 women

This past year, **Womankind Worldwide** forged ahead in the second year of our new strategy, standing proudly with our partners and in our actions as part of the global women's movement.

In October 2018, we published our annual **Impact Report**, highlighting just some of the changes we brought about with our partners in 2017-18 thanks to our supporters.

We and our partners remained steadfast in our commitment to ending violence against women and girls: for instance, the **Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association** supported 125,000 Zimbabwean women to access justice, while **FIDA Kenya** continued its crucial work preventing Female Genital Mutilation through community-level champions. Our work around women's economic rights enabled us to support women like Miremba, who is leading an eco-feminist movement against land grabs in Uganda alongside our partner **National Association of Professional Environmentalists**. Meanwhile, partners like the **Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe** and **Women in Politics Support Unit** made major strides in women's leadership and participation, preparing over 300 women candidates for Zimbabwe's elections and lobbying 14 political parties to sign Gender Parity Pledges. On behalf of the entire Womankind team we thank our supporters who are working with us to make the world a better place for women and girls. Together we are making the change that we want to see.



In 2017-18...
103,705 women directly benefited from our work with women's movements

Over **12.7 million** people were indirectly supported through awareness-raising and changes to law and policy.



Through their advocacy work, our partners reached and influenced **3,745** leaders, journalists, and service providers.

We supported partnerships with **45** partners in Africa and Asia, with **21** of these being new partners like the **Nepal Disabled Women's Association** and the **Center for Domestic Violence Prevention** in Uganda.



Leave a lasting legacy



Womankind supporter Anita Woodcock is determined that her legacy will go towards her passion for furthering women's rights and empowerment. We spoke to her about the considerations she made before pledging to leave a gift to Womankind in her will.

Above: Womankind supporter Anita Woodcock

Hi Anita! How long have you been a supporter of Womankind Worldwide?

For 11 or 12 years now.

Was there a particular aspect of Womankind's work that prompted you to leave a gift in your will?

It was Womankind's commitment to empowering women that particularly resonated with me. I know that any money I leave in my will to Womankind will go towards empowering women, educating them about their rights and developing their skills for a sustainable livelihood.

Do you feel that Womankind's values align closely with your own?

Oh, absolutely! All my life I have been passionate about the development of people. I believe everyone should have an opportunity to develop and reach their potential.

Do you have any advice for someone who may not have written their will yet?

No matter how simple your will is going to be, get it down on paper. I've had a will for many years and change it regularly. It's not set in stone. I don't associate it with dying, I just want my money to do good.

If you are interested in leaving a gift in your will to Womankind Worldwide, or perhaps have already left a gift to us, please tick the appropriate box below and return this form to our freepost address below. Please know that this is in no way a binding promise.

I have already left a gift in my will to Womankind Worldwide

I would like more information on leaving a gift in my will to Womankind Worldwide



If you have any questions about leaving a gift in your will or would like further information, please contact Hannah on 020 3567 5936 or email hannahl@womankind.org.uk

Name _____

Address _____

Tel no. / Email _____

Please return to:

FREEPOST RTUZ-GKXH-GXJA, Womankind Worldwide, Wenlock Studios, 50-52 Wharf Road, London, N1 7EU

Interview with a women's rights activist

Raising awareness of life with a disability

Dibabe Bacha is a blind woman, and Vice Director of the Ethiopian Women with Disabilities National Association (EWDNA) – an organisation fighting for accessibility and legal protection for disabled women across Ethiopia. In spite of a ten-year struggle to be recognised by the Ethiopian Government, EWDNA has been hugely successful in increasing awareness and laws protecting women with disabilities.

Hi Dibabe! Could you tell us about EWDNA's work?

EWDNA represents more than 3,500 women with disabilities across Ethiopia. We offer group and individual counselling. We provide vocational training, so disabled women can make their own living. We also lobby the government to increase the legal protection for women with disabilities as well as increasing accessible infrastructure.

What are EWDNA's biggest achievements so far?

There is almost too many to mention! We have pushed the Government to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Peoples



Dibabe Bacha standing outside the EWDNA centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

*with Disabilities (CRPD). It has even become **part of Ethiopian law**. And of course all the women who no longer hide in their houses, who go out and live fulfilled lives.*

What have you got your sights set on next?

*Next, I hope we can do something about accessibility. **There is no accessible infrastructure**. There are no sign language translators anywhere. There is no information or documentation in Braille. EWDNA wants to change this!*

How do you feel about your recent partnership with Womankind?

*We have found that in Ethiopia, people don't want to work with women, and especially not women with disabilities. Womankind helps us to bring global awareness for women with disabilities, so **I think we will change the life of women with disabilities together.***



Thank you to all who supported EWDNA in the 2018 Big Give Christmas Challenge.

“Now, I have hope for tomorrow”

Feeling alone and marginalised as a woman with a disability, 21-year-old Frehiwot felt as though no one could relate to her experience. Upon discovering Womankind partner Ethiopian Women with Disabilities National Association (EWDNA), she has found a community, and is now inspired to connect and share with other women like herself.

*“I faced a lot of problems before I came across EWDNA. I used to face discrimination from society and my family. My family did not support me. **The community did not accept me.** I was moving from one place to another. I felt lonely.*

Five years ago, I went to a meeting for people with disabilities, where I met a friend who told me about EWDNA.

*When I first visited EWDNA, I was so afraid. But after going to the coffee ceremony [held fortnightly to welcome new EWDNA members], I felt very happy. Before, I didn't look after myself. **I thought I was the only one with a disability.** But when I came to EWDNA, I met a lot of friends with disabilities. After the first coffee ceremony, each day felt longer until the next one.*

EWDNA has given me training and basic business skills. They gave me a machine to make and sell chips and initial capital to



Right: Frehiwot, EWDNA member

start my business. In my job before selling vegetables on the street, people would insult me and kick me. Now they have respect for me; they bow their heads.

*EWDNA is very important. Women with disabilities in this community face a lot of problems. They could be raped or physically abused, or someone could take advantage and make them work more. **EWDNA stands for women. They bring up those who fall.** I would not be in this stage without EWDNA.*

*I have changed a lot. **I used to consider suicide.** Now, I have hope for tomorrow. I would encourage any woman with a disability on the street to come to EWDNA.*



Support our work

£54 could provide materials and training for a woman with a disability to learn a new skill to generate income.

Building brighter futures in Ethiopia



"We always tried to overcome the poverty but we had no information. The whole community lived like that. Our fathers and our mothers had lived this way too."

– Ameleweg, Siiqqee member

Above: Ameleweg on land her cooperative have acquired through saving in Nekemte, Ethiopia

With less than 1 in 5 girls reaching secondary school, Siiqqee Women's Development Association (Siiqqee) is a necessary lifeline for some of the poorest and most marginalised women in Ethiopia.

With limited educational opportunities, women in rural communities are often caught in the cycle of poverty, **forced to endure back-breaking work and often violence and discrimination.**

Siiqqee works to break this cycle. They bring together marginalised women to train them in practical skills and provide them with information on their rights. They also organise women into self-help groups where they can share skills, save together and feel less isolated by poverty.

In November 2017, a movement of **Womankind supporters came together to raise an incredible £33,377 during the Big Give Christmas Challenge.** These funds were vital for Siiqqee to support members of the self-help groups to take their saving to the next level. By forming cooperatives, women had the potential to significantly increase their monthly household income.

As a result of funds raised during the Big Give,

three cooperatives have been formed in the rural town of Nekemte. Each cooperative is now engaged in rearing livestock, brick manufacturing and spice production.

Siiqqee has further supported the cooperatives by providing training to boost their productivity. Workshops delivered so far have included financial management and leadership training.

Most crucially, women taking part in cooperative activities have reported a **50% growth** in their monthly income. By each contributing 2p per week, the most they can possibly afford, cooperative members have managed to save an incredible **£7,000.** From this members will be able to take loans to support themselves and their families. They will also utilise it to ensure their newly established businesses continue to thrive.

"It is because of Siiqqee that we are here today. To get us out of our homes and save to improve our lives." – Ameleweg



Support our work

£113 could equip 20 women with business skills needed to successfully run a cooperative.

Be a fundraiser – **Young feminists making a difference**

As well as sharing the stories of the women we support, we love to shine a spotlight on our supporters' stories. This year, we have seen a series of young women using their networks to raise awareness and funds for women and girls around the world.



Dammy (left), alongside her Year 12 friends, organised a hugely successful 'Rush for Rights' event in July at her school, Chelmsford County High School for Girls, raising an incredible £2,100.

"Don't wait for another time for your voice to be heard. Use it now. Strive for a change in society. You may not know it, but by doing so you could be encouraging someone else to stand up as well. No matter how small, your actions can make a difference." – Dammy



Olivia raised over £2,000 for Womankind Worldwide and St Giles Hospice by shaving her head.

"I feel lucky that I have been able to raise so much money that will hopefully make a real difference in many people's lives. My hair will grow back, but the support and generosity I received will stay in my memories forever." – Olivia



Talia raised £2,175 this summer through her Bat Mitzvah and a local parkrun.

"I loved doing the parkrun with my school friends. We were all in our matching Womankind running vests and people were shouting support as we ran. Some even came up to us afterwards to ask about Womankind. It felt like we were really making a difference." – Talia



Support our work

Feeling inspired? Start planning a fundraiser to celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March. Email supportercare@womankind.org.uk for a fundraising pack.

My details

Title	<input type="text"/>	Name	<input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>			Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>			Tel	<input type="text"/>

I am happy for you to contact me by email Please do NOT contact me by post Please do NOT contact me by phone

Please complete your contact details above (we can't process your gift without them). You can also send us a cheque made payable to Womankind Worldwide, with this form, to our freepost address below.

Please do not acknowledge my gift.

I want to help with a one-off gift

I'd like to give £ By: Visa / Mastercard / Maestro / CAF Charitycard (please delete)

Card no	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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I want to help with a regular gift

I'd like to set up a direct debit of £ monthly Originators identification no. 838163

Please debit my bank / building society account on 1st or 15th (please tick)

Name of account holders

Branch sort code Bank account no

Name of bank / building society

Signature(s) Date

Instruction to your bank or building society: Please pay Womankind direct debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the direct debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Womankind and if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank / building society.

I want to increase my gift by 25%

Make your gift worth 25% more by adding Gift Aid at no extra cost to you. Tick and date below and fill in your address details above.

Yes, I am a UK taxpayer and I would like Womankind to claim Gift Aid on this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the last four years until I notify you otherwise. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Date

Please inform us if your address changes or you no longer pay an amount of tax equal to the tax we reclaim.

Return to: FREEPOST RTUZ-GKXH-GXJA, Womankind Worldwide, Wenlock Studios, 50-52 Wharf Road, London N1 7EU