

FEMINIST OPPORTUNITIES NOW

We are in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. IPPF Africa Region and its partners are about to launch a new project to fight all forms of Gender-Based Violence by strengthening the capacity of women's movements in Africa, Latin America and Asia: Feminist Opportunities Now (FON) project. In this interview with the 5 consortium members, we learn more about the project and its implementation plans.

What is the FON project about, in summary? How long will it run for?

Yoann Maldonado, Head of Mission in Mexico (MdM France):



MdM-FR has made access to SRHRs one of its priorities for action and advocacy. In particular, MdM-FR focuses on developing integrated multidisciplinary prevention and response strategies to SGBV."

Feminist Opportunities Now (FON) is a 4-year programme that aims to build the capacity of feminist movements to address and respond to gender-based violence (GBV).

This will be done via sub-grants and organizational development support, with a particular effort to reaching small and often non-registered ones, who often struggle to carry the voice of discriminated communities.

The project will pay a particular attention to activist organizations working with or led by people who may face particularly high discrimination, gender inequalities and GBV, such as members of the LGBTI+ community and in general people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities; people living with disabilities, with HIV/AIDS, sex workers, etc.

Who is funding it? What countries are involved?

Susana Fried, Director Global Programs (CREA):

The programme is funded by the French Government via the French Development Agency (AFD). This project will be implemented in 9 countries: six in Africa (Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ethiopia and Kenya), two in Latin America (Colombia and Mexico) and two in Asia (Bangladesh and Sri Lanka). The FON Project aims to support mutual learning and sharing as well as at strengthening the networking of feminist CSOs from the South, bringing them closer to networks at national, regional, and international levels, in order to bring their voice to the public arena.



CREA aims to strengthen feminist leadership and movements, advance SRHRs, address and respond to Gender-Based Violence to develop and promote well-being, security and rights and fostering collective resistance.

Why are feminist organizations important in today's human rights and development spaces?

Jessica Michel, Project Manager, (EmpowHer Global):



EmpowHer has a strong expertise in women's economic and social empowerment, paying particular attention to the entrepreneurship of young women.

Feminist organizations include various structures and themes, but they all share common values and a global commitment to gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women, which are fundamental human rights.

In advocating for these rights and raising awareness among their ecosystem, feminist organizations are key actors to document, elaborate and diffuse strategies to tackle these issues. By being in the frontline witnessing inequalities and discriminations, they have meaningful insights in understanding local contexts and stakeholders. We also believe that feminist organizations are empowered if they share their experience and expertise through a global network, which is one of the objectives of the FON Project. The development world needs feminist organizations to convey voices and strategies that support the creation of a better place for all.

What is innovative about the project? Why is the FON project important to IPPFAR?

Wanjiru Wairimu, FON Programme Officer (IPPFAR)

All about us – led by us: this is the message and drive behind the brand-new innovative Feminist Opportunities Now (FON) project.

With Feminist Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), formal and informal, at the core of the project: from its diversified governance structure - with Regional Technical Advisory committees spearheaded by CSOs with specific gender expertise -, to its direct recipients – feminist CSOs whose organization and projects, small or large, will be selected for financing -, and indirect recipients – the women, girls, LGBTQI+ people of 9 countries on 3 continents, who will better address and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.



IPPF leads a locally owned, globally connected civil society movement that provides and enables services and champions sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, especially the under-served".

Feminist CSOs who will receive funding, will self-assess their needs, and propose where and how they would like to improve and strengthen their organization and the collectives they are part of. The FON-tastic consortium members will react to those needs by providing tailor-made trainings and support in advocacy, organizational development, movement building, financial risk management, documentation of cases of violence using ensuring gender-transformational ecological approaches. Moreover, the selected feminist CSOs will be supported to empower and create collective movements to share their knowledge and ideas, building on best practice.

What will success look like at the end of the project?

Alice Bordaçarre, Head of Women's Rights Desk (FIDH)

We aim to see stronger, strengthened, and listened feminist communities, who will come together at national, regional and international level to shape laws, policies and norms through feminist action to achieve gender equality and respect of human rights for all by combating gender-based violence.

The logo for FIDH, consisting of the lowercase letters 'fidh' in white on a dark purple rectangular background.

FIDH documents violations of human rights such as SGBV and advocates to guarantee support and access to justice for victims and survivors.

