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ing feminist alliances ■■■ Nurturing feminist alliances ■■■



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EMPOWERMENT:

Radical, feminist versions of empowerment define it as a socio-political process of emancipation, combining work to raise individual self-esteem and develop skills, with a collective commitment and transformative social action.

Equipop supports the empowerment of women changemakers at every level (local, national, regional, and global).

Summary

3 Editorial

4 In 2022

6 Equipop's partners in West Africa

8 Networks

Mobilising

12 Fighting the backlash: uniting feminist energies

Supporting

20 Helping to empower organisations

23 The Feminist Agora: empowering the collective, empowered by the collective

24 The Young Amazonian Women for Development foundation: empowering women, taking action against violence

26 ROAJELF Benin: empowering women for a fair, sustainable world

28 Taafé Vision: rewriting the script for gender equality

30 Gouttes Rouges: united against period poverty and illiteracy!

32 Breaking the silence with Stop au chat noir! (sexual abuse charity)

34 Supporting a girls' revolution: the Guinean Young Women Leaders club

36 Voix de Femmes (women's voices): raising voices to empower Mauritanian women

38 Nigerian Young Women Leaders: combating gender-based violence

40 Warkha TV: the first platform to produce feminist content in Senegal

Sparking change

44 Advocating a feminist approach to health

Find out more about Equipop

51 Vision & Values

52 Equipe Hope ("Team" Hope)

54 Equipop's lifeblood

56 The team

58 Budget

60 Communications

62 Acknowledgements

Editorial

In June 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, dealing a massive blow to abortion rights and paving the way for further challenges to a great many freedoms, especially the right to bodily autonomy. This event has highlighted the risks bearing down on women's rights around the world. Alongside the Jean-Jaurès foundation, Equipop has published a report to illustrate how this backlash phenomenon is at work on every continent, and how concerted action by conservative, masculinist movements is working to impede new progress and turn back the clock on gains made.

Against this backdrop, diverse, strong, feminist organisations connected through cross-border solidarity, remain the most fundamental driving force behind resistance and the achievement of gender equality.

Based on this firm belief, we have ramped up our work over recent months to support over fifty front line organisations and activists across 12 countries, in West Africa and beyond. These organisations raise awareness about rights, spotlight and speak out against violence, train public sector workers, provide advice and care, and help enact changes to the law.

We have provided financial and technical assistance to help them conduct their projects and organise their work according to their own priorities. We have stood alongside them in success as well as in the face of adversity and have learnt so much from them. We regularly updated our vision of this partnership together, for to remain a useful ally, we must keep challenging and developing our stance and methods. Equipop has risen to this challenge thanks to its attentive team, eager to learn and to support the empowerment of our partners as effectively as possible.

At the same time, aware that it is one part of a vast galaxy, and keen to link up research, activism, social work and political action, Equipop has brought together the efforts of stakeholders from a range of sectors and regions. We have produced knowledge, facilitated discussions, trained students and professionals, co-built public policy, and monitored governments' commitments. In doing so, we are indeed helping to raise awareness about our interdependencies, build our collective capacity to analyse, reflect and take action. We shall continue down this road, seeking to fuel feminist policy and develop solidarity, ever mindful of raising the voices of those most affected. Together, let's continue to nurture our movements, and to build feminist alternatives to support fair and sustainable societies.

Aurélié Gal-Régniez
Executive Director

Sisterhood support Partnership Mobilization
Building feminist alternatives Building feminist alternatives

IN 2022

Nurturing feminist alliances ■■■ Nurturing feminist alliances ■■■

We cemented our assistance to women's rights organisations and campaigners

- 65 grants awarded totalling €1.8 million (up 183% on last year) in 12 countries.
- New partnerships developed with 37 organisations and movements.
- Co-facilitation of the first Feminist Agora in Niger, bringing together almost 50 feminist campaigners from West and Central Africa.
- Co-facilitation of a series of feminist tours reaching out to one thousand women and girls in eight countries to hear their stories and priorities in terms of rights.

We ensured policy makers heard the voices of young people and feminists

- Support provided to our feminist partners to take part in regional bodies in which we are stakeholders (the Ouagadougou partnership, the Organisation for Dialogue on Safe Abortion) as well as international meetings (International Conference on Family Planning, International AIDS Conference, and the UN Commission on the Status of Women).
- Support provided to a community of 400 young people working for 'comprehensive education and information' in partnership with UNESCO.
- Start of a three-year mandate as co-chair of the French High Council on Gender Equality's 'Feminist diplomacy; European and international issues' commission, and drafting of the 'final assessment report on France's international strategy for gender equality (2018-2022)'.

We promoted, produced and shared knowledge

- Continuation of the 'Feminism & Health' and 'Francophone Sisterhood' discussion series, addressing issues such as cyber bullying, campaigner burnout, and mental health.
- Drafting of the 'Women's rights: Fighting the backlash' report, in association with the Jean-Jaurès foundation.
- Publication of accounts by women survivors of gender-based violence with IBPF, Voix de Femmes, and the Association of women legal advisers in Burkina Faso.
- Exploring the concept of healthcare democracy in Senegal and Burkina Faso with some one hundred young people.



Equipop's partners in West Africa

BEN

BENIN

- CALVIF (Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes)
- CeRADIS (Centre de réflexions et d'actions pour le développement intégré et la solidarité)
- Filles en Action
- Fondation des Jeunes Amazones pour le Développement
- GRAFED-Ong (Groupe de recherche d'action et de formation en épidémiologie et en développement)
- Jeunes Filles Actrices de Développement
- Le BACAR (Bureau d'Appui-Conseils d'Afrique pour les Réalisations)
- OSV/Jordan (Organisation pour le Service et la Vie)
- ROAJELF Bénin (Réseau Ouest Africain des Jeunes Femmes Leaders)
- Scoutisme Béninois
- Women in Power Association
- Association des Femmes pour une Relève Orientée (AFRO BENIN)
- RESCUE AND HOPE
- AFRO BENIN

BFA

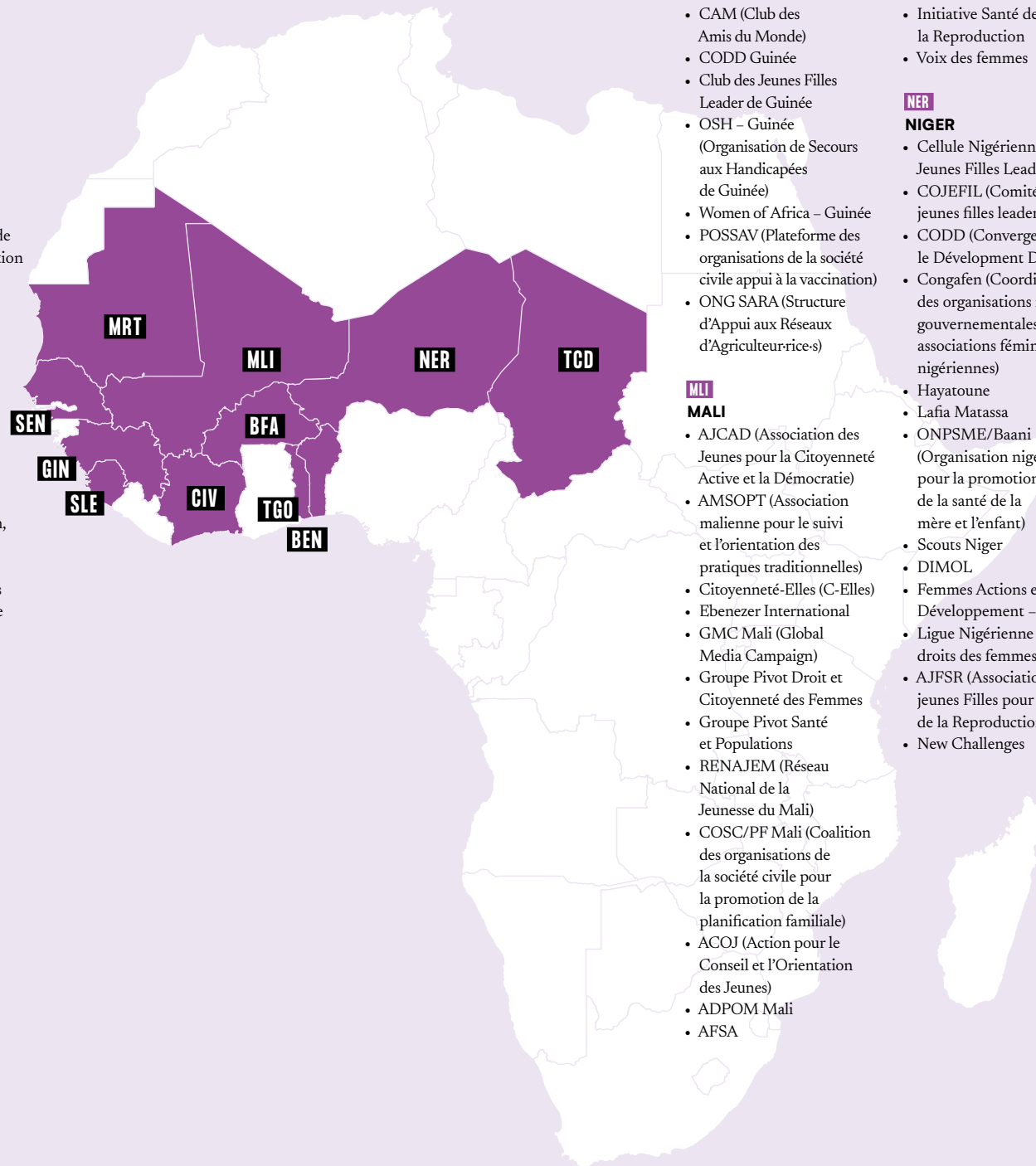
BURKINA FASO

- ASMADE (Association Songui-Manégré / Aide au développement endogène)
- Burcaso (Conseil burkinabé des ONG/OBC et associations de lutte contre les IST/VIH/sida)
- WOMA Média (nouveau nom de Emma L Infos)
- Femin-in
- Fondation Rama
- Gascode (Groupe d'Appui en Santé, Communication et Développement)
- IPBF (Initiative Pananetugri pour le bien-être de la femme)
- MMF/ANBF (Marche Mondiale des Femmes / Antenne Nationale du Burkina Faso)
- SOS/JD (SOS Jeunesse & Défis)
- SOS Village d'enfants – Burkina
- Taafé Vision
- Voix des femmes
- Women in Global Health
- Association des Femmes Juristes du Burkina Faso
- Diakonia – Burkina
- Collectif des féministes du Burkina Faso
- ADDAD Burkina Faso
- REPAPER Burkina

CIV

IVORY COAST

- ONG Actuelles
- AFJCI (Association des femmes juristes de Côte d'Ivoire)
- ASAPSU (Association de Soutien à l'Autopromotion Sanitaire et Urbaine)
- CPDEFM (Citoyennes pour la promotion et défense des droits des enfants, femmes et minorités)
- Gouttes rouges
- LEADAFRICAINES
- Ligue Ivoirienne des Droits des Femmes
- MESSI (Mission des jeunes pour l'Education, la Santé, la Solidarité et l'Inclusion)
- Association des femmes juristes de Côte d'Ivoire
- ONEF (Organisation nationale pour l'enfant, la femme et la famille)
- SOS Village d'enfants – Côte d'Ivoire
- Stop au chat noir
- RIJES
- WOMAN African Freedom (WAF)



GIN

GUINEA

- CAM (Club des Amis du Monde)
- CODD Guinée
- Club des Jeunes Filles Leader de Guinée
- OSH – Guinée (Organisation de Secours aux Handicapés de Guinée)
- Women of Africa – Guinée
- POSSAV (Plateforme des organisations de la société civile appui à la vaccination)
- ONG SARA (Structure d'Appui aux Réseaux d'Agriculteur-riche-s)

MLI

MALI

- AJCAD (Association des Jeunes pour la Citoyenneté Active et la Démocratie)
- AMSOPT (Association malienne pour le suivi et l'orientation des pratiques traditionnelles)
- Citoyenneté-Elles (C-Elles)
- Ebenezer International
- GMC Mali (Global Media Campaign)
- Groupe Pivot Droit et Citoyenneté des Femmes
- Groupe Pivot Santé et Populations
- RENAJEM (Réseau National de la Jeunesse du Mali)
- COSC/PF Mali (Coalition des organisations de la société civile pour la promotion de la planification familiale)
- ACOJ (Action pour le Conseil et l'Orientation des Jeunes)
- ADPOM Mali
- AFSA

MRT

MAURITANIA

- Initiative Santé de la Reproduction
- Voix des femmes

NER

NIGER

- Cellule Nigérienne des Jeunes Filles Leaders
- COJEFIL (Comité des jeunes filles leaders)
- CODD (Convergence pour le Développement Durable)
- Congafen (Coordination des organisations non gouvernementales et associations féminines nigériennes)
- Hayatoune
- Lafia Matassa
- ONPSME/Baani (Organisation nigérienne pour la promotion de la santé de la mère et l'enfant)
- Scouts Niger
- DIMOL
- Femmes Actions et Développement – FAD
- Ligue Nigérienne des droits des femmes
- AJFSR (Association des jeunes Filles pour la Santé de la Reproduction)
- New Challenges

SEN

SENEGAL

- ANJ SR-PF (Alliance nationale des jeunes pour la santé de la reproduction et la planification familiale)
- Collectif Plus jamais ça!
- ENDA santé
- GESTES (Groupe d'études et de Recherches Genre et Sociétés)
- JED (Jeunesse et développement)
- JGEN Sénégal
- LARTES- IFAN (Laboratoire de recherche sur les transformations économiques et sociales)
- ONG 3D (démocratie, développement local, droits humains)
- RAES
- ROAJELF Sénégal (Réseau ouest-africain des jeunes femmes leaders)
- Solthis Sénégal
- Warkha TV
- YWA (Youth Women for Action)
- Gorée Institute
- Réseau Siggil Jiguéen
- ABOYA (And Bokk Yaakaar)
- BANDO
- RJPA-MG-ME
- Youth Women for Action Sénégal

SLE

SIERRA LEONE

- Purposeful

TCD

TCHAD

- Ligue tchadienne des droits des femmes

TGO

TOGO

- SOS Village d'Enfants – Togo

Networks

Equipop has always believed that working together acts as a powerful driver for change. In 2022, the organisation furthered its commitments to a number of networks in France, in Europe, and in francophone sub-Saharan Africa. These include:



ALLIANCE DROITS ET SANTÉ (RIGHTS AND HEALTH ALLIANCE)

alliancedroitsetsante.org
This network of French and West African civil society organisations works to improve the status and health of women and girls in West Africa.



AWID

awid.org
AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development), set up in 1982, is an international, feminist, non-profit organisation that supports movements fighting for gender justice and women's rights worldwide.



COLLECTIF GÉNÉRATIONS FÉMINISTES

The Feminist Generations collective comprises organisations campaigning for the adoption of feminist approaches in France's domestic and foreign policies



COLLECTIF PRÉVENIR & PROTÉGER

@PProtéger
This collective comprises 14 French organisations that work to safeguard the rights of children and further the rights of women and teenage girls.



COLLECTIF SANTÉ MONDIALE

collectif-sante-mondiale.fr
This collective includes nine French organisations (Action Against Hunger, Equipop, Global Health Advocates France, Médecins du Monde, One, Oxfam France, Planning Familial, Sidaction and Solthis) which advocate to make global health a French priority.



COORDINATION SUD

coordinationsud.org
Coordination SUD provides national coordination for French aid, emergency, and development NGOs and is dedicated to supporting and representing their positions before public and private institutions in France, in Europe and worldwide.



COUNTDOWN 2030 EUROPE

countdown2030europe.org
The Countdown 2030 Europe network comprises 15 organisations that work to make sexual and reproductive health and rights a priority issue in the development policies of European and EU countries.



DROITS HUMAINS POUR TOU-TE-S

droitshumains.unblog.fr
The Droits Humains pour Tou-te-s grassroots collective aims to spur French public institutions into discontinuing the term traditionally used for human rights, droits de l'homme (mankind's rights).



ENDFGM

endfgm.eu
EndFGM is a European network of NGOs which fosters European action to end female genital mutilation.



EXCISION, PARLONS-EN!

excisionparlonsen.org
Excision, parlons-en ! aims to help bring together organisations and other legal entities, as well as individuals, around the issue of female circumcision in France and worldwide.



F3E

f3e.asso.fr
F3E (fund for the promotion of cross-cutting studies, preliminary research and evaluation) is a French network of NGOs and local authorities dedicated to improving the impact and quality of international aid workers' action.



IBP

ibpnetwork.org
With over 100 member organisations representing international non-governmental organisations (NGO), local civil society organisations (CSO), and universities among others, the IBP network brings partners together to share best practice, experiences, and tools in order to support family planning and reproductive health programmes. Its work focuses on supporting knowledge sharing, documentation, and research into implementation.



NOUSTOUTES

noustoutes.org
NousToutes is a feminist collective open to all, made up of volunteer activists whose aim is to put an end to the sexist and sexual violence to which women and children are massively subjected in France. The collective has two main objectives: to demand effective public policies against gender-based and sexual violence in terms of budget and methods, and to raise public awareness of the facts and mechanisms of gender-based and sexual violence through actions, communications and training.



PARTENARIAT DE OUAGADOUGOU

partenariatouaga.org
The Ouagadougou Partnership was launched in 2011 during the Burkina Faso Regional Conference on Population, Development and Family Planning, by the governments of the nine francophone West African nations and their technical and financial partners, in order to spur progress on the use of family planning services in these countries.



PLATEFORME DROITS HUMAINS

plateformeddh.fr
The Human Rights Platform is a group of French NGOs working internationally to advocate and champion human rights. It offers French NGOs focusing on this issue at international level a permanent space to share and collaborate. This enables members to raise their profile, increase their representation, connections and mutual support.



RÉSEAU DES JEUNES FÉMINISTES D'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

feministesao.org
This network comprises West African feminist campaigners who work actively in the field and wish to make their voices heard in national, regional and international decision-making processes, especially those related to women's and girls' rights.

MOBILISING

Equipop mobilises influential stakeholders to forge a legal and institutional environment conducive to human development and especially to compliance with women's and girls' rights.



FIGHTING THE BACKLASH: UNITING FEMINIST ENERGIES



In such exceedingly challenging national and international contexts, feminist movements are hard at work to uphold rights. Once again this year, Equipop contributed to these efforts at different levels, whether regarding processes undertaken at a global level, within the West African context, or in relation to the French government's foreign policy.

Equipop's report, 'Women's rights: fighting the backlash', published in February 2023 in association with the Jean-Jaurès foundation, presented an in-depth analysis of the so-called 'backlash' phenomenon. Theorised by the American journalist Susan Faludi, the concept of 'backlash' is commonly used to refer to the action of conservative, masculinist movements that respond violently whenever progress is made regarding rights of women and LGBTI+ people, and implement strategies not only to undermine such developments but also to roll back women's rights in general.

In response to these attacks, it is more vital than ever to take action, strengthen transnational feminist solidarity, and wage battle together. By working together at a local, national and international level, and by forging feminist solidarity across these different levels, progress in rights can be made. Equipop has been working in this way throughout the year, focusing on three main goals: to support feminist organisations and activists, to unite our efforts, and to uphold positions before institutions.

Championing rights across the board

In March 2023, Equipop took part in the 67th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. Indicative of this backlash phenomenon, the CSW led to a law being passed - far from an annual occurrence - on an unprecedented subject: digital technology and gender equality. Yet, these negotiations came about at the cost of concessions made to anti-rights movements, which are often highly mobilised and coordinated.



The example of the CSW demonstrates that the rights of women and LGBTQI+ people must be upheld with the utmost care in every arena. To do so, feminist activists and movements have to be involved in inter-governmental processes in the earliest stages, as true strategic partners. Such involvement must be given political and financial support. Yet, once again this year, many activists had to forego travelling to New York due to cost and visa issues.

With this aim of building momentum at an international level, in 2022 Equipop forged ahead with its support to partners involved in various processes and its contributions to the work of regional and global networks. For instance, we took charge of monitoring the Generation Equality Forum through its accountability group and pursued our active role within Women7 in advance of the G7 organised in Japan.

“The patriarchy is fighting back, but so are we.”

António Guterres, opening remarks to the 2023 CSW

Funding for feminist groups, a key issue

Increased funding for feminist movements and groups is a matter of necessity if we are to meet the challenges ahead. The Feminist Agora, facilitated by Equipop (see page 23) addressed this as a core issue. It was also one of the main messages a delegation of seven African feminist campaigners brought before political leaders in Paris in January 2023 as part of the Feminists in Action project, of which Equipop is a member. Aside from the volume of funding, the conditions imposed are also decisive, and need to shift to reflect the flexibility required in reality.

Of course, there are many other factors to consider in the fight against backlash. International security issues must be understood from a feminist perspective, drawing on the UN concept of ‘Women, Peace and Security’. We could also point to the fight against gender-based violence, and gender-aware budgeting, to name but a few, all of which fall within ‘feminist foreign policy’. Equipop is indeed a member of the ‘Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative’ initiative, a new platform set up in New York during the CSW. More broadly, Equipop has worked to strengthen and enhance the concept with overseas associations and research centres, fostering it in most of its institutional communications.

Supporting a feminist foreign policy for France

In France more specifically, the issue of feminist foreign policy is regularly on the agenda of meetings with parliamentarians. Following parliamentary elections in June 2022, Equipop began to forge ties with the newly elected members of parliament to raise awareness about this analytical perspective, which remains largely unknown to foreign policy experts.

Equipop’s approach also included involvement in France’s High Council for Gender Equality. In 2022, Equipop began a three-year mandate as co-chair of the ‘Feminist diplomacy, European and international challenges’ commission. This year, the commission focused on drafting a report entitled ‘Feminist diplomacy: taking action / final assessment of France’s international strategy for gender equality (2018-2022)’. In January 2023, during a scaled-down meeting, Equipop was able to remind the French President of the need to fly the feminist diplomacy flag unconditionally.

Presented to the Foreign Secretary and the Minister for Gender Equality on 3rd July, the report highlights three main shortcomings: French feminist diplomacy is not based on a clear definition; political support for it is too reticent; and it is inadequately resourced, both in terms of financial and human resources. Progress has been made, it points out, but a real step change is required to shift to a true feminist foreign policy.



On 23rd November 2022, over 2,000 people attended the ‘Women and conflict: towards feminist diplomacy’ event, both online and in person, organised by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, the French High Council for Equality (HCE), and UN Women France, demonstrating people’s increasing interest in this subject, and their high expectations of the government. As a member of the HCE, Equipop took the floor to reassert the value of feminist foreign policy in addressing many global challenges.

Championing SRHR rights in particular

The backlash applies first and foremost to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Since the very beginning, Equipop has championed SRHR across the board. While this approach continued at every level in 2022-2023, two particular examples deserve mention: the regional initiatives in West Africa, and the processes with global impact.

At regional level in West Africa

The Ouagadougou Partnership (OP) for Family Planning, established in 2011 and involving nine governments from French-speaking West African countries, alongside financial and technical partners, is an important regional entity. Equipop’s contribution to the OP’s various mechanisms lies in facilitating the involvement of feminist activists. Indeed, we need to take a step back from the prevailing vision of family planning, which takes a quantitative approach, and is not built with enough contributions from women and young people. The changes that have, without question, been taking place for several years now, must be ramped up.

This need to incorporate feminist perspectives can be found in another regional process: the Organisation for Dialogue on Safe Abortion (ODSA), which is a newer organisation founded in 2021. It is vital for this development to be based on a feminist approach, including young women in particular. Equipop has therefore been fostering dialogue on this matter and shall continue to do so during the next phase of ODSA’s development.

This year also saw an outcome for another regional process extending beyond the bounds of West Africa to include Central Africa, this time on the issue of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).

Permeating conservative reasoning within institutional arenas results in the reproduction of imbalanced power relations, which then restricts access to SRHR for all. In response to this, Equipop advocates a systemic, transformative, feminist vision. And CSE is an essential tool to redirect public policy in support of SRHR.

As a member of the Rights and Health Alliance network, Equipop has co-chaired the Technical Working Group on CSE since 2021, alongside the UNESCO and UNFPA regional offices. Equipop has helped set up a youth community bringing together over 500 members from 23 countries in the sub-region. Since September 2022, these young people have held online meetings every month to share knowledge and experience, debate the accountability framework, and drive forward national movements in their own countries.

April 2023 saw the culmination of a seven-year process. Health and education ministers from 23 West and Central African countries travelled to Brazzaville to proclaim their official commitment to comprehensive education and information programmes, high quality sexual and reproductive health services, and the fight against gender-based violence (GBV). This commitment is based on three pillars: access to sexual and reproductive health services, comprehensive education and information, action against gender-based violence.

“This must not simply be seen as an umpteenth commitment.”

Aïda Brun, member of the Ivory Coast National Youth Council, member of the Ivory Coast Community of Young Activists, Brazzaville, April 2023.

Within processes at a global level

In November 2022, Equipop sent a delegation to the 6th International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) in Pattaya, Thailand, which brings together several thousand participants every three or four years. This major international event quite naturally offered an opportunity to foster dialogue with non-profit and institutional partners. Whether through remarks made by Equipop or its partners, what the ICFP offered above all, was a chance to raise awareness about feminist approaches among family planning experts.

Throughout the year, Equipop has continued to monitor the Generation Equality Forum's SRHR coalition, of which Burkina Faso, France and the Rights and Health Alliance are leading members. As such, Equipop helped facilitate the network's discussions in preparation for the coalition's various key dates, from its annual meeting in New York, to the event at the Women Deliver conference in Kigali in July 2023. The main objective remains to implement the commitments made by six West African nations in Paris in July 2021, which were discussed at a progress meeting in June 2023 in Ouagadougou.

For many years, Equipop has been heavily involved in advocating for the adoption of feminist approaches in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Working alongside other international organisations and networks, that so often lack the means to make themselves heard, this entails acknowledging the impact HIV and AIDS have on women and young girls, and breaking down the imbalanced power relations which drive this pandemic.

In sub-Saharan Africa, women between the ages of 15 and 24 are three times more likely to catch HIV than men of the same age; in 2021, every two minutes one more teenage girl or young woman was infected with HIV worldwide.

Source: UNAIDS 2022

To understand the dynamics at play here, we need to analyse the gender power balance, which is brought to bear primarily in the realm of sexual relations. It can be seen in various forms: the struggle women face imposing the use of condoms in heterosexual relationships; sexual and gender-based violence which increases the likelihood of catching HIV; the patriarchal control over women's bodies; and discrimination against HIV-positive women.

This imbalance of power also transcends international organisations fighting against HIV/AIDS. It can be seen in speeches delivered at conferences full of keywords, in the optional nature of sessions on gender issues, in the way women and feminist activists are marginalised and excluded from decision-making bodies; in the non-response to sexual and gender-based violence.

Once again this year, Equipop bucked against this trend through advocacy work at the International AIDS Conference in Montreal in summer 2022, and with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's secretariat and decision-making bodies. As France is one of the major contributors to the Global Fund, our recommendations are regularly shared with the French government, which was the case in advance of the Global Fund's

2022 Replenishment Conference, during which France committed to increasing its financial support. France now regularly takes a stance before the Global Fund's various bodies in support of a gender-based approach.

Maintaining solidarity over the long term

All the mobilisation which took place, or took root, this year shall continue over time, regardless of the forthcoming national, regional or international deadlines. The backlash phenomenon is a tidal wave whose flow can only be stemmed over the long term. The fight is both very specific, according to each geographical and political context, and very general. There is no other way to achieve this than to promote feminist alliances at every level.



SUPPORTING



Equipop supports development stakeholders, especially organisations working on women's rights and health worldwide.

HELPING TO EMPOWER ORGANISATIONS



Radical, feminist versions of empowerment define it as a 'socio-political process', combining work to raise individual self-esteem and develop skills, with a collective commitment and transformative social action. At Equipop, it is this vision we are referring to when we work to help empower civil society organisations and campaigners. This core aspect of our mission is implemented with consideration for the multiple dimensions of power.

The different dimensions of changemakers' power

Inner power

This is activists' and organisations' ability to give meaning to their work by developing critical awareness of the world around them, and the part they can play therein. It involves building a strong identity through a clearly defined mission, vision, and values, which must then be brought to life. Activists' and organisations' inner power also draws on their ability to understand themselves, identify any challenges, tensions, as well as their own resources. Through this understanding, efforts and attention can be focused on opportunities for change and emancipation. This helps foster confidence, build vitality and fuel inner strength.

Outer power

This is the ability to act in accordance with one's mission, to create and produce the desired outcome. This power requires diverse resources such as technical skills, knowledge, analytical ability, interpersonal skills and expertise. It also entails having access to material and financial resources. Bolstering this power increases a person's social utility and the impact of their actions.

Collective power

Uniting, coming together, collaborating, joining forces, collective power is all about changemakers' abilities to develop a joint understanding of the issues on which they wish to focus their action, and to work collectively in this pursuit. It involves developing a strong understanding of each other, relations based on trust and solidarity, as well as smooth operating methods that bring out the added values of each stakeholder and respect each individual's distinctive nature. This power increases a person's influence on how societies and the world are built.

Support crafted by Equipop

Equipop's support to empower changemakers therefore involves each of these dimensions of power (inner power, outer power, collective power) and draws on several different tools, channels, and methods. For example, Equipop helps its partners conduct self-assessments, and provides regular strategic feedback to help organisations understand their own strengths and weaknesses, reassert their aims and ambitions, and plot a path to achieve this. This self-assessment also includes provision of financial resources to undertake any courses of action identified, which can be very varied: defining a strategy, training and fostering loyalty among campaigners, purchasing management software, creating a website, hiring staff, developing a monitoring/evaluation framework, etc. Organisations can thereby purchase equipment or fund work by contractors and consultants. They can also draw on the technical resources at Equipop's disposal. According to the teams' availability, Equipop can offer support on request with issues relating to advocacy, communications, management, gender-based approaches, and mobilising resources. The longer the partnership lasts over time, the more insightful this hands-on support becomes. Equipop also supports lifelong learning, knowledge production and dissemination through specific funds, as well as tailored methodologies (practice analysis, professionals clubs, change-oriented approaches, etc.). Finally, the core focus of Equipop's work lies in collective action. It does this by helping to set up networks and alliances, as well as helping to design and implement projects and campaigns led by consortia. More specifically, Equipop has developed a workshop methodology based on design thinking, which fosters collective creativity.

Equipop, a constantly evolving ally helping to build strong solidarity networks

Equipop has developed this working method using a holistic and integrated approach, mobilising both technical and financial resources. The most important part, however, is the intention driving it. The aim is to provide support while bearing in mind that our organisation is an ally, and not the party primarily affected. So, it is a question of building relationships based on trust, actively listening to partners' needs and wishes, being in synch and standing by their side in times of celebration, and also when the going gets tough, learning together and building a joint vision of the balance of power that underpins our societies. It also means recognising expertise developed through experience, and creating the right conditions for this to come to the surface, be voiced, disseminated, and transform us. Our global approach also implies accepting conflict and questioning, while keeping in mind that our aim is to help build strong solidarity networks of independent people and organisations.

The Feminist Agora: empowering the collective, empowered by the collective

In the context of social change, helping to build collective perspectives and action is essential. That is why Equipop offers as much support as possible to spaces which help break down barriers, encourage dialogue on lived experience, and pool resources. So, in French-speaking West Africa, Equipop champions existing regional feminist collective action, while also facilitating online and in person spaces for dialogue. As part of this approach, Equipop launched the first Feminist Agora, in Niger, organised in association with the Benin and Senegal ROAJELF, IPBF (Burkina), Femin-in (Burkina), the Ivory Coast League, the Guinean Young Women Leaders club, GMC (Mali), Voix des Femmes (Mauritania), Nigerian Young Women Leaders, YWA (Senegal), and the West African Young Feminists Network.

Over the course of five days, the 50 campaigners who attended were able to use this arena to share knowledge, experience, and expertise on a wide variety of topics, from supporting survivors of gender-based violence, to bodily autonomy. One of the major issues about which these feminists decided to raise collective awareness and alarm bells, was that of campaigner safety. Although modes of activism have developed and enabled greater inclusion of feminist campaigners in this region, the latter face multiple threats. This is a sensitive point, which needs to be addressed not only by the women themselves, but also by allied organisations such as Equipop. It is as much a question of safeguarding women campaigners in public spaces, as of finding solutions to combat the violence they face online, in a context where anti-rights movements are increasingly organised and influential, and call for organised resistance.

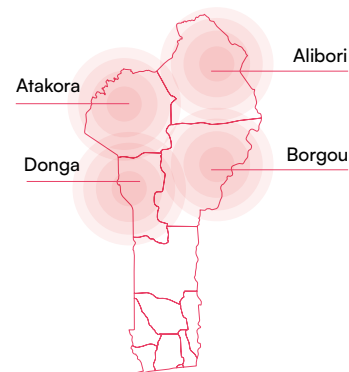


Benin



The Young Amazonian Women for Development foundation: empowering women, taking action against violence

The Young Amazonian Women for Development (YAWD) foundation works at every level - individual, community, and institutional - to build a world where everyone can flourish freely, without fear of gender-based violence or discrimination. YAWD was founded by Viviane, Nadège and Benedicta, three students at Parakou University seeking to take action in response to the oppression, bullying, and forced marriages to which young Benin women are subject. This national, woman-led, feminist organisation, officially established in 2017, has 40 members: an active, permanent team of five, three of whom are paid staff, a dozen volunteers, and 25 new members.



“Any journey must begin with self-confidence, an awareness of one’s own strength and potential, in order to overcome the boundaries set by society and fight against gender-based violence.”

Benedicta Aloakinnou, YAWD President

Challenging gender norms

The ‘Amazons’ organise feminist debate cafés at community level. These open discussion forums offer a chance to deconstruct gender stereotypes, raise awareness among community members about gender equality issues, and foster dialogue in order to challenge established norms. The aim of this activity is to encourage a collective change in mindset and promote a fairer society.

Supporting the individual and collective empowerment of women and girls

YAWD works with young girls to develop their skills, and boost their self-esteem and confidence. The aim is to encourage them to take charge of their own lives by providing them with the necessary tools to escape the inequalities and violence they endure. Through the Femme Impacte (women impact) programme, one hundred young women have benefited from personalised support, including help to implement practical community initiatives. The alumni network set up enables participants to continue training, helping each other, and sharing ideas even once they have left the programme. YAWD is proud to see these young women becoming changemakers in their own communities.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE ‘BREAKING DOWN INEQUALITIES’ PROJECT

This flagship social project run by the foundation brings young women from the same neighbourhood together to identify as a group the drivers behind empowerment, and examine as a priority how to improve their living conditions. By organising gala charity balls, YAWD raises funds to address the needs identified. Last year, 25 young women were offered support to return to work by creating and

selling biodegradable bags. Now in its fourth year, the project aims to support 50 girls and young women with disabilities, as well as single mothers with disabled children. Whether through training in financial management, help to sign up to certified courses at partner centres, or provision of funding, the Amazons help these women become financially independent.

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

Equipop has been helping the foundation to implement new organisation development practices to improve its efficiency. YAWD has produced an Organisation Development (OD) manual which has enhanced their credibility with funding bodies. In addition, Equipop has helped the foundation secure funding and develop a project taking action against sexual and gender-based violence. This is a revolutionary initiative in Benin in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence.

Equipping professionals taking action against SGBV

At institutional level, YAWD works with activists, the police, lawyers, as well as prosecutors to raise awareness about issues surrounding SGBV and build their capacity to respond to victims’ needs. The foundation facilitates dialogue and partnerships between these stakeholders and grassroots activists, thereby weaving a strong, committed network, and producing an efficient, coordinated response.

In the medium term, the Amazons intend to work with the Justice ministry to advocate for the inclusion of specific modules on gender-based stereotypes in all law courses.

Towards greater empowerment

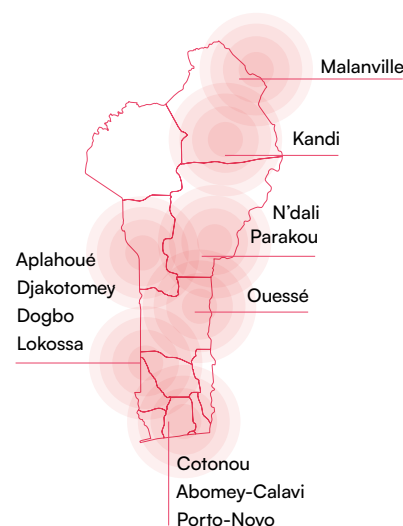
The foundation also applies the principles of empowerment to itself. It is therefore seeking to become more financially independent, to consolidate and develop its organisation, by equipping itself with county-level coordination units. In order to raise women’s voices further, and bring feminists together, the Amazons hope to set up a strong, feminist, sisterhood movement in the north of Benin. Its aim is to create a network and build alliances to increase the impact and scope of feminist movements.

Benin



ROAJELF Benin: empowering women for a fair, sustainable world

It all began in Senegal in 2009, when a group of young women decided it was high time for them, and their sisters, to be better represented. With assistance from the CEDEAO Centre for Gender Development, they set up a space where they could meet to take regional action in support of women and young girls, and there the West African Network of Young Women Leaders (ROAJELF) was born. This female-only network comprising women aged 18 to 35 went on to develop a Benin branch in June 2012. Its aim: to become a model organisation for young women on issues that concern them.



“Each initiative, however small, helps shape a fairer, more inclusive world.”

Mariette Montcho, Executive Director of ROAJELF Benin

Raising voices, asserting rights

Empowering women means building stronger, fairer and more sustainable societies. By supporting and encouraging women to get involved in governance, the network hopes to enable women and girls in Benin to be independent, and to enjoy their rights, with effective access to high quality information and services that respect the environment and gender equality.

A holistic approach to women's rights

ROAJELF Benin takes a multi-sectoral approach through five focal points:

- women's and girls' rights
- sustainable development goals
- peace and security
- ICT and entrepreneurship
- governance

The latter is a major part of the association's work, and the network offers support to all women who wish to get involved in decision-making bodies to protect women's interests.

SPOTLIGHT ON 'THE YOUNG GIRL FROM NIKKI' TOOL

In order to deconstruct gender stereotypes, ROAJELF Benin worked with a cartoonist, a sociologist, a psychologist as well as all the Nikki town representatives. That is how 'the young girl from Nikki' came about. This archetype highlights the characteristics, needs, and realities of young girls in this community. 'The young girl from Nikki' therefore played a central part in community discussions led by the ROAJELF teams on sensitive subjects such as menstruation. By encouraging open dialogue, the organisation helped raise collective awareness about the needs of girls and the types of oppression they endure. By dispelling prejudice, these debates contribute towards building a future where girls can live fulfilled lives, free from the restrictions and limited expectations imposed by imbalanced gender norms.

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

Since 2020, Equipop has been assisting ROAJELF Benin in its organisational and institutional development through a strategic partnership. The network is now focusing on developing its membership base in order to broaden its activities and run operations nationwide. The network is also hoping to expand several activities which have received strong community interest, including the archetype of the young girl from Nikki, and the production of sanitary towels.

Data-driven action

From a strategic perspective, the network sees action research as a vital focus of investment. Gathering more data will give more sway to advocacy and draw attention to the extent and impact of its work. This approach will be shared with other civil society organisations in the sub-region to help build momentum for gender equality.

“Equipop was the first organisation to place their trust in us by offering significant financial support, despite the considerable institutional and organisational challenges we face.”

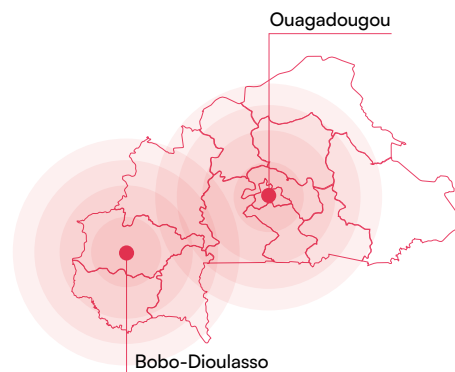
Mariette Montcho, Executive Director of ROAJELF Benin

Burkina Faso



Taafé Vision: rewriting the script for gender equality

Films are a powerful source of inspiration. They both reflect our society as it stands, and act as a tool to push the boundaries. The patriarchal perspective of society reproduced by the film industry is what made Azaratou Bance seek to do things differently. With friends from the world of cinema, she founded Taafé Vision in 2017. This feminist organisation has set itself the mission of championing women's rights by making stereotype-free films, dealing with issues written by women for the whole community. Taafé Vision has a team of 5 staff, and 13 volunteers. It is actively supported by some one hundred members who offer help to run projects and shoot films.



“When we send out a call for film projects - regardless of the chosen theme - most of the projects we receive always come back to the issue of gender-based violence, relating either to personal or family experience. Each initiative, however small, helps shape a fairer, more inclusive world.”

Azaratou Bance, Founder of Taafé Vision

Sharing stories among women

Taafé Vision uses its films and debates to shed light on the oppression exerted by patriarchal societies, gender norms, social orders and roles imposed on women, and social exclusion. It has developed tools and set up safe spaces conducive to free speech, from the initial creative phase to broadcasting works. Working together on scripts in a women-only environment is a strategic choice: to empower women and offer them an opportunity to share their experience. This creates a climate of trust where they can discuss their lives freely. It offers an opportunity for them to share their stories, disclose information, understand each other, and enjoy mutual support.

Self-empowerment through women-only environments

By offering spaces reserved exclusively for women, Taafé Vision creates a safe environment where everyone can express themselves freely without fear of judgement or discrimination, especially on socially or culturally sensitive subjects (like sexual and gender-based violence). Women-only environments can lead to greater involvement, thereby ensuring voices are better represented and taken into account. It can also help challenge these very same restrictive social norms and help understand and deconstruct stereotypes and sexist behaviour.

Finally, women-only environments can also be used to draw attention to and address specific issues in a more in-depth way. These women's perspectives and experience can then be taken into account more effectively.

SPOTLIGHT ON SCREENING & DEBATE SESSIONS

Screening & debate sessions are the focus of Taafé Vision's work. The aim of these events is to raise collective awareness and foster constructive dialogue on fundamental issues. Such opportunities are decisive in raising public awareness about the normalisation of violence in society, as well as gender-based violence. Public screenings are organised at festivals and at universities, leading to audience debates on the notion of women's roles in society and within their families.

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

Through the Feminists in Action project, Equipop has attributed several grants to Taafé Vision, including for its project entitled 'Turning ideas into films', and to support internal operations. Organisational funding is a key factor for feminist groups to help them develop and become sustainable.

One to watch

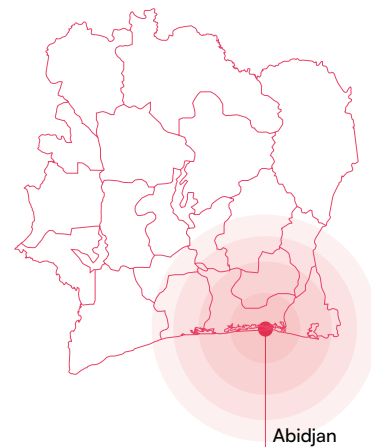
During the 16 Days of Activism campaign against gender-based violence at the end of November 2023, Taafé Vision has decided to organise a '16 films - 1 cause' festival. The idea is to show one film a day, during the daytime and close to the market, to help get around restrictions imposed on women in the evenings (childcare, meal preparation, no authority to leave the home alone, etc.). This again will be a women-only event.

Ivory Coast



Gouttes Rouges (red drops): united in the fight against period poverty and illiteracy!

There are still many girls who do not understand what is happening to their bodies the day they get their first period. Gouttes Rouges raises awareness, informs young people, and deconstructs common preconceptions. Established in October 2020, the organisation is committed to gender equality, and especially the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls in Ivory Coast. It currently has six volunteers and nine active members, as well as one staff member responsible for implementing projects. Gouttes Rouges is seeking to change the perception according to which the role of women is simply to bear children and have their period each month. One important aspect of their work is also to raise awareness about freewill and consent by way of subjects such as early marriage and sexual abuse within families, in relation to girls starting their periods.



“We take action so that women and girls can experience their periods peacefully, and without shame. So that they don’t have to worry about sanitary products or access to clean toilets at school, so that they can work from home if they are in pain, ...”

Amandine Yao, founder of Gouttes Rouges.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FIGHT AGAINST PERIOD POVERTY

Gouttes Rouges works tirelessly to bring the issue of period poverty to the fore, and to take action in the field, on social media, and through advocacy work with political decision makers. It runs ‘Red Clubs’ in low-income areas and schools, where women and girls can come together to discuss issues related to their bodies, their experiences, and their needs. Once particular problems have been identified, Gouttes Rouges endeavours to improve sanitary conditions by providing adequate hygiene products, and by renovating or building toilets in schools. Members of the organisation then conduct surveys in and around the clubs to identify the needs and preferences of girls who do not go to school, and set up a buddy system to provide them with sanitary products. Last summer, these ‘Red Clubs’ developed into month-long ‘Red Camps’, opening their doors to other young women over the school holidays. Finally, Gouttes Rouges is actively involved in advocating tax exemptions for sanitary products, alongside other organisations such as Jeunes Femmes en Action, Actuelles, Arc-en-Ciel, and OSEF.

Backed by Equipop!

Equipop’s support is not limited to funding but encompasses a global approach to help Gouttes Rouges with its organisational development. This has opened new doors for the organisation and enabled it to approach other funding bodies. The technical and financial support provided by Equipop during the ‘Menstrues Libres’ festival also helped it improve the event’s organisation and raise public awareness more effectively.

What lies ahead for the organisation?

Gouttes Rouges is seeking to expand into other areas of Abidjan and French-speaking West Africa. Regular contact with other campaigners in the sub-region has made them even more determined to share and implement their expertise and strategies in other countries, especially by means of Red Clubs. The latter belong to the girls themselves: they are spaces run for and by women and girls. Although their focus has primarily been menstrual health, as part of its three-year development plan, Gouttes Rouges also aims to address family planning, and cover issues such as contraception and safe abortion.

“You get the picture of an older sister with years of experience and knowledge, passing this on to her younger sister? That’s the type of support we have been getting from Equipop.”

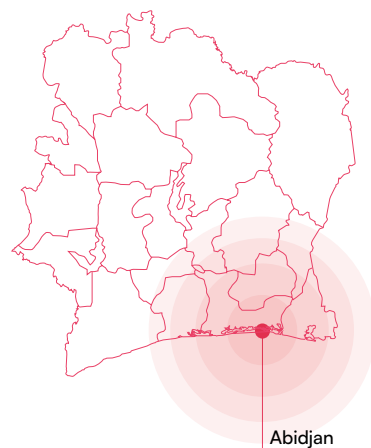
Amandine Yao, Founder of Gouttes Rouges

Ivory Coast



Breaking the silence with Stop au Chat Noir!

In 2019, Bénédicte Joan, a sexual abuse survivor, set up Stop au Chat Noir, an organisation which supports young victims of sexual abuse and encourages, promotes and supports action to bring an end to sexual and gender-based violence. Its name comes from an Ivorian expression, ‘act like a black cat’, which describes the way in which some young men slip into young girls’ bedrooms to obtain sexual favours, sometimes under duress. In truth, this expression masks a societal phenomenon that has become far too normalised, and highlights a number of issues related to how women are treated and their place in Ivorian society. Many victims of the famous black cat struggle to put what happened to them into words, or even to understand the seriousness of such acts. That is where the association comes in.



Abidjan

Stop au Chat Noir has a team of 6 people (consultants and volunteers), and over 100 members, whose work is twofold: preventing sexual violence and caring for survivors, including psychological support, educational psychology, and counselling, to address their needs and provide them with a safe, caring environment.

“We raise awareness among young people through debates, which are known as *gbayements* here. We also organise discussion groups where we talk about very crude topics, like sexuality, no holds barred.”

Bénédicte Joan, President of Stop au Chat Noir

SPOTLIGHT ON “LET’S TALK”: DELICATE BUT NECESSARY CONVERSATIONS!

“Let’s talk feminism” is an awareness raising and training programme taking action against gender-based violence, which began in 2022, around the districts of Sassandra, Soubré and Yabayo. The aim is to bring about the changes required to achieve gender equality and empower schoolgirls through inclusive education, by involving all stakeholders in the student community. How? By loosening people’s tongues on delicate but necessary subjects! These conversations take the form of discussions groups, conferences, live sessions on social media, with the same, single objective: to give survivors of sexual violence the chance to rebuild their lives.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE CONSENT FESTIVAL

In March 2022, the association organised the first ever feminist festival on gender-based violence in Ivory Coast: the Consent Festival! This first festival of its kind took place at Félix-Houphouët-Boigny de Cocody University, and highlighted the work of Stop au Chat Noir, as well as all the other organisations campaigning against sexual and gender-based violence in Ivory Coast.

The first ever Consent Festival offered a precious opportunity for advocacy, as all the recommendations put forward by Stop au Chat Noir to deal with GBV more effectively within universities were presented.

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

Through Equipop’s support, the organisation has consolidated its internal operations by formalising its financial procedures. This assistance has also enabled Stop au Chat Noir to extend its awareness raising and advocacy work in the region, contributed to establishing Villa Kotonga, and developing a mobile app.

Where words are welcome

Data is a vital element in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence, to understand the magnitude of the phenomenon, analyse the challenges encountered, and assess the impact of action in the field. In response to this, the organisation developed the ‘Stop au Chat Noir’ app to make an inventory of sexual abuse cases and record the accounts of women victims of such abuse. The chat function within the app enables victims of sexual violence to break out of their isolation and silence. Here, they can chat anonymously. The Stop au Chat Noir volunteers offer active listening and moral support. They also provide information about local and national resources and support mechanisms, direct them towards appropriate emergency support facilities, or specialist helplines if necessary. Stop au Chat Noir hopes to enhance the app with information on the context of GBV in Ivory Coast in order to inform young people about their rights and help them put the violence they may have experienced into words.

Support to rebuild lives

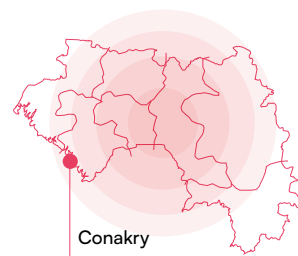
Villa Kotonga is an emergency shelter which was set up by Stop au Chat Noir. It is a safe, secure refuge for survivors of GBV living in Bingerville and their children. In order to support survivors at each stage on the road to recovery, the organisation has decided to equip Villa Kotonga with a creative space to run training courses.

Guinea



Supporting the girls' revolution: the Guinean Young Women Leaders club

In 2016, seven young women set up the Guinean Young Women Leaders club, to provide a safe, secure space for girls to talk openly about violence they may have experienced and the changes they wish to see in their society. Today, the club has 11 staff and over 500 members nationwide. Its aim is to foster a movement allowing girls, regardless of whether they are members, to raise their voices and understand their rights. Its members work to improve the sexual and reproductive health of teenagers and children through access to information about menstrual health and contraception, bodily autonomy, action against sexual and gender-based violence.



The club also helps prepare young women to take part in decision-making at every level - community, local, governmental - especially when it comes to issues that affect them. So, young members play an active part both in managing the organisation, and in the activities run: community awareness raising, empowering their sisters, mobilising artists, advocacy work with the authorities, supporting and caring for victims of violence, etc.

“We want to spark a major revolution among girls. So that they don’t always have to say yes. So that they can make their voices heard and say what they think. So that they may enjoy and benefit fully from their rights, in all circumstances. We seek to create the conditions so that girls do not have to endure an oppressive system, and can create their own, according to their own ideas and passions.”

Kadiatou Konaté, Co-founder of the Guinean Young Women Leaders club

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

Youth organisations struggle to secure direct funding. The Guinean Young Women Leaders club advocates flexible funding tailored to the reality of different communities, geographical areas, and populations. Through its strategic partnership with Equipop, the club has managed a €20,000 fund for the first time, while benefiting from support and capacity building. Bolstered by this experience, and now with access to a wider range of opportunities, the club members have incorporated direct funding of other youth initiatives into their strategy. They in turn offer support to the organisations running these initiatives so they can learn to raise and manage their own funds.

Proud to be empowered in the face of sexual and gender-based violence

Guinea is not endowed with funds to support victims of sexual and gender-based violence. So, one of the club’s proudest achievements is its capacity to address this need, if only in part. For the last two years, they have been able to offer financial relief and holistic support (legal advice, health care, psychological support, accommodation, etc.).

A strategic turning point

The club members are driven by strategic planning and ideas. In the future, they hope to do more in the field of sexuality education for girls, expand their return-to-work and economic empowerment activities to all young women victims of violence, and find new ways to take action against female genital mutilation, the prevalence of which has stagnated despite strong civil society mobilisation.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE YOUNG GUINEAN WOMEN’S FORUM

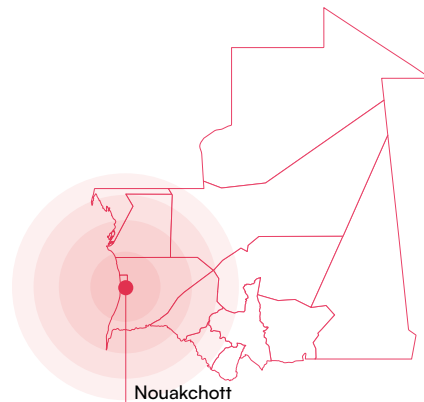
Every year the Guinean Young Women Leaders club organises a two-day event with panels, exhibitions, theatre performances and poetry, to highlight specific issues around women’s and girls’ rights. The first one, in 2021, ‘Young women: victims of yesterday, changemakers of today’, placed girls at the centre of the fight against violence. In 2022, the theme was ‘What solutions to sexual violence in Guinea?’. It offered an opportunity to raise women’s voices, remind stakeholders (the government, youth organisations and movements, the media) of their responsibilities, and identify the stumbling blocks and priority actions in the fight against sexual violence.

Mauritania



Voix des Femmes: raising voices to empower Mauritanian women

Voix des Femmes (women's voices) is a Mauritanian feminist organisation, which arose from an ambition to unite all Mauritanian feminist movements. Voix des Femmes reflects the organisation's feminist membership: a real melting pot! The aim of the organisation, for its part, is unambiguous: to dismantle the patriarchy. And at Voix des Femmes, members' tool of choice to do this is the women-only environment. The organisation sets up spaces for open dialogue, debates, ideas, sharing, listening, and sisterhood, exclusively reserved for Mauritanian women, or those living in Mauritania. At Voix des Femmes, dismantling the patriarchy also involves producing audiovisual feminist content, advocacy work, awareness raising and training activities.



Nouakchott

To see through this mission, Voix des Femmes has nine coordinators who make up the decision-making committee, and volunteers who take part in the awareness raising activities in the field.

“The challenge lies in raising awareness about gender-based violence and feminist issues in our various national languages, so that every Mauritanian woman can say feminist in her own language.”

Dieynaba Ndiom, President of Voix de femmes

TAKING ACTION FOR LEGISLATION COMBATTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN MAURITANIA

In response to mounting opposition and blockading of the Mauritanian government's 2016 parliamentary bill on combating violence against women and girls (legislation including harsher sentencing for rape cases and sanctions for sexual harassment), Voix des Femmes decided to take action. The organisation set in motion wide social and political mobilisation to remind parliamentarians and the authorities of the importance of passing the bill, which is a significant step in combating violence against women and girls. Widespread awareness raising (particularly through the production of video content) was carried out to make the content of the draft legislation accessible to as many people as possible, in all the national languages, so as to thwart the disinformation narrative obscuring what was actually contained in the bill.

Keeping the conversation going

The women-only environments set up by Voix des Femmes are vital to the empowerment of women living in Mauritania. The organisation therefore wishes to continue providing these spaces for dialogue, which are the cornerstone of Voix des Femmes' work.

Organisational consolidation

With Equipop's support, Voix des Femmes has decided to consolidate its organisation to make it more efficient. The organisation has produced a manual of procedures outlining codes of conduct for all its activities and spending. To spread its message even further, the organisation has also equipped itself with the means to produce podcasts.



Niger

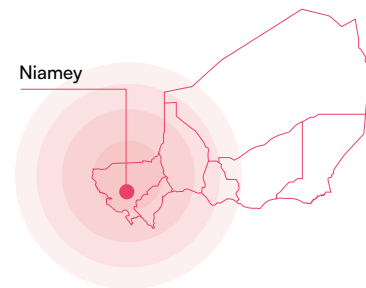


Nigerian Young Women Leaders: combating gender-based violence

The Nigerian Young Women Leaders branch was established in May 2015 by a group of Nigerian students to promote women's and girls' rights in their country. Today, it has 135 members, including eight volunteers and seven staff.

The club reinforces the rights of women and girls in Niger through five key areas:

1. Driving forward social change by challenging discriminatory social and cultural norms.
2. Encouraging women leaders and facilitating their involvement in decision-making bodies.
3. Taking action against all forms of discrimination, especially sexual and gender-based violence.
4. Promoting girls' education and retention rates.
5. Supporting the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls, especially access to high quality services, care, and information.



“Nigerian women and girls face many challenges which prevent them from living fulfilled lives and playing an equal part in society. That is why female leadership, girls' education, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights lie at the heart of the group's actions.”

Nafissatou Hassan Alfari, President of Nigerian Young Women Leaders

SPOTLIGHT ON THE LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING CAMP

Since 2019, the group has organised Leadership and Mentoring camps for young women. Organised every other year, this year will see the third camp of its kind. A mentoring system is set up between young women who have already completed their education or leadership training, and less experienced girls. The former offer support and guidance to the latter to help them develop personal and professional skills and make decisions about their own futures. The girls are also given training in leadership, communications, personal development, community-based project management, and subject-specific knowledge. Such sisterhood and empowerment set in motion a virtuous circle whereby the girls in turn become role models themselves. They have a positive influence on their peers and help their communities develop through feedback and community-based micro-projects.

Determining one's own destiny

Niger has one of the highest rates of early marriage worldwide. According to a demographic and health survey conducted in Niger in 2018 by the National Institute of Statistics, around 76% of women aged 20 to 49 got married before the age of 18 and almost 28% before the age of 15. By taking action against early and forced marriage, the group is also combating sexual and gender-based violence, and fighting to uphold children's rights and gender quality.

Information and emancipation

By promoting menstrual health and reusable sanitary pads, the organisation has supported the economic empowerment of some one hundred seamstresses - sanitary pad designers - in and around Tillabéry and Niamey. By setting up discussion groups and disseminating an awareness raising guide in five schools in Niamey, Hamdallaye, Sakoirra and Damana, 500 young people were able to get to grips with key information - alone or in groups - about their own bodies.

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

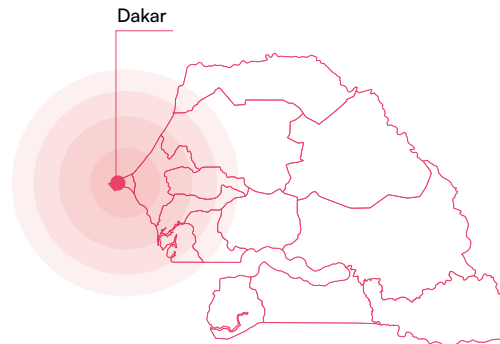
Thanks to Equipop's support, the organisation has been able to implement concrete initiatives for its organisational development. Appointing a member of staff, funded by the 'strategic partnership' programme, has built its operational capacity significantly. Alongside this, securing an organisational development fund has enabled them to draw up a five-year strategy, as well as a three-year action plan, an advocacy strategy, and a policy on the use of resources. These additional resources have enabled the organisation to carry out its mission more effectively.

Senegal



Warkha TV: the first production platform for feminist content in Senegal

Warkha TV is a web channel which produces podcasts and videos taking a feminist approach to subjects related to women's rights. Through its work, Warkha TV helps to deconstruct stereotypes and campaign for gender equality in Senegal and beyond. Warkha TV came about thanks to Fatou Warkha Sambe's enthusiasm for digital media, and her ambition to create high-impact content. As her work gradually gained recognition, Fatou Warkha Sambe began to realise the importance of taking action against gender-based injustice and offering a feminist perspective to journalism. This firm belief truly came to life in 2018. The subjects covered by Warkha TV mostly focus on violence against women, including rape and femicide.



The organisation criticises how these issues are handled, and the way in which the debate is framed in the public arena.

“Warkha TV played an important part in the advocacy campaign to criminalise rape in Senegal, by broadcasting campaigners’ action live, and by helping to make feminist voices heard.”

Fatou Warkha Sambe, Founder of Warkha TV

SPOTLIGHT ON THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM CAMPAIGN

One of Warkha TV's flagship initiatives has been its '16 days of activism' campaign, running for the 5th time in 2023. This annual event offers an opportunity to introduce discussions on a range of issues related to sexual and gender-based violence, such as rape culture, and vulnerabilities specific to people with disabilities or HIV. Through interviews, web series and reportage, Warkha TV deconstructs social norms and challenges stereotypes. Last year, following on from the 'Feminist Tours for Community Dialogue', Warkha TV decided to go out and meet women and girls in rural areas, including Louga and Tambacounda, to raise the profile of the work it does for women's rights.

Sisterhood support from Equipop!

Warkha TV was granted two-years' worth of funding for its '16 days of activism' campaign by Equipop. This support has enabled the team to travel out of the capital and raise its profile. Beyond the financial aspect, the partnership with Equipop has given Warkha TV the chance to network, share experiences and knowledge, not least at the 2022 Feminist Agora.

Future goals

By creating educational and informative content, and by working with other organisations, Warkha TV aims to shed light on the injustice, violence and patriarchy in operation within our society. Its ultimate goal is to raise everyone's awareness about these issues and to help bring about positive social change. It hopes to establish itself as a support platform for the feminist movement, particularly by broadcasting other organisations' work. It also aspires to reproduce this model in other African countries, by seeking out funding to set up operations there without local organisations having to bear the cost. Its vision includes inter-regional collaboration and the collective creation of feminist knowledge. One of Fatou Warkha Sambe's dreams: to organise a three-month feminist writing residency within the scope of the platform.

“Attending the Agora enabled me to meet some exceptional people, in a caring campaign space.”

Fatou Warkha Sambe, Founder of Warkha TV

SPARKING CHANGE



**Equipop works alongside local stakeholders
to drive social change at grassroots level.**

ADVOCATING



APPROACH

A FEMINIST



TO HEALTH

Healthcare is a political issue, that much is now a given. We know that the balance of power, the distribution of wealth, and strategic decision making have specific consequences on particular groups. This is especially true when healthcare is considered from a global perspective, rather than simply in terms of life expectancy.

Although women live longer than men on average, they face systemic discrimination, which has a significant impact on their quality of life. Feminist thinking offers precious resources to reduce healthcare inequalities, improve everyone's health, and help build fair, sustainable societies. Firm in this belief, Equipop works with other organisations and research teams to test and promote new ways and means to address contemporary healthcare problems, especially in terms of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Dialogue, training, innovation

What can a feminist anthropology of health contribute to? What can the history of science teach us about the gender biases underlying how medical knowledge has evolved? What kinds of discrimination overshadow people's healthcare pathways? How can we cultivate a feminist approach to gynaecology? What is feminist sexual education? How can women reclaim knowledge of their own bodies? What strains does the patriarchy exert on the mental health of certain social groups? Just some of the many questions we have looked into over the past few months during meetings and encounters with researchers and practitioners, not least as part of our 'Feminism & Health' tour.

Thanks to contributors from a wide range of backgrounds and countries, offering a multi-disciplinary perspective, we have been able to pore over the

many feminist contributions to healthcare and discuss the implications in terms of practice. These conversations, initiated in 2019, are destined to continue and feed into cross-cutting principles and a roadmap that Equipop applies to various projects: adopting a political, economic and social interpretation of healthcare, rather than one solely focused on individuals, working to empower those primarily affected, applying an inter-sectional approach, decompartmentalising knowledge and giving value to experiential expertise, giving consideration to the vulnerability of each person and ecosystem, as well as our inter-dependencies, etc. These approaches translate into expertise, in which our teams and partners are trained, such as facilitating women-only discussion groups, or implementing social audits. In Senegal, Equipop co-facilitates discussion groups with new mothers, whereas in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal, Equipop co-organises discussion groups with feminist activists in rural and peri-urban areas, specifically focusing on vulnerable girls. These safe spaces for dialogue among women allow participants to voice and share their own experiences. Sometimes they can help break taboos, and often they contribute to politicising experiences and fueling a collective response. As for social audits, they help identify any problems accessing high quality services, and ensure the voices of those for whom they are intended are taken into account. Equipop helps partners and youth groups in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger as well as Senegal with this exercise. Social audits are a well-established



tool in community health care, yet rarely used by and for young people. The innovative approach championed by Equipop and its partners involves developing a method to empower young people, so their role is not limited to simply surveying. They play a central part in each stage - co-designing tools, analysing data, conducting high-level advocacy - and thereby become a resource for SRHR issues within their communities.

DISCUSSION GROUPS¹

Discussion groups tread a fine line between personal privacy and open sharing. They are spaces where people can voice stories from their private lives. They are tools through which experience can be shared openly and taboos broken. In this sense, they are eminently political. In a safe setting, within the bounds of confidentiality, women, minority and marginalised people can give free rein to words which would otherwise be silenced: about sexuality, gender-based violence, and our bodies in general. Menstruation, childbirth, menopause, medical violence, addiction, and sexual abuse are just some of the wide range of subjects this intimate format can bring to the fore, and which, while rooted in specific local and national contexts, resonate across borders. Worldwide, women and minority groups share concerns which may vary, yet which are often related to violence within the patriarchal system. Equipop is committed to taking action against this violence. Standing united with all action against violence throughout the world, the organisation upholds women's voices loud and clear, and helps them to transform their daily lives so that they feel strong, free, and safe.

1. Excerpt from the introduction to Equipop's ethics and methodology charter for discussion groups.

Renewing the SRHR agenda

Feminist knowledge helps us reconsider core issues, such as how health policy priorities are set at national and international level, and how healthcare is managed in each society. It can also offer interesting insight to challenge how different pathologies are treated, from depression to cardiovascular diseases and cancer. In terms of sexual and reproductive health and rights, Equipop's core mission, it steers us towards rethinking the policy and programmatic agenda, by making more room for feminist demands, some of which remain in the political blind spot. Our work with organisations and activists has thereby

bolstered our commitment to the issue of sexual and gender-based violence, in all its forms. The latter must be seen as a core battleground for SRHR. In 2022, we launched a project in Senegal to combat gynaecological and obstetric violence, and more recently we worked with a collective in Burkina Faso (including women legal advisers, IBPF, Voix des Femmes), to launch a project to prevent violence against women and girls and offer care to survivors, especially in areas where populations have been displaced. These projects provide data, analysis and methodologies that can be used to fuel advocacy and inform other stakeholders' practice. The issue of prevention and comprehensive sexuality education is also championed by our partners, whether in France, where we are launching a partnership with Filactions, or in West Africa, where we are helping youth groups ensure their demands for access to information, to support services and empowerment centres are heard. We have also forged ties with many other stakeholders over recent years through our work on menstrual health and rights.

All these issues lead us to examine the array of controls exerted over women's bodies, to bring the question of bodily self-determination back to the fore, and to systematically adopt a rights-based approach. This requires every stakeholder working in the vast field of SRHR, from healthcare professionals to research teams and politicians, to forge productive ties with feminist movements. We work hard to facilitate collaboration within institutional arenas, such as the Ouagadougou Partnership, which brings together donors and governments from eight French-speaking African countries to help spur on progress in the use of family planning services, and ODAS, a regional mechanism whose primary objective is to improve access to safe abortions. Above all else, we work hard to support the collective work of feminists, including the provision of funding, for they have always been the driving force at national and international level behind the most significant advances in SRHR, and the most powerful opposition to the attacks persistently levelled against them.



Find out more about Equipop

Vision & Values

Today, Equipop has around 40 employees and 50 members, and an annual budget of €3.88 million. The organisation has two offices in West Africa, in Ouagadougou and in Dakar, and a European office in Paris.

This vision and these values are embodied in Equipop's work, combining social and political mobilisation, project design, knowledge production, financial and technical support to partners and feminist activists.



RESPECT FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS



WELL-BEING, FREEDOM &
RESPONSIBILITY



SUPPORTING



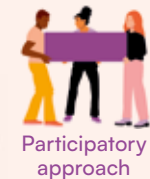
SPARKING
CHANGE



SOCIAL JUSTICE &
EQUITY



Building
partnerships



Participatory
approach



Working
in a network



MOBILISING

Equipop is driven by feminist values, and the vision of a world where the rights of everyone, irrespective of their sex or gender, are respected, including their sexual and reproductive rights, and where everyone can play an active part in building fair, sustainable societies.

Our priorities lie in contributing to trans-local collective action and providing flexible, long-term support to campaigners and organisations. Social creativity, supporting partners and collective learning dynamics are therefore central to the organisation's overall strategy and projects.

L'Équipe Hope

(“Team” Hope) - Rejecting the status quo and taking action at our own level! Since the very beginning, Equipop has worked with and for young people to build a rights-conscious movement committed to social change.



Sisterhood for gender equality

This year, some thirty young volunteers in Paris seeking to promote gender equality and international solidarity set up Equipe Hope. Their motivation: meeting other young people who share the same commitment to gender equality and international solidarity, in an atmosphere of sisterhood and joy.

“Being a member of Equipe Hope has enabled me to meet other people and discuss issues together, to be proactive about matters which are important to me, and to fuel my activism.” — Garance



“Meetings with international campaigners are also organised, and these are essential. They provide an opportunity to share our feminist experiences and discover other realities, as well as to forge ties and build sisterhood at an international level.” — Mathilde

Multifaceted mobilisation to take action on every front

The young members of Equipe Hope have taken action online throughout the year: feminist communications workshops, training on verbal self-defence, setting up a digital tool on consent and gender-related stereotypes, interactive video interviews with campaigners and partners of Equipop, launch of the #backlashalert digital campaign.

“Being a member of Equipe Hope means rejecting the status quo and taking action at our own level, for example #backlashalert, which helps mobilise our networks and spread information about the rights of women and LGBTQIA+ people.” — An-Lan



Yet, Equipe Hope's work is not all digital. The volunteers also get involved by taking part in various events and demonstrations. One example of this was the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, organised by Excision, Parlons-en !, as well as the Solidays festival. The volunteers have also attended protest marches side by side on several occasions, including to uphold the right to abortion worldwide in September 2022, to combat sexual and gender-based violence in November 2022, and at International Women's Day in March 2023.

“I really enjoyed the march on 8th March with Equipop and the Equipe Hope volunteers. It's a great opportunity to come together and protest together about a fight which matters greatly to us.” — Mariana



Equipop, supported by Equipe Hope, attracted attention once again this year at the Solidays festival's Solidarity Village in Paris for its innovative, committed and interactive stand on the theme of feminist international solidarity! To raise awareness among young festival goers, Equipe Hope organised a series of activities on different topics: backlash, comprehensive sexuality education, HIV and feminism, gender stereotypes, and sexual orientation. For Equipop, Solidays presents a valuable opportunity to inform younger generations about their rights, what part they can play in upholding these rights, and ways to bring about a change in mentality. In all, 1,000 young people took part in this awareness raising over three days. By being involved in Solidays, Equipop can extend this awareness raising through meetings with the media and other organisations, as well as work with influencers.

The Solidays festival is a community music festival organised by the French association Solidarité Sida, which takes action against HIV/AIDS.

Equipop's lifeblood

Equipop relies on a board of 13 trustees and a multicultural and multi-disciplinary team comprising some forty staff members to define and implement its mission. Once per year, some sixty members gather for the General Meeting.

THE NEW TRUSTEES



Aline Nanko Samaké

Following three years spent within various international organisations - including Equipop, where she worked as a communications and social mobilisation assistant - and further studies, Aline Nanko Samaké has decided to continue challenging the social world around her, offering ideas and making an impact as an apprentice researcher. Having completed two master's degrees, in African studies and humanitarian management, she is now a PhD student in political sciences at the University of Geneva. Her PhD thesis looks at how the way in which sexual and gender minority groups use

cities has helped (re)define urban spaces in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, and in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. Based on a methodology which blends aspects of political sociology and anthropology, her work draws inspiration from feminist, decolonial and queer approaches. An advocate for research rooted in real life, she firmly believes in the transformational power that stems from closer ties between development stakeholders and researchers.

“What I like most about Equipop's mission, is that it is about doing with and for, rather than instead of. That's how I would summarise Equipop's way of working. By encouraging capacity building, Equipop places its trust in the expertise of grassroots organisations at the front line of the fight for equality. This participatory approach ensures the work of the organisation is truly effective. One of the major challenges facing Equipop - and feminist movements and organisations in general - is the inclusion of gender and sexual minority groups. These groups exist in West Africa, just like elsewhere in the world, yet they are often overlooked in feminist projects. I firmly believe that Equipop has the expertise to rise to the challenge of leaving no-one behind.”



Chaneline Mevowanou

Chaneline is a feminist campaigner from Benin, who specialises in building and strengthening feminist movements as a means of making the world a fairer, more equitable place. She currently works as French content curator for Eyala, a bilingual (French and English) platform that offers a centralised space to raise the voices and share the experiences of African women, girls and LGBTIQ people, in order to shake up patriarchal norms on the continent and within diaspora communities. She founded the feminist campaign group, 'Young Women for Development', based in Benin. As an activist, she has set up and run spaces where girls and women can learn about the causes of inequalities, how it affects them, and what resources they can use to start breaking down gender-based oppression. Her work draws on the means and approaches of feminist popular education, communications, advocacy, and digital technology.

“What I like most about Equipop's mission, is that it tackles those areas where the patriarchy has claimed ownership, exploited, and oppressed women's bodies, sexuality, fertility, and reproduction. Its work to enable women to take back full control of their own bodies, their sexuality, their fertility, and their reproduction is revolutionary, and that is what I really appreciate about Equipop's mission. What strikes a particular chord with me, is Equipop's use of feminist approaches in its work. Analysing human rights violations through feminist and intersectional perspectives is what we need to wage a collective fight for women's liberation. Radically transforming our societies into safer, fairer places for women means dismantling the foundations of patriarchal oppression.”

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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- **Chaneline Mevowanou**
Vice-president
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Trustee
- **Aline Nanko Samaké**
Trustee
- **Khadidiatou Sy**
Trustee

The board meets on average once per quarter.

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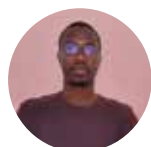
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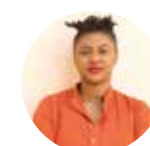
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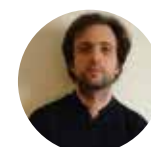
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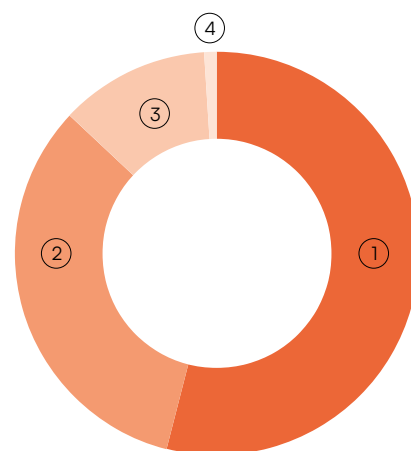
Nicolas Rainaud
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Budget

In 2022, 90% of Equipop's expenditure was allocated to its social missions. Equipop's budget increased by 2.2% from the previous year and ended the year with a surplus.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

- Equipop's 2022 budget came to €3.88 million, up 2.2% from 2021 (€3.80 million).
- 54% of this year's budget came from private funds, including international foundations and organisations. Institutional funding amounted to 46% this year, 34% from French bilateral cooperation institutions (mainly the Agence Française de Développement) and 12% from multi-lateral cooperation institutions (United Nations agencies, West African Health Organisation).
- Equipop continues to strengthen and develop new technical and financial partners, and to foster collaboration, which is key to driving forward projects.
- Alongside this, we have increased our support to African civil society organisations by working hard to mobilise resources for the latter as well as targeting new donors.



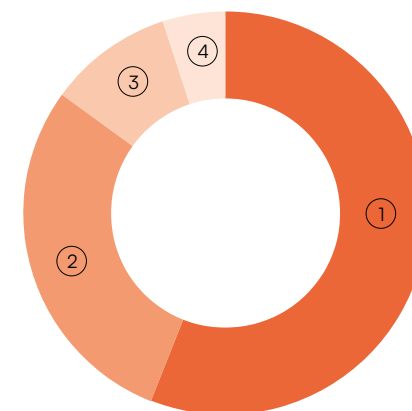
€3,88 MILLIONS

- ① **53,6 %**
Private funds and international
- ② **33,8 %**
Bilateral cooperation
- ③ **11,9 %**
Multi-lateral cooperation
- ④ **0,7 %**
Financial and operating income

USE OF FUNDS

- Spending reached €3.87 million, up 5.6% from the previous year. 90% of Equipop's expenditure was allocated to the organisation's social missions through 24 projects.
- In line with the sector's criteria, overhead costs are low.
- In 2022 Equipop continued, and stepped up, implementing activities pertaining to previous years' projects, including Change Lab, Consolidating Young Feminist Movements in West Africa, Youth on Alert, Feminists in Action Fund, DEMSAN, Women's Health and Rights in Burkina Faso, Countdown 2030 and SANSAS.
- Five multi-year projects began in 2022, including Our Body, Our Health, Transformative Alliance, Promoting and Supporting SCO SRHR Advocacy in West Africa.
- Aid granted to partner civil society organisations went up 17% in 2022 to €1.2 million, through three support funds: Innovation Fund, Organisational Development Fund, Strategic Fund.
- The year-end result shows a surplus of €13,940.
- This surplus has increased the organisation's own funds, which is one of its medium-term objectives.
- Building our own funds helps the organisation to cover working capital requirements, to implement innovative activities, to invest in supporting its organisational development, and to weather the unpredictable nature of project funding.

Equipop draws up annual accounts which are audited by Mazars SA statutory auditors. The 2022 annual accounts, as well as the auditor's report are available in full on equipop.org.



€3,87 MILLIONS

- ① **56%**
Supporting civil society players
- ② **29%**
Driving change through pilot projects
- ③ **10%**
Overheads
- ④ **5%**
Mobilizing political leaders and citizens

Communications

Equipop strongly believes in the importance of raising the voices of women and young people, and of facilitating the sharing of knowledge generated by activists and organisations. That is why Equipop places communications at the heart of its work and its support to partners. This approach has significantly raised the online and media profile of our advocacy work and the values upheld by Equipop and its partners.

3

Publications produced by Equipop in support of its partners.

- **The power of rebuilding**
The journeys of women survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in Burkina Faso
(Available in French)
- **Feminist foreign policy**
Addressing the global challenges of the 21st century
(Available in French)
- **Women's rights: fighting the backlash**
Recommendations for French foreign policy
(Available in English and French)

45000

45,000 followers on social media
(40,000 in 2021-2022)

Media appearances in France and internationally in 2022-23.

- 28 media appearances in 2021-2022.
- Equipop's report published on the backlash against women's rights was widely quoted both in France (AFP, France Info, HuffPost, Ouest-France, Le Parisien, Public Sénat...) and internationally (Deutsche Welle, RTS, RTBF, Die Welt).
- Further info: equipop.org/revue-de-presse

50

4

Events for the 'Feminism & Health' and 'Francophone Sisterhood' tours, with the support of students from ISIT (School of intercultural management and communications).

- 19 January 2023, Feminism & Health — Feminist conversation about mental health
- 26 January 2023, Francophone Sisterhood — the power of narrative, from private lives to public policy.
- 16 March 2023, Feminism & Health — Feminist conversation at the town hall of Paris' 13th district on 'Gender stereotypes and differential treatment in the field of medical research and provision'.
- 30 March 2023, Francophone Sisterhood — Feminist theories, emancipation tools for all?

Examples of media support offered to feminist activists.

- Feminist media training delivered to partner feminist activists.
- Launch and running of an inter-organisation study group on cyberviolence.
- Connecting feminists with journalists
- Attendance at high-profile events and forums

21

Acknowledgements

In order to carry out its mission, Equipop relies on the support of many individuals and organisations that share its convictions and support its work. To all the members and volunteers who contribute to the organisation, the partners that offer financial support, without which our projects could not be implemented, the NGOs and local organisations

with which we have developed strong, long-lasting partnerships, the experts and civil servants with whom we co-build policies and programmes, the journalists and internet users who disseminate our information and messages, we would like to extend our warmest thanks for your support and loyalty.

We would like to give special thanks to:



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To discover exclusive content and share more with our community.



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To take a look behind-the-scenes at Equipop.



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To take a look behind-the-scenes.



On LinkedIn
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To keep up to date with the Equipop's news and innovations in the sector.



On YouTube
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To watch videos of Equipop's and our sector's news.

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The activity report is also available on our website: www.equipop.org

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Noir et Voix des femmes

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Equipop is a feminist international aid organisation working to improve the rights and health of women and girls worldwide, focusing particularly on their sexual and reproductive rights and health. Equipop champions feminist values and places the gender approach at the heart of its work.

Partnership ||| Mobilization
Nurturing feminist alliances ||| Sisterhood support ||| Partnership ||| Mobilization
Nurturing feminist alliances ||| Nurturing feminist alliances ||| Nurturing feminist alliances ||| Nurturing feminist alliances |||

Equipop is an evolving organisation with some forty staff across its offices in Dakar, Ouagadougou, and Paris. It supports and works with over one hundred different partner organisations and feminist activists in 12 countries.



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