

Make Every Woman Count

Annual Report 2012



Make *Every* Woman Count

Promoting the Empowerment of African Women & Girls

Founded in December 2010 two months after the launch of the African Women's Decade, Make Every Woman Count (MEWC) is a young African women-led organisation that promotes and advocates for the empowerment and rights of African women and girls. MEWC provide timely and accurate information, resources and tools to support and strengthen the work of African women's rights advocates, African women's grassroots, organisations and activists. Through its campaigns and publications, MEWC monitors and raises awareness of the African Women's Decade 2010-2020 launched in October 2010 by the African Union.

MEWC is both a platform for African women & girls, a space for shared ideas, and a voice for those who have largely gone unheard. Unlike many organisations working towards women's rights, we seek to strengthen the voices of African women and girls so that they can take the lead on Africa's social, political and economic development.

Mission

MEWC's mission is to ensure that African women and girls have a real voice in all governance institutions, from the judiciary to the civil service, as well as in the private sector and civil society, so that they can fully participate equally with men in the public dialogue and decisions-making and influence the decisions that will determine the future of their families, communities and countries.

Vision

MEWC's vision is a world where African women and girls are fully empowered to participate in the economic, political and social development and to influence decisions that affect their lives; a world where African women and men, girls and boys have equal rights and opportunities and equal access to resources, education, healthcare, employment, leadership and decision-making.

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**Dear Colleagues,
friends and
supporters,**

I am pleased to share with you MEWC's 2012 Annual Report with highlights of another great and busy year for MEWC. In the next pages, you will find out how MEWC is turning its vision and mission into reality to promote the empowerment and rights of African women and girls.

2012 has proved promising for African Women and political participation. Women are beginning to break the political glass ceiling in many countries and finding their way in roles traditionally occupied by men; from the nomination of the 2nd woman head of state, to the election of the first woman as head of the African union, more women are gaining ground in the political space.

We have come a long way, but we still have far to go. Despite the progress made in many African countries, women still live under the burden of discrimination. They are under-represented in decision-making positions, parliaments and peace talks.

It is not a secret that the world's challenges will not be effectively addressed unless the exclusion faced by women and girls is tackled across the board. We need to have more women in decision-making and leadership positions because whether the issue is food security, economic recovery, health, or peace and security, the participation and inclusion of women is needed today more than ever for more sustainable and equitable solutions.

MEWC is working towards realizing a world where African women and girls can achieve their full potential, realise their aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong and peaceful communities. We work to ensure that women have a real voice in all governance institutions; from the judiciary to the social service, as well as in the private sector and civil society; so they can participate equally with men in public dialogue and decision-making, and influence the decisions that will determine the future of their families and countries.

We believe, however, that for African women to have a real voice in decision-making they need to have the necessary tools and access to the avenues of change-making; for this reason, MEWC aims to provide timely and

accurate information, resources and tools to support and strengthen the work of African women .

Existing primarily online, MEWC is a virtual information hub that promotes African women's participation in all aspects of development discourse. MEWC centralizes current, critical resources and tools providing African women with a platform for sharing ideas and maximizing the advocacy and networking potential of the internet and social media technology.

MEWC uses its own platform to hold African governments accountable to issues of gender parity. In 2012, MEWC published its second report which monitors progress on the "African Women's Decade 2010-2020". MEWC's public review reveals countries that are failing to make any progress on women's rights and those that are repealing legislation protecting women. MEWC also monitors the role of women in elections across Africa, reporting about them virtually as they are taking place.

At MEWC, we recognize that increased opportunities for advancing the African Women's rights movement through technology will only ever be of use if they can be accessed and effectively utilized by African women themselves. Accordingly, in 2012, MEWC offered a series of workshops for Diaspora African women in the UK, focusing on technology and its potential as an advocacy tool and thereby empowering a new generation of African women leaders.

MEWC endeavours to use technology to embrace the approach endorsed by the African Union to mobilize larger numbers of women who can contribute to the dialogue about the issues that most affect and constrain them. Simultaneously, it seeks to fill identified gaps in available information about the status of women's rights in Africa and women's ability to participate in political processes, and through technology, make that information available on the broadest possible scale so it can be used to inform the global conversation and advance the human rights agenda encompassed by the AWD.

Unlike many new organizations that cannot begin to offer services until they have financial support, MEWC has begun operating successfully with virtually no funding beyond the in-kind donation of services that it is already receiving. While MEWC will continue to

embrace volunteerism and in-kind support as a key part of its sustainability and strategic planning, we simply cannot expand our organisation, nor continue to offer the services already established without the income to cover the very real costs that we incur. Our plan, with the assistance of our readers, is to introduce a staged development that will allow us to accommodate growth and ensure the stability of the organization over time.

On the 15th of January, MEWC launched a three month fundraising campaign from 15th January - 15th April to raise **£200,000** to carry out our vital work and help Make Every Woman Count take its next step in developing as an organisation. With your help, the crucial work we have done will be given stronger foundation and we can move forward to achieve even more.

Every woman deserves to be counted, so please help us ensure a future where all African women can raise their voices and be heard around the world.

If you believe in our values, and the work we have already achieved, please consider making a donation to our organisation by visiting our website at www.makeeverywomancount.org

With your help, we can achieve our goal. No amount is too small to make a difference.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication, passion and motivation of MEWC's team who every day work hard towards a world in which women's rights have been achieved and where all people enjoy their human rights.

I also would like to thank all our partners, supporters, and allies, we are very grateful for your continued support in making a difference in African women's and girls' lives.

In Peace & solidarity

Rainatou Sow

MEWC Founder & Executive Director

2012 HIGHLIGHT ACHIEVEMENT:

2012 has been a great year for MEWC. We were featured in CNN's "African Voices program". Our Founder/Executive Director was awarded the "Most Inspirational women by Women4Africa" and she was also named one of the 20 Youngest Power Women in Africa 2012 by FORBES Magazine

AFRICAN DIASPORA DIALOGUE ON WOMEN AND YOUTH SUMMIT

In May 2012, MEWC took part in the "African Diaspora Dialogue on Women and Youth Summit" held in Pretoria, South Africa. The event brought together the representatives of Women and Youth organizations and networks working on women and youth development issues, prior to the Ministerial Meeting and the Global African Summit of Heads of State and Government, at a Women and Youth Global African Diaspora Dialogue.



Participants at the "African Diaspora Dialogue on Women and Youth Summit"

DIALOGUE FOR ACTION AFRICA CONFERENCE

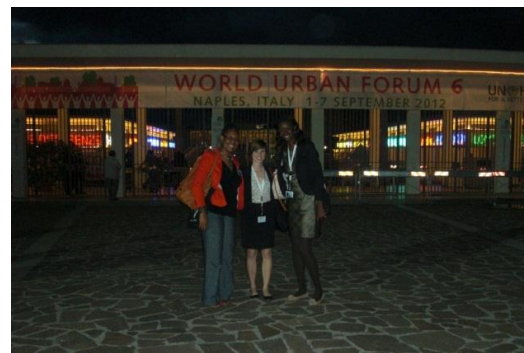
In June 2012, MEWC took part in the first "Dialogue for Action Africa" which took place on June 11, 2012 in Libreville, Gabon. In association with Mrs. Sylvia Bongo Ondimba, First Lady of Gabon, this day-long dialogue was to provide a global platform for NGOs, academics, business leaders, and officials dedicated to resolving Africa's greatest challenges for women and to enable them to share their inspirations and visions to work together to make a Plan of Action for Africa.



Forum on Women's and girls' education

THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM

MEWC took part in the 6th World Urban Forum organised by the UN Habitat held in Naples, Italy in September 2012. This Forum was conceived as a platform where various segments of society can discuss, learn, practice, agree and disagree on different ways to build and sustain a more prosperous urban future for our cities.



MEWC Team at the UN Habitat Forum in Naples

AFRICAN WOMEN'S DECADE 2ND YEAR ANNIVERSARY

MEWC organised the second anniversary of the African Women's Decade on the 31st of October at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University in London. The event was well attended and brought together women's rights, activists, grassroots women's groups and students. There were also government officials such the Deputy high commissioner of Zambia, South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and officials from the UK government's developmental arm (DFID).

Mama Khadija Hussein from Sudan was awarded for her great work on promoting peace in Sudan and for working to promote women's rights in Africa. This award is a part of MEWC's annual effort to acknowledge an individual doing fantastic work to promote women's rights in Africa.

African Women's Political Participation & Election Monitoring

During 2012 MEWC covered 18 elections across the African continent. There were both positive and negative results. In the Lesotho parliamentary elections there were no female candidates, nor were there any female candidates in the Guinea Bissau presidential elections. On the positive side, in the Gambia legislative elections there were four female candidates and in the Senegal presidential elections there were two female candidates. In Guinea Bissau, the second round of the presidential elections was postponed due to a military coup. New elections are in 2013. On the other hand, in 2012 Algeria became the first and only country in the Arab world where women hold more than 30% of the seats in the parliament.

The MEWC political participation and election monitoring project aims to provide a deeper analysis, in the form of briefing papers that incorporates primary sources: the views and voices of parties and voters on the ground. The first objective is to provide an easy to use tool to follow the role of women in elections across Africa by covering the position of female candidates before and after the elections have taken place. The accessibility of current and reliable data on women's political participation, access to leadership is even more difficult to find and compile. Without this information it is difficult to construct an objective view and interpret the position of women with regards to political participation. By providing this data in an accessible, easy to read framework, MEWC hopes to maintain an information gateway for researchers, policy makers, students, women's organisations and even local voters.

In the long run the objective of the project is to provide a platform to female voters and candidates to express their views and ideas and raise their political profile while engaging with the Pan-African women's movement via MEWC. MEWC hopes to provide a platform to female candidates and women-led political parties to share their experiences with our readers, policymakers, politicians and other women organisations. By sharing these lessons MEWC hopes to contribute to improving women's access to information, encourage communication and highlight the prevailing obstacles that prevent gender parity within the context of leadership and political representation.

The Political Participation team is working hard to provide accurate data and reporting. As resources are limited and the team is small, our ability to follow-through on up-to date and instant information is hindered. Nonetheless, we manage to cover every African election. It is important to note that MEWC remains to be one of the only outlets for elections information specifically focused on women's issues and participation in African elections. We are excited to reveal our second annual Political Participation report at the end of January which will show how our work continues to improve and also that the need for more resources and 'on the ground' access to information is crucial to raising awareness of women's political participation across the continent.

MEWC WORKSHOPS

Under the theme "Empowering Diaspora African Women to Lead" MEWC held a series of 5 workshops in London during the year. The primary objectives of these workshops were to empower Diaspora African women to play a stronger role as decision-makers in community development and to participate in all areas of social, political and economic development.



The programs aimed to enable women to reach a level of critical understanding of their legal rights, raise social consciousness pertaining to the human rights violations women face, and provide women with the knowledge and skills to create strategies. The workshops focused on issues relevant to increasing women's awareness of their role in peace advocacy efforts, their legal status, on democracy concepts, leadership, entrepreneurship, communication skills and how to lead and maintain effective civic organisations.

The workshops had the following themes:

- Women's Empowerment Through Social Media: Understanding the basics of Social Media
- Strengthening Women's Leadership and Capacity Building
- Taking your Communication Skills to the Next Level: Strategies for Success
- Empowering Entrepreneurial Women: How to Start and Run your Own Successful Business
- Identifying Gender-Based Violence and Understanding Legal Frameworks on Human/Women's Rights



In total, MEWC trained 80 women from all over Africa during the workshop series which was made possible through a grant from the UK Big Lottery Fund.

"This is my first time to take part in a workshops/training; I have been amazed by how much I have learned in less that few hours. It has been a great way to network with other African women. I wish there were more workshops/training like this. Thank you so much MEWC, please keep up the great work" Mariam Hassama

MEWC PUBLICATION

MEWC's publications are perhaps our most important achievements. Our publications are meant to encourage discussion, challenge the status quo and provide a new approach to gender issues in Africa. Some of our publications are the first of its kind in the field, namely our report on the first year of the African Women's Decade which reviewed every African country in regards to the progress made, or lack thereof, in the area of women's rights, and our report on Women's Political Participation, which monitors women's participation in each election that takes place in Africa.

AFRICAN WOMEN'S DECADE (2010-2020) SECOND YEAR REPORT

The MEWC African Women's Decade Annual Report (AWD) strives to evaluate the progress, initiatives and developments in relation to women's rights at the country, regional and Pan-African levels. Each African country has been evaluated, focusing on MEWC's central gender issues: Women, Peace and Security; Violence Against Women; Political Participation and Leadership; Economic Empowerment; HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health; Human Rights of Women; and Education. The objectives of the report are to function as a reference to women's situation across the continent during the second year of the African Women's Decade. Furthermore, we hope the report encourages decision-makers to increase their efforts to improve the situation for women at the national, regional, and Pan-African levels.

The Second Annual Report of the African Women's Decade was in many respects much easier to realise. The team had learned from the difficulties of the first report and were able to better prepare for the work required to complete the second report. These improvements helped everyone in meeting

their responsibilities and deadlines and we believe it is visible in the level of content in this report. We are very proud of the second annual report, "African Women's Decade: Two Years On". We still have a long way to go when it comes to inclusion of primary sources and more detailed and accurate data. Following MEWC's mission, we strive to further improve our work for the third year report.

The second annual report, "African Women's Decade: two years on" has been featured by among others: [the Association for Women's Rights in Development \(AWID\)](#), [UN Economic Commission for Africa \(UNECA\)](#), [the Union of International Associations \(UIA\)](#), ...

"Thank you so much for compiling a detailed report on the Decade of the African Woman report, it would be useful in our lobbying and advocacy activities"
Tafadzwa Muropa, Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe(WCoZ)

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS ACROSS AFRICA IN 2011

In February 2012, MEWC published its first report which monitors [Women's Political Participation in Elections Across Africa in 2011](#). This report seeks to provide an overview of the role of women in elections across Africa in 2011 by covering the position of female candidates before and after the elections have taken place; it is one of the first election monitoring projects in the field focused solely on the women's political participation.

Our aim in this report is to provide an analysis of women's participation in African politics, incorporating primary and secondary sources to reveal achievements and obstacles to women's political empowerment. We aim to provide a platform for feminist views and voices of parties and voters on the ground. The first objective is to provide an easy to use tool to follow the role of women in elections across Africa by covering the female candidates before and after the elections have taken place.



The accessibility of current and reliable data on women's political participation, access to leadership is even more difficult to find and compile. Without this information it is difficult to construct an objective view and analyses to interpret women's political participation. By providing this data in an accessible, easy to read framework, MEWC hopes to maintain an information gateway for researchers, policy makers, students, women's organizations and local voters.

In the long run, the objective of the project is to provide a platform for female voters and candidates to express their views and ideas, raise their political profile as well as possibly engaging with the Pan-African women's movement via MEWC. MEWC also hopes to provide a platform to female candidates and women-led political parties to share their

experiences with our readers, policymakers, politicians and other women organizations. By sharing these lessons MEWC hopes to contribute to improving women's access to information, encourage communication and highlight the prevailing obstacles that prevent gender parity of leadership and political representation.

MONITORING GENDER MAINSTREAMING WITHIN THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Make Every Woman Count set up this initiative as a means to monitor efforts within African Regional Organizations towards gender mainstreaming. In this regard, Make Every woman Count has been monitoring the political representation of women in these organizations as a method to hold African countries responsible and bringing the experiences, knowledge and interests of women and men to the forefront of the development agenda.

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

Throughout the year we have hosted many successful campaigns aimed to raise awareness and raise African women's voices. For example, to celebrate International Women's Day we published one poem per hour written by men and women from across Africa to commemorate the 2012 theme, "Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures."

To highlight the 6 months mark before the second anniversary of the African Women's Decade, we proudly presented an African Women's Day event: **Let's MakeRuralWomenCount. To celebrate African Women's Day we wanted to share** the voices of young Africans and highlight their ideas for a better future for African rural women. This project aimed to highlight the deep-rooted barriers to global progress and sustainable development and the need to include rural women's issues in policy-making. We featured the 10 most inspiring visions for making rural women count on our website and promoted them through social media.

Another successful campaign was our **Let's MakeAWDcount campaign**, a call-to-action dedicated to making the African Women's Decade count. We held a **#myAWD** forum on social media to hear from our followers and supporters around the world on what the African Women's Decade means to them. The **#MyAWD** forum took place on Facebook and Twitter, allowing participants to share their opinions and thoughts.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN

This year MEWC participated in the [16 days of Activism](#) by publishing articles on 16 different countries: Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. The countries were chosen based on having a history of conflict and/or having had a UN peacekeeping mission. To use this opportunity as a way to elaborate on the findings on violence against women and gender-based violence as presented in the second year report of the AWD, members of the MEWC team were asked to author the articles in the series.

Each country has its own experiences with regards to violence against women and gender-based violence, and the 16 articles highlights the specificities of each country. In South Africa, a country with a very progressive constitution, rape and domestic violence are common instances of violence against women. South Africa has the highest rate of death resulting from domestic violence in the world: a woman is killed by her male partner every six hours. Sudan is one of two countries, the other being Somalia, that has yet to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Seeing as this convention is a basic tool in the fight against discrimination against women it is an issue that should be prioritised by the state but also the international community.

The work with this year's campaign went fairly smoothly as the team worked well together to

produce timely and accurate information. We



also think that we have provided our readers with well researched and informing articles according to this year's theme for the 16 Days: "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!" Importantly, the articles show that there are many underlying causes to gender-based violence and the mechanisms that allow for protracted violence against women are often related to vast inequality, insecure livelihoods and conflict.

MEWC believes that militarism and violence exacerbates the mechanisms that perpetuate violence against women. Women's livelihoods are destroyed, environments are damaged, and women's health is often endangered. It also undermines democracy, human rights, access to education and economic development, all of which MEWC attempts to build through its advocacy efforts.

BLOG

The [MEWC blog](#) is meant to function as a platform for opinions, thoughts and ideas relating to Africa and women's situation across the continent and in the Diaspora. This year we sent out calls for writers on "Women and the Political Process in Africa", a series that presented several different insights and views from women in Africa and the Diaspora. This is something that we will try to do again during 2013, however it is difficult to attract a large number of contributions with a small staff. This is something that MEWC hopes to improve in the coming year.

As part of the African Women's Day celebration MEWC issued the competition "Let's Make Rural Women Count". The purpose of this competition was to encourage young African women to share their project ideas for rural women's empowerment to lead, develop

and reshape their communities. The winner was Namwase Angella Sandra who was awarded £100 and her contribution can be found in the MEWC blog section.

The 16 Days of Activism on Violence Against Women articles were also published through our blog tool. For more information on this, check out the 16 Days of Activism section of this report.

We are happy to conclude that the readership of articles published on the blog is increasing and that the blog is better established. Nevertheless, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to establish it as a known source for opinions, thoughts and ideas. This is something that the blog team will focus on this year.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Make Every Woman Count as a new organization is gaining speed, especially in our online presence. We see social media as an invaluable way to connect with others, promote networking amongst the groups we support and share our vision for a better world, which starts with investing in African women and women worldwide. Since creating our twitter account just over a year ago, we have made nearly **8,000 tweets** and have acquired

well over **2,000 followers!** We post daily about African women's issues and share news related to our thematic areas. We also frequently interact with other organizations and re-tweet their news and opinions as well. Similarly, we have a strong presence on Facebook and post news and videos daily. We also use our social media networks to promote events and campaigns.



MEWC'S MONTHLY INITIATIVES

MEWC's monthly initiatives aims to advance awareness, discussion and ideas of feminist movements in Africa as well as issues surrounding women's rights and empowerment on the African continent. Each month MEWC publishes one interview with a female leader, one highlight of an organization working in one of our theme areas, and one video. Each of these aims in different ways to provide a focused and sometimes new perspective or view on issues regarding women's rights and empowerment in Africa. The highlight especially is meant to encourage networking and discussion amongst women who are grassroots leaders in their own communities and who are working for women's rights in Africa. Moreover, the aim is to give a broad array of ideas that are all connected to the themes that MEWC work with: Women, Peace and Security; Violence Against Women; Political Participation and Leadership; Economic Empowerment; HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health; and Human Rights of Women.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH:

Every month Make Every Woman Count features a dynamic [group or initiative](#) in Africa or in the Diaspora doing inspirational work. We have featured international, national and local grassroots groups on a variety of topics ranging from women's political participation to girl child education awareness. The primary goal of this project is to give a voice to African women and African women-focused groups and help serve as publicity for them. Our highlight of the month is featured on the front page of our website and we promote their work through numerous social media networks throughout the month. The project also serves as a networking tool, as we feature groups strengths and challenges in order to promote capacity building and knowledge sharing amongst our supporters and other featured groups. This year we have highlighted many inspiring groups from around the world.

In January, we kicked off the year with The Association des femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène from the DRC which support the autonomous and independent efforts of Congolese women in the promotion and protection of their human rights whilst also improving their social, health and economic situation. We also featured The Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO), a women's organization that was founded in 1962

in Tanzania to bring together African women's organizations in a single platform for sharing good practices and for joint action to promote human rights and gender equality. We have featured the Girl Child Network from Zimbabwe and the Centre for Girls and Interaction from Malawi. We had the pleasure to also work with a Kenyan organization, Voices of hope Africa that works to end FGM and The African Women Power a diaspora led organization which showcases entrepreneurial stories of African Women.

We loved working with the ever-inspiring BrestSens from South Africa and the Grassroots Empowerment for Self Reliance who promotes women's political participation in Sierra Leone. We featured Pathways Togo and FAWEMA from Malawi who both promote girl child education in Africa. This project took us from London UK where we interviewed The Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development to rural Zanzibar where we met with KuFaa Tena a small women's cooperative that promotes empowerment and sustainability. The stories we heard through interviews and online communication from these gender activists across the globe are nothing short of inspiring and we truly feel honoured to share them with our supporters...

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH:

Our interview of the month initiative aims to engage world leaders and gender activists on African women's issues through a series of interview questions to be featured on our website. We seek to highlight leaders from varying backgrounds and discuss current issues and debates surrounding African women's rights.

We aim to feature a variety of inspiring women from grassroots activists to United Nations representatives. This year we had the honor of highlighting a Zambian female leader, Leah Chatta-Chipepa who is the Executive director of Akina Mama wa Afrika in Kampala and the CNN Hero Betty Makoni who has won 28 global awards for her innovation and commitment to her work to protect over 300,000 girls in Zimbabwe with her initiative the Girl Child Network.

We had the pleasure of hearing from Lindy Wafula the founder and executive director of

Project Africa, a non-profit organization established in Kenya which promotes gender equality and empowerment as well as Margot Wallström the first-ever Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Her mandate is global and multifaceted, focused overall on leading and coordinating efforts to end conflict-related sexual violence against women and children.

We have also had the pleasure of interviewing Tabitha Njoroge, the Chief Executive Officer of Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) from Kenya and Alice Muhirwa the National treasurer of a yet registered opposition political party named FDU-inkingi . We have featured Chantal Binwaassumani a human rights activist in the DR Congo working for The Association des femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène is a Congolese (AFPDE) as the project coordinator since 2005 and Naana Otoo-Oyortey is the Executive Director of the Foundation for Women's Health

Research and Development (FORWARD) an African Diaspora women's support and campaign organisation working in the UK and Africa on female genital mutilation, child marriage and obstetric fistula. Lastly we featured the touching story of Mariama (not her real name) a survivor of FGM/C and

published an in-depth interview with our own founder and Executive Director Rai Sow.

We are very pleased with the variety of dialogues we have had this year and hope to continue bringing inspiring voices to Make Every Woman Count followers.

VIDEO OF THE MONTH:

Also part of our monthly feature initiative, we highlight a new video each month. Videos are interactive and offer alternative ways of sharing knowledge and learning. They are vividly rich in image and offer our followers a keen insight into the lives of African women and activists in this field. Each month, we aim to feature new perspectives and footage from Africa and abroad. We particularly love sharing our video features on Facebook and Twitter and engaging with our followers about the content.

With our video of the month project, we have taken our website visitors to Gambia with IFAD's video featuring Fatour Danso an inspiring farmer and first ever village chief; we've learned about Shea Butter as a means of empowerment for women in Mali through UNIDO's video; as well as women's political

representation in South Sudan and women's global peace and security through UN Women video features. Our followers also watched the thought-provoking film, "This is my Body" and learned about women's empowerment in Liberia. We featured the inspiring videos: "I will Never Be Cut" which depicts young Kenyan women fighting back against FGM and "Peace to Politics: Burundian Women Take Charge" about a unified ethnic entity of women who paved the way for women's voices to be heard.

Through our video highlight project we also learned from the East African Community organization and heard the heart-warming stories of two Malawian women who overcame the hardships imposed by their traditional culture.

GAMBIA: Gambia's First Woman Chief Plants the Seeds of Change

Friday, 07 December 2012



Source: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Fatou Danso is a farmer.... but she is also The Gambia's first female village chief. Fatou has introduced many other firsts to her village. The land here was once only farmed by men. But now Fatou has distributed the land to women - and together they have formed a vegetable garden scheme. Now these women can support their husbands with what they earn from selling their produce.



SPECIAL SECTIONS AVAILABLE ON THE MEWC WEBSITE

DAILY NEWS:

One of the main goals of Make Every Woman Count is to provide timely, accurate and up to date information and news, resources and tools on gender issues in Africa. Thus on a daily basis, the Make Every Woman Count team works tirelessly to provide the latest news on Women, Peace and Security, Political Participation and Leadership, Economic Empowerment, HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Rights, and Human Rights of Women, by posting it on the website. This news is gathered from around the world and it is related to women's rights in Africa and all over the world. This has been very important tool for all women, activists, organizations, governments, who visit the MEWC website in that it serves as a central hub for news on women's rights in Africa from various sources. This is has been a challenge for the team on some days when the team members cannot keep a constant flow of the news posting but it has improved this year nonetheless. We are working tirelessly to ensure that our daily news is updated every day.



The screenshot shows the MEWC website interface. At the top left is the logo with a map of Africa and the text "Make Every Woman Count Promoting the Empowerment of Women & Girls in Africa". To the right is a "Select Language" dropdown menu and "Powered by Google Translate". Below the logo is a navigation menu with "Home", "News & Events" (highlighted), "About Us", "Gender Issues", "African Women's Decade", "Countries", "Tools", "Community", and "Blog". The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has two sections: "Solemn Declaration" with a link to "Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa" and "Maputo Protocol" with a link to "Protocol to The African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa". The right column is titled "News" and features two articles. The first article is "INTERNATIONAL: Quotas for Women's Political Participation" dated Wednesday, 11 January 2012, with a source of "Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)". The second article is "INTERNATIONAL: Human Rights and the UN: Progress and Challenges" also dated Wednesday, 11 January 2012, with a source of "UN Chronicles".

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Make Every Woman Count aims to be a source of information for all resources pertaining to women's rights in Africa. The announcement section aims to provide to individuals, organizations, governments information about different ways and opportunities to engage with women's rights issues and these include seminars, call for papers, conferences, statements, surveys, all of which are crucial in both informing the public and also ensuring effective participation in these activities.

RESOURCES:

Our resources section provides useful resources such as studies, reports from other organisations and international instruments like the Maputo Protocol, CEDAW and UN SCR 1325. This highlights the importance of sharing with other organizations and women's rights activists and scholars as well as the grassroots women's groups who need access to free resources pertaining to their movement.

ADVOCACY TOOLS:

Our main goal is being a hub for information and resources for women's rights in Africa. The advocacy tool is geared towards achieving this goal by providing useful information women's rights organizations,

grassroots women and activists the necessary tools to carry out their work. We thus make available a wide variety of advocacy tools from civil society, academics, governments and the United Nations and we hope to continue to provide more as we grow.

FUNDRAISING AND FELLOWSHIPS:

We keep an updated list of fellowships and fundraising opportunities for organizations, practitioners, activists and all women, especially African women seeking information and resources to further their studies or interests. This is a very important tool as it provides the information that most women in Africa are lacking, or would not know how to access and thus we hope that it is utilized and has been helpful to those who need and use it.

MAKE EVERY WOMAN COUNT NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter is published once a month. It aims to highlight important and significant developments in our six gender topics; Women, Peace and Security, Violence against Women, Political Participation and Leadership, Economic Empowerment, HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Rights, and Human Rights of Women. The newsletter is also meant as a one-stop for all our current news, events, interview of the month and other resources.