



HOPE FOUNDATION FOR AFRICAN WOMEN (HFAW)

ANNUAL REPORT

2015

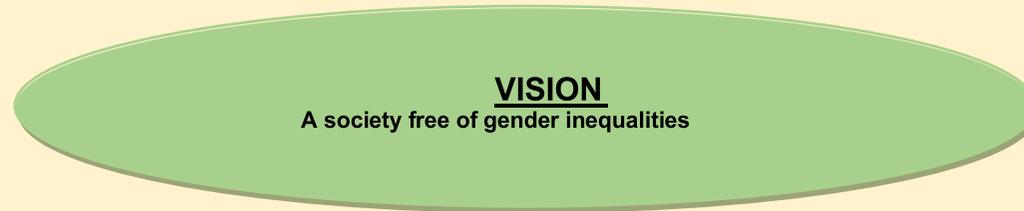


**EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS: TRANSFORMING
COMMUNITIES USING POPULAR EDUCATION MODEL**

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Model of our program



Opening Letter

Dear Friends, Colleagues and supporters!

We are pleased to share our very first Annual Report! for 2015. Previously, we have only managed to produce mini reports based on single projects. This year our annual report will shed light on our progress, activities, model approach and initiatives to increase our outputs and impacts

HFAW believes in the power of ordinary people and seeks to unveil it. We believe that communities know themselves best and have the best solutions for their own problems. We further believe that when women and girls are empowered, they can have tremendous transformation of their families and communities. We are also aware that our women are dealing with formidable challenges to survive and will have a hard time reaching their potential due to the chronic gender disparities currently experienced which has led to pervasive poverty and violence against women and girls. The rampant FGM in the communities we work and the socialization associated with it explains the status quo for women as well as the high rates of early pregnancies.

To address these challenges we have to use three prong approaches: Tackle gender issues such as GBV and FGM for social empowerment; Empower women economically through supporting agribusinesses including providing crop and animal husbandry best practices, provide finance and entrepreneurship literacy trainings, offer avenues to credits and markets for their produce; advance understanding of human rights as well as motivate participation in leadership issues including holding their leaders to account especially to end corruption. With limited resources, we are having many challenges but we are taking small but incremental steps forward using popular education model.

The strength of any organization is measured not only by its accomplishments but its ability to move forward with extremely limited resources. As a young organization HFAW had a difficult financial year but worked hard to advance its community transformative work. We continue to support women with their economic activities especially the recipients of kiva loans; We used our new model, popular education, to reach over 400 pupils and parents and over 25 teachers with information about child abuse, FGM, early pregnancies and child rights. This is in addition to the previous year when we had reached over 1000 pupils and 400 parents and 50 teachers with similar information. We shared popular education methods with 8 central African women and 25 women from 9 East African countries.

We continue to mentor our HFAW health and human rights facilitators who are becoming formidable village activists and build the capacity of our staff. We are proud of the work done by our women and staff this year as they gave so much of their unpaid time.

We thank our supporters including International Methodist Women, EPES Foundation and global giving Foundation and for standing up with us during a difficult year. We look forward to 2016 as we put women, youth and children first.

Sincerely,



Grace Mose-Okong'o
HFAW Executive Director/Founder



Jane Olago
HFAW Chairperson
Nairobi University, Kikuyu Campus

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2014 to March 2016)

- Trained 30 (20 women and 10 men) health and human rights promoters
- Endorsed 139 kiva interest free loans
- Supported over 60 women with economic activities including dairy farming, tailoring, brick making, crop arming etc.
- Shared popular education model to 8 central African women
- Trained 25 women and youth from 9 East African countries
- Reached 1000 pupils, 400 parents and 50 teachers with advocacy and information about FGM, early pregnancies, child abuse and child rights
- Reached additional 400 pupils and parents and 25 teachers with advocacy information on FGM, early pregnancies, child abuse and child rights
- Sponsored incubation of rabbit farming with 40 farmers including donation of 20 does and one buck

HFAW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jane Olago (MA)- HFAW Chair; Nairobi University, Kikuyu Campus
Agnes Matagaro, BSC, HFAW Treasurer; Pursuing MA in Gender at Kenyatta University
Grace Mose- Okong'o (Phd)-Secretary and HFAW Executive Director/Founder
Joan Rakuomi, HFAW Assistant Chairperson; Pursuing MA in Gender and Development Studies
Joyce Bosibori (HFAW Assistant Treasurer) (Secretarial); Property Manager
HellenNjoroge (MA) HFAW Board Member; Nairobi Women's Hospital
Charles Anunda HFAW Board member (Diploma in Business studies); President Agmond International Company

HFAW STAFF VOLUNTEERS

Grace Mose- Okong'o(Phd)-Executive Director
Mary Were Nasibi (Phd)- Trainings Director
TeresiahGitau- (BSC)-Program Director
Lisper Bundi (BA)-Office Associate
Joyce Amoyi (KSEC)-Grassroots Project Coordinator
Vincent Oirere KSEC- Office caretaker

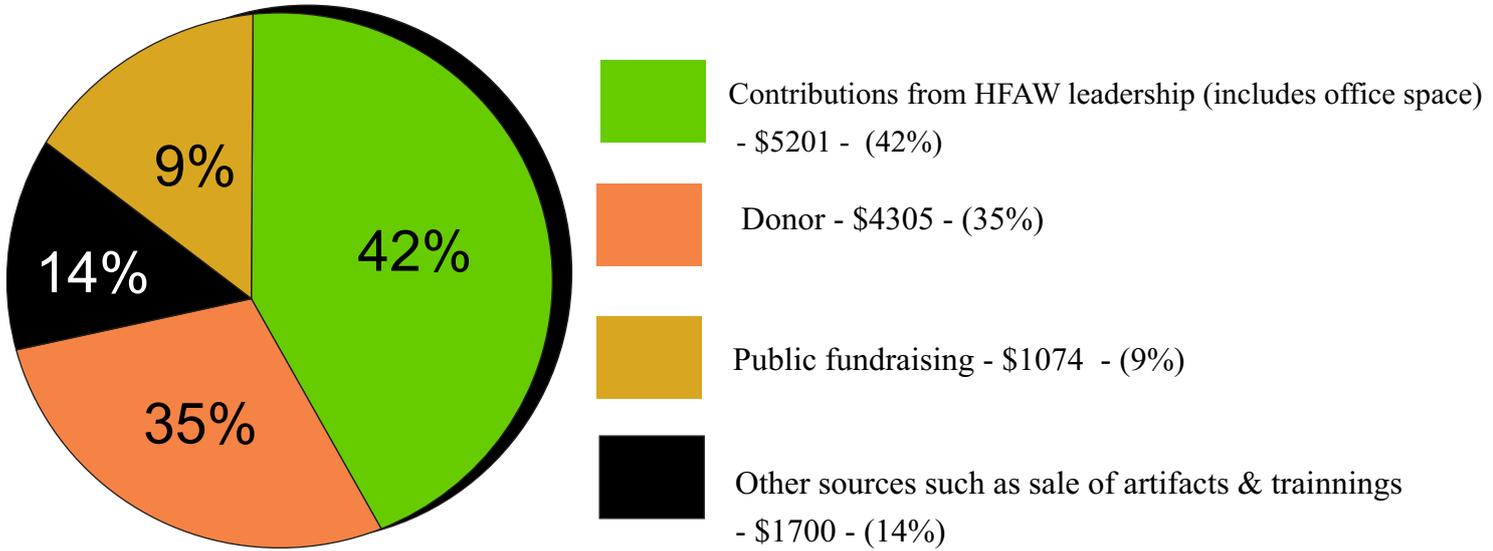
OUR VALUED SUPPORTERS/DONORS

International United Methodist Women (unitedmethodistwomen.org)
Epes Foundation (www.epes.cl)
Global Giving Foundation (globalgiving.org)
Kiva Foundation (kiva.org)

We want to recognize our valued individual donors
Melanie Nelson
Carol Larkini
Jim Roberts/Karen Roberts and Family
Lisa Fontes
And many anonymous supports, thank you!

Sources of finance

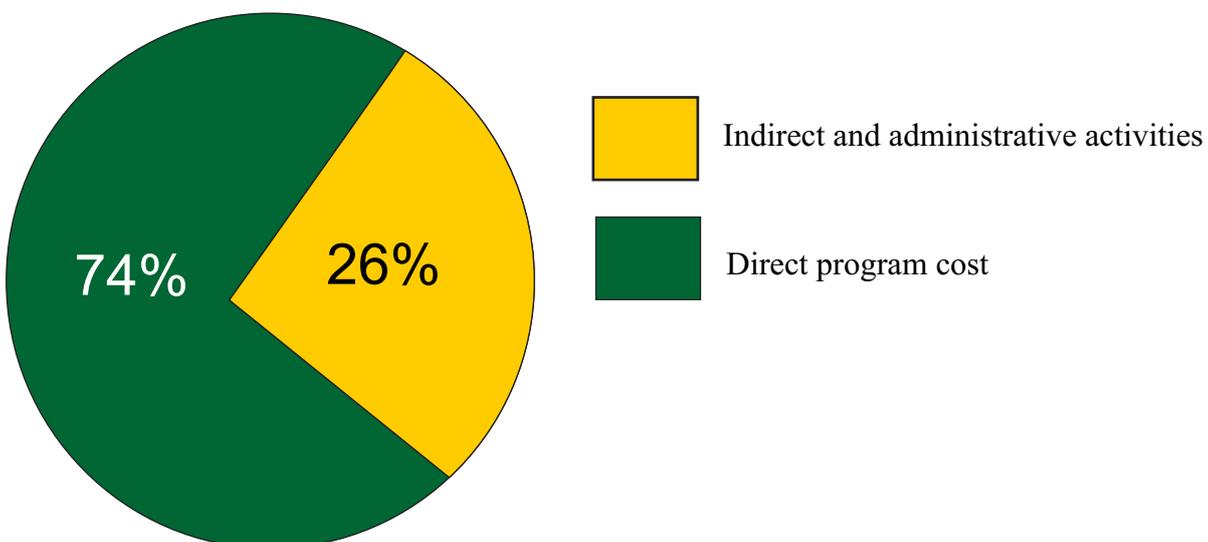
April 1,2015 to March 30,2016



Total funds \$12292

Total expenses

April 1,2015 to March 30,2016



Introduction

HFAW engaged its new model, Popular Education (PE) to challenge gender inequalities in communities. PE develops one's critical consciousness and creativity. It helps individuals and communities create their own history; motivates them to action that transforms their own life situation. Hence helps create a new story.

Every human society is built around a particular story, or narrative. If we don't change these stories, then humanity's legacy will be of dominant behaviors that uphold structures of domination, which will then continue to affirm that there is no alternative to the current systems of oppression. For the story to change, we must intervene in how and where it is made, and the best place to challenge the old stories – and to create new ones – is at the individual and community level.

Health Promoters sensitizing about GBV,FGM, child abuse & rights

Mould a child when s/he is still young they say. Once again Gisebei Primary School invited us to attend their education day. This was an opportunity for us, once again, to educate the pupils about their rights as children, child abuse and FGM/C through: the Use of songs, role play, music, drama, illustrations, question and answer sessions were used to engage the pupils and the audience. Over 400 pupils and parents and 25 teachers were reached with the information with their parents wanting to learn more.

Though during the discussions it emanated that a lot still needed to be done in terms of educating parents especially women about the wellbeing of their girl child (children) because some of them said “anything else can end but not FGM should continue as they think that it nurtures a girl into womanhood.



Health promoters engaging with pupils, and teachers at St. Anne Academy



Gisebei Primary

HFAW also worked with St. Anne Academy (above) in its advocacy agenda

Exchange Program with women from Central Africa

Our work in the community using Popular Education got the attention of our international partners/friends leading to an exchange visit with eight women from Central Africa (Zimbabwe, Congo and Cameroon). They came to experience and learn first-hand what is and how Popular Education model is applied in transforming community. During their visit, we introduced to them what PE is, how it works and also took them to the grass-root to interact with women and men who went through the programme.

“The trip to Kenya was fruitful in that it opened my eyes to new things and ways in which to improve the community through interventions for women. The HFAW methodology of Popular Education is a good one. This is so because it engages everyone and acknowledges that everyone has a part to play, no matter their social ranking. It also builds people from their



lived realities, it addresses problems according to the needs presented using the simplest resources thus saving on time and money,” said one of the visiting guests, Samantha.

People have the power, ability and are capable to change their own realities, this is what we believe in and preach as an organization. The fact that we live in different geographical areas does not mean we cannot relate to one another's problems/challenges. The visit was an eye opener to our sisters from another country because, Samantha further wrote:

“I have identified the area of Cultural practices and sexuality. The experience in Kenya taught me that Africa still has a long way to go in terms of addressing cultural practices that are harmful especially to women and children. An example is that of the FGM practice that is still rampant in some parts of Kenya. In Zimbabwe, in Shamva district, there is a high rate of child marriages and people are comfortable with it... I would like to pursue this topic of cultural practices in my area as I have seen the impact it has on the girl child as well as the children that are born under such conditions.”

Involvement of men in our programme is significant, the community we work in is very patriarchal and to succeed in such an environment men need to also be part of the process. They are not only involved because of success of the programme but also to help us deal with the backlash and realize our mission of gender equality.

“Men can be facilitators in the improvement of the lifestyles of women and children; Women, in whatever circumstances, can be empowered to improve their situations; Projects, when well coordinated, can improve communities as a whole; There is need for the engagement of local authorities in programming” Grace Musuka Reported back on behalf of other team members. The women expressed a strong interest to further learn more about Popular Education with the intention of bringing back the method to their respective countries. Finally two women managed to register to participate in the EPES International School in January 2016 in Chile and one managed to attend. EPES is our mentor and role model on Popular Education

LUCCEA TOT Training on the Abandonment of FGM/C

In wanting to find ways of overcoming mere awareness on FGM/C and building strong and new strategies that will end FGM/C; **The Lutheran Communion in Central and Eastern Africa (LUCCEA)** Secretariat, having been informed about HFAW work in Nyamira and our unique approach (Popular Education model) in tackling the issues invited us to train the women and youth on Popular Education.

The TOT training entitled “**The LUCCEA ToT Training for Accelerating Abandonment of FGM/Cut,**” brought **Twenty five** women and youth from nine countries in East and Central Africa to Kenya to attend the training. The countries were: Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Congo and Madagascar.

FGM/C in Africa is a menace and the effects on women/girls' (physical, psychological, emotional, social and economic) is devastating. For it completely strips the women/girls off their dignity. Hence a total abuse of human rights.

To end FGM/C Popular Education was the new strategy taught to the participants. How can Popular Education end FGM/C one asked? PE critically helps one to examine his/her conscious leading to one questioning what s/he believe as the norm thus becomes critically aware of the situation and self driven in addressing his/her problems and the communities' too.

The training was simple, hands on, practical, participatory as well as interactive with fun, exercises, song and games. In addition, we also used visual by sharing real life photos and documentaries of what really happens during the so called “circumcision” and engaged participants in critical and analytical questions about the photos and documentaries. This lead to Participants feeling the urgency to do more and quicker to end FGM/C by using PE as it raises their critical consciousness. Furthermore they were convinced that it will end FGM/C in their respective countries.



"It is an idea whose time has come" said one of the participants from Kenya about Popular Education and ending FGM/C. "Where has this approach been in the world?" Another participant from Tanzania asked.

Popular education helps one see beyond the normal and helps one re-examine themselves for example during the session one reverend from Congo shared that, she previously had been given a book on FGM to read however ignored. She said "I did not think FGM was a significant problem of concern to me as it was not rampant in my country." After the training she shared that she felt compelled to do something to learn more and combat FGM no matter which country is practicing it.

Shocked by the extent of which communities go to circumcise their girls, as no one had shared with her until the training of what really happens, a Reverend from Uganda said "Now I feel a strong obligation to end FGM whatever it takes."

At the end of the training were able to come up with a Regional and individual Action Plan that they will use in their respective countries.

The participants made overwhelming requests for plans us to provide additional trainings. Requests were made for the LUCCEA office to work with us to support implementation of an action plan and additional trainings in specific countries to ensure that each participant took actual actions in their churches as simple as including FGM issue in church programs.

Economic empowerment

HFAW Supports Women Economic Empowerment Projects

Working with women without supporting their priorities is futile. Economic needs have been identified by women as a top priority. Many of the HFAW beneficiaries have launched their own economic empowerment projects that generate some income for their own family upkeep. This economic activities have also played a key role as a springboard for our transformative educational program in Nyamira county.



Jackline used her Kiva loan to buy a cow.



Lydia used her Kiva loan to buy cow medicine



Ruth used her Kiva loan to buy fertilizers & high-brid seeds



Without skills/fertilizers there is low production of crops

Since 2012, HFAW worked with kiva to endorse 139 interest free loans to over 60 women (including a few men). Our own evidence seems to suggest that loans alone do not transform lives. Since these communities are largely agricultural, women require serious agricultural skills both crop and animal husbandry in order to improve their livelihoods. It is very evident that many families seem to perceive farming as a way of life rather than a serious agribusiness venture. Additionally women require access to credits and this is a problem since many women do not have property that can be presented to financial institutions as collateral. Women have also reported that they have major challenges with balancing their economic empowerment with their heavy domestic chores. These calls for real advocacy skills to enable women learn how to negotiate with husbands and other family members to get help and support. The challenges women are facing form our core business in the near future

This program has transformed my life. I will go to the community and impart the knowledge to others

- Karen Nyaboke, Health promoter-

This program has caused a lot of changes in me. Now I have divided my land into two parts so that I use one part and my wife will use the other part. I now consult with my family unlike in the past when I made all decisions

-Mamboleo, Church elder and health promoter-

New Economic Empowerment Idea for Women- Rabbit farming

The CEO introduced the idea of rabbit farming as one of economic empowerment avenue for women. She went ahead and put up a demonstration farm where the women will be able learn and develop their own rabbit ventures. The women, through the help of our CEO will be able get markets for their rabbits. It was noted though, that for them to be able to put up this projects they needed funds for startups, and this is not possible. The reason being, the interest free loans they used to get from kiva.org stopped because of transitioning from individual trustees to Field Partnership. We could not meet the requirements of transiting to Kiva Field Partner. Hence the idea of women registering and getting low interest loans from United Women's SACCO for their projects was shared by our CEO.



Grassroot co-ordinator Joyce- young rabbit project

HFAW work has made me know my rights. I never knew we have so many rights as women. I feel so empowered. I never knew how to speak in public, now I can speak.

**-Joyce Onwonga,
Health promoter**

Capacity Building

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

To be able to get a clear sense of direction, we were able to develop a strategic plan for 2016-2020 with the participation of the staff, grass root and board members with the help of a consultant. This was a two day workshop which took place in Nairobi at YMCA. The strategic plan will clarify our focus and help us better engage our local beneficiaries and stakeholders at the local and international levels. As we expect even better outcomes and bigger impact in the near future. The main focus will be GBV, reproductive health, economic empowerment and HFAW capacity building. In addition it will act as a blueprint for our engagement in projects, finance and governance processes.



Chile Training-Epes PE Training

One of our staff was able to participate in EPES international school 2016 in Chile to learn about Popular Education for purposes of capacity building our staff. In addition, Maasai women's backpacks were sold for women empowerment program in Amboseli and the funds remitted to them. Later on, the CEO also to another training on “Being a Leader “hosted at Multimedia University in Kenya.



Training on Global Women's Leadership Network In California, USA

HFAWCEO was privileged to participate in the Global Women Leadership Network which offers transformative training titled “The Ripple Effect of Women leaders: From Local Impact to Global Change.” The training inspired direction for our CEO and helped her see the obstacles that impede the staff and stakeholders in achieving their potential. As a result, she came back with a new road map to steer the organization towards achieving its full potential and success. Following this training HFAW developed its first professional strategic plan to guide its activities.



Partnerships & Publicity

NDIA Women Walk and Fundraiser

Jiinue Women's Network in collaboration with us (HFAW) organized for a walk in Kirinyaga County Ndia Sub-County. The purpose for the walk was to educate the masses on electing leaders of integrity and fundraise for women economic empowerment projects. The theme of day was “Poverty is in our Minds, Wealth is in our Hands” “A New World is Possible for Kenyan women and Kenyans”



Over 1,500 women, men and county leadership including the County Governor joined the walk, with the governor flagging off the walk. During the walk and fundraiser, women were able to raise awareness about the ills of bad governance and its effects on women and girls. The funds will be used for table banking activities. For Ndia Women Empowerment Network popularly known as “Jiinue” (Swahili word meaning self-uplifting) to help women borrow funds from their table banking kitty to continue enhancing their socioeconomic activities.

Photographer, Richard Lord Visit to HFAW

We had a rare opportunity to share our work on an international scale with an international photographer Richard Lord (www.rlordphoto.com). Richard through our funder United Methodist Women International Ministries came to Kenya to visit our projects among the Maasai of Amboseli and Kisii of Nyamira regions with the aim of taking photos. In addition this was also an opportunity for him to interact with the women to get a clear picture of what it is they(women) were doing and also to experience their work. The women showcased their activities and a few of them interacted with him on a one to one basis.

Richard said “I like the women enthusiasm in doing this work” in addition upon arrival back in the US he wrote back to say “you are definitely in the top 5 in my 25 years of doing this work. The depth and insight that you provided are very rare when working with development/health etc agencies.”Richard mentioned that the outcome (Journal) of the visit will be out in July/August 2016



Other partnerships & publicity

We participated in Girl Generation forum where FGM/Cut stake holders attended

We participated in launching of leadership program in Egerton University

We Elected and legalized new board members

We attended KIVA meeting and earned a certificate for good performance.

CHALLENGES

- We have done capacity building for staff but more is needed both for staff and HFAW women for more efficient delivery of services
- We are challenged with limited resources to an extent where we are unable to pay salaries for volunteers who give so much of their time
- Both HFAW women and volunteer staff need to have medical insurance and benefits but HFAW has little ability to deliver
- There is enormous need for our services but we are limited by lack of resources

NEXT STEPS

We plan to conduct follow up with schools where we have done GBV advocacy work in 2015 and 2016 to ensure that some changes are being realized

- We plan to conduct more advocacy in additional schools since there is so much request each time we complete an event. Reaching parents, teachers and pupils has been effective advocacy process
- We plan to train female farmers in agribusiness skills so as to allow them embrace best farming practices for better outcomes
- We plan to train in finance and entrepreneurship literacy as well as create systems to enable women to access loans. We will also make follow up trainings and ensure loan repayments. In this plan we intend to work with women to launch HOPE SACCO, which is a women driven savings and credit society to allow women who often lack collateral get a place to borrow, invest and return with interest. This will be a great sustainability plan for women and HFAW as interest accumulated will support HFAW trainings

Conclusion

HFAW strives for gender equality through economic empowerment, promotion of sexual and reproductive health, eradication of GBV such as FGM and advancement of human rights through popular education model. The bottom line is that people need to live prosperous high quality life. None of that is possible when there is chronic gender issues and poverty. Our core business is therefore to:

- (i) Identify, train and support successful economic empowerment projects. We must end poverty and food insecurity and improve incomes as our first step towards addressing gender disparities
- (ii) We must work with women and communities concurrently to increase women's self and community advocacy skills and impact. Targeting school pupils, parents and their teachers and leaders has been powerful
- (iii) We have to sensitize the whole community about poor governance and corruption. Corruption has dramatic impact on women and children and youth. Everything we do is null and void when corruption thrives and poor leaders end up being elected every year.

The three strands are very complimentary to each other and none of them seem less important to us and the women.

Therefore it is important for us to invest in the capacity of the people who are our greatest assets. This is especially true with our grassroots women. In 2015 we spent time and money in building the HFAW staff volunteers capacity. Our focus now is the grassroots women who must be fully equipped as they are going to be the driving force for HFAW. We have already trained the health and human rights promoters who are doing excellent advocacy work. We will now embark on other areas

(i) We plan to select a few motivated farmers and train them as field TOTs or field educators who will support the community with agribusiness both animal and crop farming

(ii) We will identify financial institutions who will work with HFAW to give financial and educational support to the women. Women need financial and business skills as well as access to credits and other products

(iii) We recognize that in order to improve our work we must collect data for monitoring and evaluations.

We have to constantly work with our communities because they can transform themselves. They know best what the issues are and can be best placed to find and implement solutions. Our role is to facilitate them.

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