

AWID IN 2015

Building Collective Impact



In 2015 AWID grew and diversified. We ramped up preparations for the 13th AWID Forum; we focused a lot of energy on the Post 2015 Development Agenda and Financing for Development processes; and we continued the core work of our priority areas (challenging fundamentalisms, women human rights defenders, economic justice, resourcing women's rights and young feminist activism), which remain highly relevant and well positioned in relation to the challenging context.

awid women's
rights

Association for Women's Rights in Development

THE CONTEXT



We continue witnessing the rapid breakdown in democracy and democratic institutions, with spaces for dissent shrinking.

Attacks on civil society activists, organisations and movements are growing and the list of countries with shrinking spaces for social, economic and environmental justice work is getting longer.



Corporations are a leading power in determining the development agenda.

This worrying trend reinforces inequalities by allowing 1% of the wealthy to set global agendas. Even more worrying is the lack of transparent and accountable systems both internationally and regionally that can hold corporations accountable.



Multiple and concurrent systemic crises (energy, food, finance and climate) continue to deepen inequalities and pose major challenges.

It is widely accepted that policies of privatisation and liberalisation – the hallmark of the neoliberal model driving the global economy, the financial system, and aid and development policies over the past three decades – have resulted in deepening inequalities and environmental destruction.



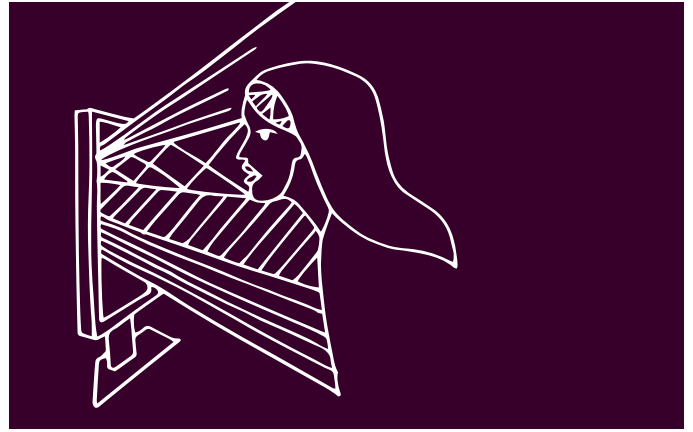
Violence against WHRDs remains an urgent problem.

In particular, WHRDs addressing environmental issues or the effects of extractive industry projects are being targeted by both corporations and states. Collusion of corporate sector actors with state and other powers to protect corporate interests over human rights has become ever-clearer; along with other non-state actors such as religious fundamentalists who are also increasingly perpetrating violence against activists.



Religious fundamentalisms are pervasive and increasingly powerful.

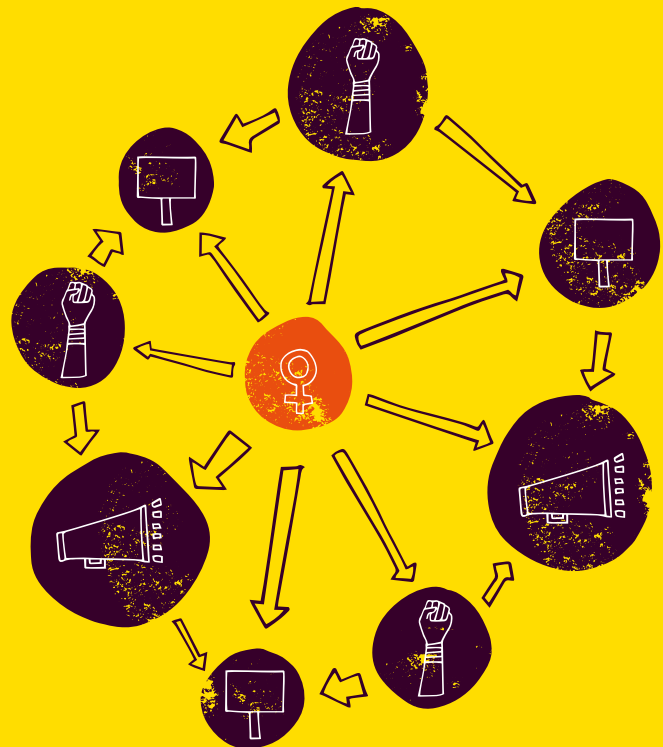
Extreme interpretations of religion and reinforcement of regressive, patriarchal, cultural and social norms – such as what we are seeing with ISIS, among others – are leading to a marked rise of violence. Fundamentalist actors are also reinforcing existing power or gaining greater formal power in State institutions, often through electoral processes.



New forms of online gender-based violence have emerged.

While the internet continues to expand access to information and the possibility of connecting and building movements across borders, it has also unleashed a whole new form of virtual psychological violence against women – sometimes followed by physical violence. Cyber-stalking, hacking, trolling, hate speech, blackmailing, slander campaigns against those who speak out online about feminisms, against oppression or fascism, and other forms of harassment of women, have become a worldwide pandemic.

In response, we are moving out of our silos. Increasingly, women's rights and other movements worldwide are articulating the systemic and intersectional nature of these and other problems. We are making better connections with the agendas of other social and environmental movements for solidarity, alliance building and collective responses. We are also seeing greater visibility of these movements fighting for justice on the ground – like #BlackLivesMatter, Student movements, movements mobilizing against gender-based violence and violence against women, Dalit struggles, Indigenous rights and climate justice actions.



OUR IMPACT

How did we strengthen
and build movements
in 2015?



AWID is
a movement building
organisation using multiple
strategies that contribute to
transforming power
and advancing rights
and justice agendas.

For effective strategizing and advocacy, we need the facts

75

We produced 75 AWID *analysis pieces* in 2015, stimulating thought and highlighting diverse issues and movements from different contexts.



To bridge the information gap on funding sources and make it easier to find the right type of funders for women's rights work and activism, we developed [Who Can Fund Me?](#) – a searchable directory with over 260 donors.



With the Urgent Responses Working Group (URWG) of the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD IC), we conducted groundbreaking [research](#) across Latin America, Asia, and Africa on the impact of extractive industries on WHRDs.



We launched the policy briefs [Religion, Culture and Tradition: No Excuse For Violence](#); and ['Protection of the Family': A Human Rights Response](#), reaching hundreds of women's rights and human rights activists, development agencies and UN officials worldwide. They are being used by women's rights activists to block fundamentalist agendas at the international level.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN MESOAMERICA 2012-2014 REPORT



We worked with the Mesoamerican initiative of WHRDs (IM-D) to launch the [2012-2014 Report of Violence Against Women Human Rights Defenders in Mesoamerica](#) and present the findings in Madrid, Barcelona and Brussels, including to European Union officials, to amplify and raise awareness about the grave situation of WHRDs in Honduras and Guatemala.

To exchange knowledge and join hands in solidarity, we need a strong online community



Through our website and e-newsletters, we sent out 94 [urgent actions](#) for cases from over 30 countries. Working with WHRD IC and the Center for Egyptian Women’s Legal Assistance (CEWLA) we used the media and [Twitter](#) to raise awareness of criminal charges brought against Azza Soliman from Egypt. Articles were published in the [Egypt Daily News](#) and the Guardian ([here](#) and [here](#)), and following the [joint campaign](#) and other collective actions by partners and allies, Azza Soliman was acquitted of all charges!

“Your solidarity kept me going emotionally and physically and I would not have done it without all of your support.”

— Azza Soliman

YOUNG FEMINIST WIRE

We supported and grew a vibrant online community of young feminists from around the world via AWID’s [Young Feminist Wire](#) website and [Facebook](#) page. Highlighting and raising awareness of Yara Sallam’s detainment, and campaigning for her [release](#), for example, resonated loudly amongst members. A young human rights defender in Tunisia remarked: “*I just wanted to say solidarity, solidarity, solidarity with Yara and the other imprisoned HRDs. She reminds us yet again that “freedom isn’t free” as they say.*”



We hosted webinars on “Sustainable Development Goals, Women’s Rights and the Media” (76 participants from 26 countries), [tax justice and women’s rights](#) (over 100 participants); and [corporate power and gender justice](#) (over 80 participants), building knowledge across borders and engaging hundreds of participants from around the world.

To build our collective power, we need to work together

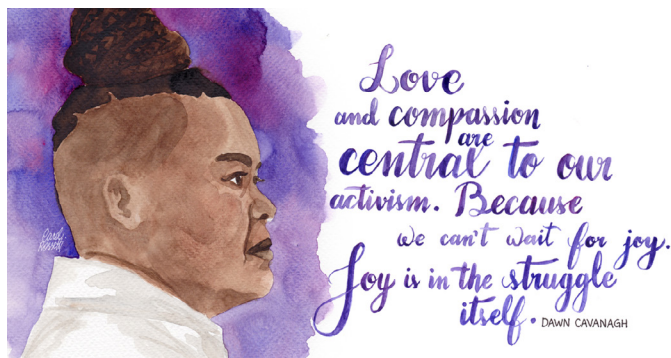


We collaborated with FRIDA on a global mapping to situate young feminist movements, their priorities, needs, and how they mobilize and resource their work. Launching the global survey [What does young Feminist Organizing Look Like?](#) the final report is based on 694 responses from 118 different countries – along with data collected from 1360 FRIDA grant applications between 2012-2014.

“ We deserve that you put aside your ideological, political and religious differences and fully recognize and affirm the human rights of women and girls and gender justice. Nothing less.”

– Lydia Alpizar

At the 59th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59), where the 20th Anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women was commemorated, AWID's Executive Director was invited to be the CSO Speaker at the Opening Session, with a message built from extensive consultation with women across the world through a 5-day online call to 'Have your say' (see [compilation of inputs](#) as well as the [live stream](#) and [text](#)). (“*You make us feel so proud that through your voice, we can be heard in the world*” Musimbi Kanyoro, Global Fund for Women) (“*Thanks for including the voice of indigenous women, among all women*” Rosalee Gonzalez, the International Indigenous Forum). Her speech was *broadly disseminated by feminists and women's rights organizations across the globe*, was published on sites such as [OpenDemocracy](#), was quoted in the [International New York Times](#), and went on to be made [quote of the day](#).



Originally scheduled to take place in Istanbul December 2015, The **Fourth International Strategy Meeting (ISM) on Religious Fundamentalisms** was held in Mexico City in February 2016 – rescheduled due to security concerns. Fifty-five activists working on the issue of religious fundamentalisms, women's rights and gender equality attended from 31 countries. An increasingly collective process; this year's ISM was co-convened by: AWID, ARROW, Musawah, CDD-Mexico, the Due Diligence Project, Coalition for African Lesbians, and ICAN (International Civil Action Network). Strategy ideas and initiatives that came out of the meeting will inform our thinking and strategizing going forward, which now includes a broader array of actors across regions and movements.



With guidance from a diverse International Planning Committee, we conducted broad outreach with key constituencies to develop the program for AWID's [13th International Forum on Women's Rights and Development](#): 'Feminist Futures: Building Collective Power for Rights and Justice'. Our [Call for Participation](#) received 1,007 session proposals from a diverse range of women's rights and human rights organizations, funders and other social movements. Major forum logistical preparations were also advanced during 2015.

To influence international processes, we need to increase our access and voice

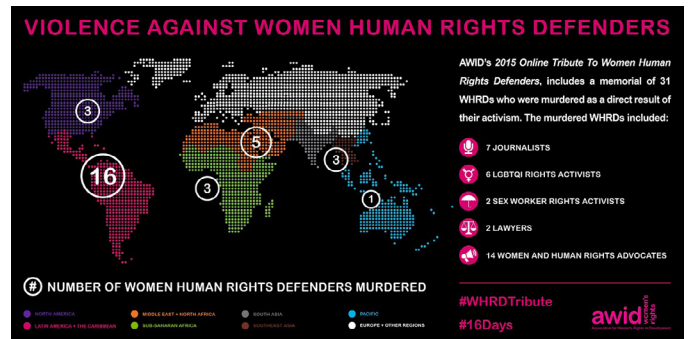


In the context of massive economic inequality worldwide, the [Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) and [Financing for Development](#) processes were critical points of engagement for women's rights movements in 2015. AWID contributed to maintaining a women's rights agenda in these processes. AWID, DAWN and Feminist Task Force reactivated and took up co-coordination of the Women's Working Group on Financing for Development (WWG on FfD), an alliance of women's organizations and networks that advocates for the advancement of gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights in the FfD-related UN processes.

Through collaborative advocacy with the [Women's Major Group \(WMG\)](#) and the [Post-2015 Women's Coalition \(WC\)](#), the new [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as "a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets" (paragraph 20) and has gender equality and women's empowerment as a stand-alone goal with specific targets (Goal 5). This was a hard-fought win and a big leap forward from the predecessor Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

“It's really a pleasure to get connected with a larger network of vibrant activists and reputed scholars.”

— Sunita Gurung, Individual Member, Nepal



Successful collaborative advocacy over a period of many months with the WHRD IC and IM-D contributed to the Human Rights Defenders Special Rapporteur, Michael Forst, concluding that WHRDs are “among those who are most exposed and at risk” calling on States to “develop, with the support of UN country teams, national programmes for implementing GA resolution 68/181 on protecting women human rights defenders.” Recognising the work of WHRDs and the specific risks they face, this is an important outcome because at the beginning of this process the HRD SR was not well acquainted with women's rights work or WHRDs!



To reposition power we need to give visibility and emphasize the important role that feminist and women's rights movements are already playing



Women in Bukavu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's South Kivu province, participate in the World March of Women in October 2010. Photograph: Gwenn Dubourthoumieu/AFP/Getty Images

AWID's successful partnership with Mama Cash and The Guardian Online - the [women's rights and gender equality in focus](#) hub - has enabled more feminists, women's rights activists and organisations to publish articles on issues which often do not get mainstream media attention. A powerful example is when the Guardian published sex worker perspectives on Amnesty International supporting the decriminalisation of sex work. The article "[As sex workers we welcome Amnesty's policy - it will help empower us](#)" by AWID board member Kay Thi Win, received a lot of recognition including "At last a well-considered article by someone with real knowledge rather than the 'we know what is best for you' brigade." (online comment). Without this partnership, we would not have been able to publish this story and to grant sex workers access to such a mass audience. Amnesty International's America's Director confirmed that this coverage from the sex workers' perspectives had a significant impact in Amnesty's International Council Meeting's decision to support decriminalization.

30% of articles published to the hub were pitched, sourced or recommended by Mama Cash/AWID in comparison to 16% in 2014.



With increased corporate interest in funding women's rights, we launched [Changing Systems, Changing Lives](#) - an animation video highlighting the crucial role that women's rights organizations play in advancing long term transformative change in the lives of women and girls. It received standing ovations at the Women's Funding Network's 30th Anniversary Conference with 350 attendees from various funding sectors! We also developed a short narrative [Becoming a Game Changer: An Integrated Approach to Women and Girls](#).

“ A number of persons have been engaging us since our profile was posted... We are grateful for the opportunity to access much of AWID's online resources, which have been quite useful for us.”

— Latoya Nugent, WE-Change, Institutional Member, Jamaica

OUR MEMBERS



57

We profiled 57 individual and institutional [Membership Profiles](#) from 35 countries and 8 regions.

“We are delighted to hear from you and the story idea in featuring members is indeed good. We have found AWID to be a very exciting network and we are involved in many of its platforms.”

— **Stephen Rwagweri, Engabu Za Tooro, Institutional Member, Uganda**

Responses to Individual Profiling on AWID’s website.

AWID members are activists, journalists, lawyers, young women, teachers, poets, social entrepreneurs, educators and more, working on diverse issues such as sex workers’ rights, rural women’s and community rights, women living with HIV and AIDS, women’s leadership in conflict and post-conflict situations, LGBTQI rights, strengthening women’s rights movements and young women’s rights among others.

As at 31st December, 2015 we had:

4,717

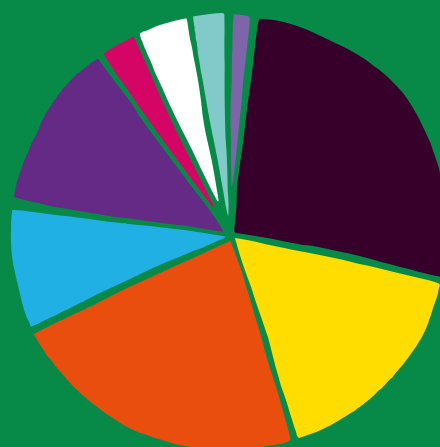
Total members

4,289

Individual members

428

Institutional members



- Subsaharan Africa
- South and SE Asia
- North America
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Western Europe
- SEE/CEE/CIS
- Middle East and North Africa
- Pacific
- East Asia

FINANCIALS

Contributions

USD

Donors

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	1,945,446
Ford Foundation	675,000
Hivos	409,015
Tides Foundation	375,337
Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs	305,477
Anonymous	220,000
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	163,400
Foundation for a Just Society	150,000
Oak Foundation	125,000
Mama Cash	89,835
Donations	40,829
Global Fund for Women	36,500
Wallace Global Fund	20,000
Action Aid International	14,739
Levi Strauss Foundation	10,000
Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)	11,069
IBON International	10,733
Channel Foundation	10,000
El Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres (Central American Women's Fund)	7,790

Other Revenue

Contributed services (probono legal services)	76,199
Membership, sales and services	18,135
Interest	5,595

Total Contributions

4,720,099



Expenses

USD

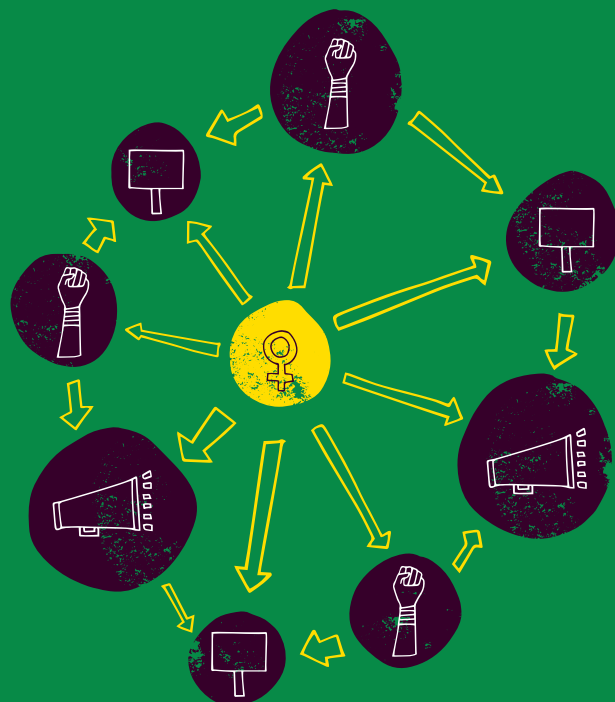
Advancing Women's Rights in and through Media (AWRM)	311,666
Resourcing Women's Rights (RWR)	980,989
Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms (CF)	413,525
Economic Justice (EJ)	495,660
AWID International Forum	554,127
Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD)	665,265
Women's Rights Information (WRI)	330,028
Young Feminist Activism (YFA)	264,673
Management and General	271,982
Fundraising	113,004
Total Expenses	4,400,919
Foreign Exchange (Loss/ -Gain)	296,844
Total Expenses with Foreign Exchange	4,697,763

“ Thanks for accepting my membership request. This is something I have long dreamed about. To be a part of women's rights issues. To be able to help my fellow women. I look forward to whatever I can do to get totally involved.”

— Bernice Bropleh Dorlaie, Individual member, Liberia

The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) is an international feminist, membership organization committed to achieving gender equality, sustainable development, and women's human rights. AWID's mission is to be a driving force within the global community of feminist and women's rights activists, organizations and movements, strengthening our collective voice, influencing and transforming structures of power and decision-making and advancing human rights, gender justice and environmental sustainability worldwide.

www.awid.org



Author: Rochelle Jones

Design and illustration: Lulu Kitololo Studio

Production: Laila Malik

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all AWID staff who contributed to this publication.

AWID is grateful for the generous support providing by the following funders towards our work in 2015:

Action Aid International
Anonymous contributors
El Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres (Central American Women's Fund)
Channel Foundation
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ford Foundation
Foundation for a Just Society
Global Fund for Women
Hivos
IBON International
Levi Strauss Foundation
Mama Cash
Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Oak Foundation
Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Tides Foundation
Wallace Global Fund