



Together, we are for the strength of women, for the strength of Africa

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Now is the time to unite with the growing movement of activists, feminists and allies across the nation and the globe who have the belief that protecting the rights of women and reducing their economic disruption and vulnerability is at the core of creating a just and equitable world. Our work is interconnected and requires all of our participation to drive innovation and realize ambitious goals—from forging an adaptable and robust women-inclusive economy to safeguarding households and the community. Person by person, in coalitions and in communities all across our great country, we are growing our grassroots impact and leading transformational change.

Together, we are powerful. Together, we are resilient. Together, we are for the strength of women, for the strength of Africa.



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT LINK

Our Mission is to advance women and girl's social, economic and civic rights.

Our Vision is having a world in which women and girls realize and embrace their rights.

We invest in empowering women and girls to realize their full potential, worth and strength politically, socially and economically through advocating for their human and social justice rights. WEL recognizes that the survival of women and their communities is increasingly challenged by economic dependency, illiteracy, gender inequalities & marginalization, HIV/AIDS, Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV), conflict, insensitive laws and policies.

Founded in 2007, we are a non-profit, nonpartisan, non-governmental women rights organization governed by an independent board of directors.



EXECUTIVE

NOTE

2020 was a revitalizing year.

WEL remains strong, bold and visionary.

We continue to focus entirely on women's rights and gender equality in Kenya. We know that transforming women's social, economic and political circumstances requires sustained change across many fronts. This is why we steadily and simultaneously tackle the interrelated issues of power, leadership, social-economic and gender-based violence.

Our program partnerships are our heartland. For over a decade now, we have been advancing women's rights and building the collective impact of women's organizations in Kenya. Our relationships and partnerships are now inter-generational. We are proud of partnerships with Kenyan Women's Rights Movement that have created a mechanism that enables women's civil and political leadership and recognize the strength that comes from many years of shared philosophy, vision and trust.

Our research and analysis demonstrate and deepens our gender expertise and capacity to inform, influence and generate action. We are deeply proud to which makes possible gender-sensitive individual-level measurement. This increases representation of women in leadership positions that facilitate active participation in policy and decision-making processes, enhanced participation of women leaders in decision/policy making within their respective leadership structures through strategic positioning and enhanced recognition of the woman's voice in policy/decision making processes. Our investment in advocacy and exchange is advancing Women in the Economy policy dialogues and for a. WEL continues to argue for inclusive economies that make visible and value women's work, whether paid or unpaid, in the formal or informal sector.

Beyond the pandemic and dealing with its effects and affects, it has been a year of critical engagement with new actors in development. We have ensured that women's rights and gender equality stay on the agenda. From this vantage point we know 2021 will be a vital year. We continue to argue for inclusive economies that make visible and value women's work, throughout our initiative programs. In this dynamic setting, WEL has had a year of learning and adapting while it still remains clear on the transformative approach for women's rights.

We extend enormous thanks to partners, colleagues and collaborators, and to our Patron, the Honorable Members of Parliament. Thank you so much to the women of Kenya, including our Board, Foundation Trustees and Leadership team, staff, volunteers and Gender Associates for your engagement, respect, expertise, advice and support. Finally, thanks to our donors and long-term supporters. Your generosity and loyalty make our work possible.

Executive Director

Virginia Nduta



Board Chair- Ms. Jael Amara

Executive Director – Ms. Virginia Nduta



Board of Directors Chairperson

Ms. Jael Amara

Ending violence against women and girls

remains one of the most serious and ongoing challenges worldwide. Women's Empowerment Link – WEL focuses on Elimination of Violence against Women & Girls by facilitating development, promotion and enforcement of appropriate mechanisms for prevention, protection and response to violence against women.

WEL's prevention and response working groups in Nairobi, Naivasha and Mombasa has facilitated support for over 74,000 members of the communities. WEL establishes multi-sectoral community VAWG working groups with membership from government, CBOs, FBOs, women and youth groups.

Across the country, more than

5,000 livelihoods
are supported directly or indirectly by
our activities either directly or indirectly,
a 32% increase since 2019*.



Transformative Leadership and Governance- We envision a world where empowered women and men can work together to address gender inequalities and promote transformational leadership and development for a just society. The program seeks to increase the number of women in leadership positions (decision making positions), be they appointed, elected or nominated.

Economic Empowerment for Sustainable Livelihoods—

Women face unprecedented challenges to their livelihoods, their identities, their institutions, and their sense of place in the evolving global village. The aim of this program is to strengthen the livelihoods base of women.



"I am determined to continue speaking up for my community and the women of Kenya. Women Empowerment is not just a program issue to me, it is the future of every Kenyan."
— Joseph Otieno, Incoming Program's Manager.

Institutional Development seeks to enable WEL become a dynamic, self-sustaining and effective women and girls' rights organization. WEL will become a stable and highly performing organization with a diversified resource base. Our interventions for each of these are elaborated thus:

Organizational Learning and Accountability: Human resources development: create spaces and opportunities for staff to undertake professional growth and development and staff welfare; ensure a supportive climate for knowledge management, learning and innovation; and establish a multi-sectoral technical reference group.

Resource Mobilization: Resource mobilization strategy: Develop and operationalize detailed well thought through resource mobilization strategy, policy and plans for WEL – includes policy for reserve funds.

Communications and Marketing: Visibility and profiling: build consistent and powerful branding at local, national, regional and international levels and increase WEL brand awareness. This will be realized in part through media partnerships and utilization of various social media platforms.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Further improve and fully operationalize M&E system for WEL – establishment of M&E framework, tools, policies & procedures and best practices.

21 towns & areas are
Ready for 100% of our input and
advocacy.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Safeguarding Measures & Policy

WEL has taken a lead in pushing for improved global standards and performance in safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) in the non-governmental and aid sector. We continue to deliver the commitments made to prevent SEAH from occurring; listen to those who are affected; respond sensitively but robustly when harm or allegations of harm occur; and learning from every case. We need to continue to tackle the underlying power imbalances, including gender inequality, that can lead to SEAH.

Our work in 2019 has built on that strong platform and is starting to deliver results. We are driving collective action by convening and chairing multiple technical working groups across the country, whose work has seen counties agree to adopt recommendations on ending SEAH. We consult victims and survivors as we develop policy and initiatives, including via an independent reference group. We have upped our engagement with representatives of groups at higher risk such as people with disabilities, children and those who self-identify as LGBT+. We have made strong progress on closing the loop on individuals who work in the sector but abuse others, including through our chairmanship of steering groups that are developing an aid worker registration scheme.

We continue to hold ourselves to at least the same high standards expected of us by our partners. WEL's Board sets overall strategy on an annual basis and receives semi-annual updates on the main strategic safeguarding risks faced by WEL. Vigilance in every program and project will help our beneficiaries and the Kenyan public be confident that we are spending aid

effectively and keeping people safe. A Safeguarding Delivery Board, chaired by our executive director, a safeguarding champion, meets semi-annually to monitor progress against the strategy.

We have a strong focus on building staff capability. Mandatory training on safeguarding for all staff is now in place to build confidence and ensure everyone knows their responsibilities. We deliver bespoke training and events for county offices and have launched a network of over 30 staff across all our spending departments to strengthen frontline safeguarding capability.

Risk Management Approaches

WEL strives for the highest standards of integrity and accountability. We are committed to the appropriate and responsible use of donor funds, transparency, and the requirements of relevant legislation and recommendations. We manage risks to achieve our objectives in a way which maximizes development impact and value for money, while keeping people safe. We operate in highly challenging environments. We are willing to take carefully considered and well managed risks to deliver our objectives and those of the projects and achieve development outcomes for the poorest and most vulnerable.

We undertake higher risk activities where the situation or the expected results justify them. We also accept risk to innovate and work in new and transformative ways. When undertaking higher risk activities, we ensure we are comfortable that the mitigating actions keep the risk to an acceptable level. In judging what is an acceptable level of residual risk, we demonstrate flexibility to adapt our approach to the context and available evidence base. The rapidly changing external context in 2019-20 has seen our risk profile rise, and we continue to strengthen our risk management framework and approach to respond effectively.

We closed the year by managing through new risks around ongoing uncertainty about the global impact of COVID-19, and its impact on our objectives and our partnerships with our stakeholders. This was through robust prioritization of our portfolio to ensure a rapid response to save lives and livelihoods and in-depth partner engagement.

We managed risks to delivery of our ambitious priorities like girls' sexual health and reproduction education, prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, women economic empowerment, the Global Sustainable Development Goals, including by showing transformative leadership and governance, investing across our diverse portfolio and strengthening our technical capabilities.

We managed risks to our capability to respond to humanitarian crises quickly and effectively, including by investing in the international humanitarian system and flexible, rapid funding mechanisms and close engagement with our delivery partners.

We have sustained momentum on controlling risks of fraud and aid diversion, and sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, maintaining a strong focus on ensuring we operate the controls to prevent abuse and investigate thoroughly if it occurs. This is in line with our public commitments and delivering against our medium-term strategy which is designed to improve prevention and response in our own work and that of all others involved in the aid sector.

WEL's risk management policy and framework, summarized below, has been in place for the period of 2019-20 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts. This framework enables staff at all levels to identify and mitigate risks.

At the heart of our approach is a set of principles: open and honest communication about risk; the use of documentation and evidence to ensure we make objective risk assessments that draw on independent evidence and consider the perspectives of our stakeholders; the application of professional judgement on what risks are acceptable to take in a given context; use of a common language on risk to avoid misunderstandings; and application of WEL's Smart

Rules (governing program spend and implementation) and Corporate Rules (governing how we manage our staff and operations).

We assess the risks WEL faces through 6 categories: risks posed by the external context; risks to our reputation; fiduciary risks of our funds being used for unintended purposes or not properly accounted for; safeguarding risks of unintended harm to people or the environment; risks to delivery of our policy and program objectives; and risks to our operational capabilities and our staff.

We define our risk appetite – the level and type of risk exposure we will tolerate to achieve our objectives – clearly at strategic, portfolio and program levels. Risk appetite is defined separately for each category of risk. At program level, the program's manager together with the monitoring and evaluation officer and the relevant project officer are responsible for determining risk appetite, using their professional judgement and guided by the strategic risk appetite, drawing on evidence and consulting with senior managers when appropriate.

Our risk mitigations include some fundamental commitments. We carefully manage risks to our staff in all situations through clear duty of care processes. We comply with relevant Kenyan and local law and take reasonable steps to avoid actions which may damage our reputation. We do all we reasonably can to ensure our funds are not used fraudulently or for terrorist financing, money laundering or bribery, and that beneficiaries of our programmes do not come to harm.

We manage risks of fraud and corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment robustly, showing zero tolerance for inaction or mishandling. We are expected of by our partners at all levels of the delivery chain to take a similarly robust approach in these areas, and we take all reasonable steps to monitor that this is the case. We hold ourselves to an equally high standard. We have clear and accessible policies setting out the expectations of our people regarding conduct, behaviour and reporting, and robust processes should our people fall short of these expectations.

We invest in the capabilities of program delivery staff across the organization to manage risk effectively, and

the technology and tools to support their efforts.

WEL has 3 lines of defence in place for risk management. WEL’s delivery teams (‘first line’) own and manage risk on a day-to-day basis. This is the project team mandate to identifying, assessing, responding and controlling risks. Monitoring and Evaluation department (‘second line’) are responsible for overseeing risk management. They design and implement policies, provide oversight and are responsible for ensuring the first line is properly designed and operating as intended. The ‘third line’ is management that independently and directly infer objective assurance and review of risk management systems and processes as well as provides systematic risk-based analysis, assessing risk exposure against risk appetite and the risk maturity of WEL’s systems and controls.

WEL’s risk policy and strategic appetite are approved and reviewed annually by the Management Board, in consultation with the management. The Management Board discusses strategic risks, supported by a strategic risk register. The board determines accountability for each of the strategic risks and assesses the rating and progress against mitigations, against WEL’s risk appetite, drawing on management information, qualitative insights from across the organization and wider evidence.

The following are the 6 risk categories and their mitigations:

Risk Category	Description of risks and mitigations
External context	We manage risks arising from the external context: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A sustained period of uncertainty about the global impact of COVID-19, which is changing the focus of delivery and impacting on partnership with our stakeholders, through robust prioritization and partner engagement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A rapidly changing global economic context which is impacting prosperity in developing countries and globally, including by close monitoring of macroeconomic effects, partnership with financial institutions, and engagement with developing partner governments.
Reputational	We manage risks to our reputation, both with our donor partners and our beneficiaries as well as with the Kenyan public, including through proactive communications, external influencing, and accounting effectively for our results in reports.
Operational	We manage operational risks to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The safety, wellbeing and performance of our workforce, including by ensuring we fulfil our duty of care to staff, setting clear priorities for the organization, and sustained progress of our dedicated People Plan.- The security of our information, including through implementation of robust cyber-security measures.
Delivery	We manage risks to delivery of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fast and effective response to all humanitarian crises, including by investing in the international humanitarian system and flexible implementing mechanisms and close engagement with our donor partners.- Ambitious action on high-level priorities like the Global Sustainable Development Goals, girls’ education, including by showing global leadership, building up our internal capabilities and ensuring that our program portfolio aligns with our policy commitments.

Risk Category	Description of risks and mitigations
Fiduciary	We manage the risk of fraud and accounts diversion, through effectively embedding our counter-implementation strategy based on learnings, our control and assurance processes and investment in capabilities.
Safeguarding	We manage the risk to sustaining momentum on tackling sexual abuse and exploitation and sexual harassment by delivering against our 2015-2019 medium-term strategy, which is designed to improve both prevention and response in our own work and that of all others involved in the non-governmental organizations sector.

Value Proposition

For Communities/ Beneficiaries

1. Capacity development (training, mentorship etc.) as well as social mobilization and organization to enable them realize rights and social justice.
2. Economic empowerment through business idea incubation, institutional strengthening as well as leveraging capacities and resources.
3. Linking and connecting them with people and organization that enable greater access to resources, opportunities and social justice.
4. Offering psycho-social support, solidarity, as well as legal aid, where needed.

For Funders/ Financiers and CSOs

1. A committed ally in support for women’s empowerment, able to deliver sustainable change as well as to demonstrate such results – we have a track record for this!
2. Guaranteed value for money as well as prudent, credible and frugal management of resources, always using the least resources to achieve most impact and ability to leverage the efforts and resources of other actors (government, CSOs, etc.) as a basis of accelerating and scaling impact.
3. Creativity and innovation, as a basis of generating new products, models and solutions towards women’s empowerment – this is done through our learning hub.
4. Specifically, for implementing CSOS: visibility and profiling, capacity development per our areas of expertise and strategic partnerships/ collaborative leadership on women’s empowerment.

For Public Sector/Government

1. Partnership towards reaching Kenya’s Vision 2030, MTPs, SDGs, and other related goals.
2. Leveraging resources for accelerating women’s empowerment and development in general.
3. Extensive geographical reach through WEL’s organizational infrastructure and networks.
4. An experienced partner for policy analysis and development for women’s empowerment
5. Collaborative leadership in rallying relevant organizations towards women’s empowerment.

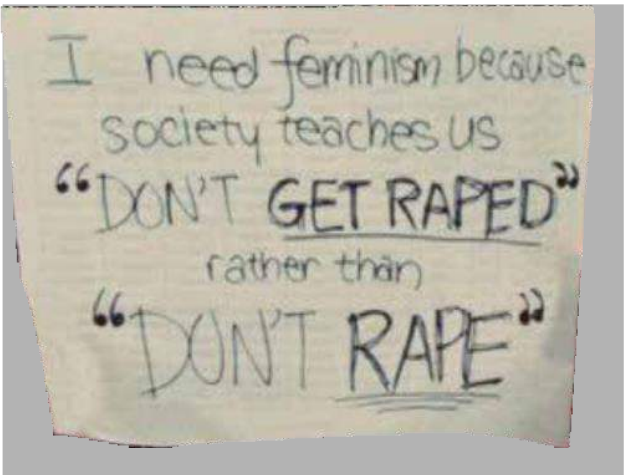
For Private Sector (Corporates)

1. Visibility for their products, services and support to community (people) and environment.
2. Expanded markets and reach via our clientele and linkages (community, beneficiaries, partners etc.) Linking private sector/ entrepreneurs to business development services.
3. Possibility to use our organizational infrastructure for effective implementations of CRS/I projects.
4. Joint development of customized products and services as well, testing and scale up of the same.

How WEL has Delivered

WEL has realised a number of results amongst these:

1. Development and launch of the Kenya Women’s National Charter: Through our “Mwamko Mpya” initiative, WEL rallied 43 CSOs to advocate for operationalization or realisation of the opportunities for women set out in the Constitution of Kenya (CoK) 2010. These led to the development of the Kenya Women’s National Charter, including a National Action Plan (NAP) for its implementation. The Charter, developed in collaboration with the government, was shared with more than 1,200 women leaders, 8, 424 citizens, media, government, political parties and CSOs. About 41 political parties integrated the Charter into their manifestos.
2. Women’s economic empowerment: Through its economic empowerment programs, WEL amongst others supported the training and establishment of Income Generating Activities (IGAs) for over 200 for survivors of violence, leading to significant improvements in the livelihoods of the concerned women. The interventions include creative tailoring, jewellery making as well as art and crafts. Additionally, a Women’s Empowerment & Support Centre - the ‘Mama Kenya Empowerment Hub/Centre’ was constructed in Naivasha. The hub seeks to economically empower women by practically training them in various skills and trades, besides acting as a rescue centre.
3. Combating Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): WEL facilitated the development of home-grown measures for combatting FGM. Using 87 trained teachers as ToTs, a total 2,815 boys and girls from 38 schools in Naivasha and Baringo were educated on the harmful practice of FGM, with 10 girls being saved from the ‘cut’, and 4 circumcisers from Baringo abandoning the practice. Separately, WEL in collaboration with the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru developed a documentary on the developments within the Ilchamus community since the Anti-FGM Declaration in 2011
4. Promotion of girls’ education: WEL contributed significantly to growing support for girl’s education in marginalised areas. As an example, the Desert Run Initiative conducted by WEL in collaboration with Desert Trust Management raised funds for girls’ education, which together with actions by supported boys to protect girls from SGBV, saw 20 girls in Northern Kenya proceed to High School.



How WEL has Delivered

5. Reproductive health: WEL has previously engaged in facilitating access to information on Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) for women and girls. This was realised amongst others through organising Women Wellness Days, during which free reproductive health services were provided, in which a total of 2,280 women were served. Separately, 450 children were immunised and 250 women enlightened on SRH, and the link between these, SGBV and HIV/AIDS.
6. Establishment of community based GBV prevention and response mechanisms: WEL contributed to the establishment and operationalization of over 300 GBV prevention and response working groups in Nairobi, Naivasha, Mai Mahiu and Mombasa. The supported groups further establishment of 22 community owned shelters/ safe spaces and 32 response units. Through these groups, over 74,000 community members were enlightened on SGBV, received psychosocial care and support services and/or shelter/ safe spaces. Additionally, symposiums organised for county officials in Embu and Nairobi, led to creation of SGBV prevention champions who serve survivors of SGBV in hospitals, police stations, rescue shelters and communities.
7. Women’s transformative leadership and capacity building: In order to promote effective women leadership as well as peaceful elections, WEL in collaboration with Amkeni Wakenya set up the Women Leadership Academy, which reached 567 women in 11 counties. Separately, over 20,000 Kenyans were reached with messages on the need for peaceful elections through the Mama Kenya campaign. Further, WEL provided relevant education on civic participation and voter education to 9,932 voters in collaboration with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). These initiatives (together with other actors’ inputs) contributed not only towards realisation of peaceful elections in 2013, but also to at least 329 women being elected and nominated to National and County Assemblies, and 5 others to various county and constituency committees.
8. Influencing: WEL engaged in various policy advocacy initiatives with women legislators, CSOs and media to address various legislative, policy or institutional gaps that negatively impact on women’s wellbeing. Specifically, WEL participated in the drafting and enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence (PADV) Act; the Sexual Offences Act, and the Prohibition against FGM Act.



Partnerships

Project	Donor
Advancing Education Through Human Rights Education	Global Affairs Canada – Equitas
East African Human Rights Program	Global Affairs Canada – Equitas
Strengthen accountability for the implementation of the new police Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in ending Gender Based Violence	British High Commission (BHC)
The digital space to support and protect the Women Rights Organizations (WROs) and the media to reclaim their digital rights of association, expression, assembly and speech.	International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL)
E-Learning Module/Programme for Strengthened Coordination and Implementation of NPS Programmes to End Gender-Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation by 2022.	UNFPA - NAILAB
Her Finance	Business for Social Responsibility (BSR)
Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA)	Plan International – Terre De Homes
Prevention of violence against women and girls	Trocaire – United Nations Trust Fund (UNTF)
Strengthening	Bread for the World -

Inclusive Leadership	BROT
Expanding Democratic Spaces	Action Aid International Kenya - AAIK
Strengthening the SDGs Kenya Forum as an accountability platform for gender and development.	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation - SDGs
Increasing police services for women and girls’ survivors of violence in Kenya	UKAID - Jocox
Jamii Thabiti	Coffey International
Stay Alliance	Stay Foundation Germany
Increasing access to social protection programmes for Adolescent Girls and Young Women.	Irish Aid Project Fund
Prevention of violence against women and girls in Nairobi and Nakuru counties.	
Promoting women’s participation as candidates in the 2017 elections	National Democratic Institution (NDI)



SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

Sustainable Procurement

Our Supply Partner Code of Conduct (the code) is now an integral and binding part of our standard contract terms and conditions and sets high but realistic standards for ethical and safeguarding behaviour, social responsibility, and value for money from the supply partners who deliver UK aid. The code has been applied to our contracts since September 2017 and now covers 80% of WEL's contract spend. A pilot program for the Code for Accountable Procurement Arrangements (APAs) involving our donor partners will be rolled out in the coming year. The outcomes of the pilot will be collected and analyzed to determine how the full roll out to APAs can best be shaped using the experiences of the suppliers. Some issues remain to be discussed and agreed with main stakeholders, following which a date for launching the Code for APAs can be determined.

Compliance with the code is monitored by the monitoring and evaluation officer with supervision from the program's manager and oversight of the executive director. Full compliance and annual verification are mandatory for supply partners and commits them to key performance indicators in 6 priority areas, including:

- Value for money and governance.
- Ethical behaviour.
- Transparency and delivery chain management.
- Environmental issues.
- Terrorism and security.
- Safeguarding, social responsibility and human rights.

WEL supply partners and their delivery chains act on behalf WEL and donor partner donors and their delivery partners and directly and indirectly impart and impact aid beneficiaries. These interactions must therefore meet the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour in order to uphold the reputation of WEL.

Supply partners must demonstrate that they are pursuing continuous improvement and applying stringent financial management and governance to reduce waste and improve efficiency in their internal operations and within the delivery chain. Supply partners must be committed to high standards, recognizing that WEL's activities may change the way people use and rely on the environment, or may affect or be affected by externalities on the conditions. They must

demonstrate they have taken sufficient steps to protect the local law and community they work in, and to identify risks that are imminent, significant or could cause harm or reputational damage to WEL or the communities we work in.

Commitment to sustainability is not limited to but may be demonstrated by:

- Formal safeguard policies.
- Publication of audit and performance reports.
- Registered with the Kenyan Government and following relevant regulation, both directly and within the supply chain such as conventions, standards or certification bodies.

Overall strategy for sustainability

WEL is committed to the global's Plan of Gender Equity stipulated in the Sustainable Development Goals and as so committed to increase resource efficiency and reduce waste. WEL has a strong record of improving performance and is dedicated to achieving the ambitious targets in Kenya and making significant improvements to our partners in line with the global ambition. We have made important progress against the 2015-2019 strategic plan and are currently reviewing our targets to 2024 and beyond.

Progress towards our 2015-19 Strategic Plan has been positive. The introduction of rapid response programmes for COVID-19, and endorsement of our programs with the National Police Service, has helped to embed important messages and ensure everyone has access to proper healthcare alongside our program needs and share best practices. This has helped WEL create a shift in behaviour change and ability to champion sustainability in day-to-day ways of working. This has provided us with confidence that WEL can further improve performance in 2021 year and beyond.

Our focus in 2021 will be to set more ambitious targets and particularly improve performance where we have been challenged in the past. Our next targets will be re-baselined to provide a more accurate representation of the community and grassroot women and girls we work to empower and the environment WEL operates within and will align with our internal strategies and government policies. WEL's progress and ambition reflect the organization's desire to be a leader in this area, aligning operations with development work on women empowerment in order to contribute to the achievement of the Global Goals by 2030.

National & County Government Partnerships and Coalitions Strengthening

In 2020, WEL's partnerships and coalitions continued to advocate for – and achieve – meaningful change at the national level. For example, HerFinance Project worked with tea farms and legal experts to review the effectiveness and impact of the national legal framework to strengthen women in businesses and end violence against women and children and trained 32 trainers of trainees for the effective dissemination and coordination of a curriculum to empower grassroots women. The trainers reached over 6000 trainees and community members.

WEL supported and responded to government partnerships' and coalitions' needs, as identified through capacity self-assessments and ongoing discussions. requested our support to strengthen their capacity to work together and grow their technical expertise on child marriage. In response, WEL organized a series of in-person and virtual workshops covering internal capacity strengthening and strategy development.

We also coordinated two webinars on the drivers of violence against women and girls, taking into account factors such as gender inequality, poverty and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare. The Tea farms in Kericho and Bomet has since identified priorities for its work in 2021. These include improving access to education and sexual and reproductive healthcare, community interventions to address discriminatory gender norms, and social support programmes for pregnant and/or married adolescents as well as support women to be proactive in investment, finance and decision making in households.

SDG Kenya Forum Project also working in Kitui and Kirinyaga also achieved a similar relationship with the local government to enable WEL to impact the grassroots women

Peer-To-Peer Learning Increased in The Context of Covid-19

While WEL works in different contexts, we often face similar challenges and have relevant expertise to share. With the suspension of in-person transnational meetings in 2020, WEL facilitated a series of online peer-to-peer discussions, so that teams could share their learnings, best practices, successes and challenges.

Each session was project-led and covered a range of topics from prevention measures of GBV and coming up policy briefs to engaging male champions and religious leaders and promoting girl-led research and campaigning. The discussions grew in popularity over the series and project teams reported strengthened cross-regional relationships and confidence. We will integrate this popular and effective innovation into our work beyond the pandemic, along with several new initiatives for 2021. These include the twinning of established and nascent partnerships for mutual support, and the establishment of an online hub for shared learnings.



Transformative Leadership and Good Governance

WEL has journeyed successfully in pushing for transformative leadership and governance and is even more energized to push on. Reiterating that gender equality, more than being a stand-alone goal, is one of the most interlinked need for growth and development, achieving the target of transformational leadership and women in governance holds the key to the realization of leaving no one behind. Without systemic changes, structural inequalities will continue to shape global, regional, national, and sub-national responses, derailing Kenya from achieving gender equality and thus should rethink the current strategies and place more emphasis on gender justice and equitable recovery.

Recognizing that overall, through our programs, WEL has made strides in enhancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Efforts are underway to promote the rule of law at national and sub national levels, WEL has ensured responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision making at all levels via its projects.

Concerned that, the country has attempted to increase the participation and representation of women in decision-making structures. However, as evidenced in the recent Economic Survey 2020 report, which revealed that the National Assembly and the Senate failed to achieve the two-thirds gender requirement. In contrast, representation of Members of County Assemblies met the two-thirds gender rule in 2020, despite thirteen counties falling short of the constitutional requirement. Similarly, Judicial officers achieved the two-third gender rule during the review period. Notably, during the period under review, the number of women Governors, Deputy Governors and County Secretaries remained unchanged. Cabinet Secretaries, Heads of Constitutional Commissions and Independent Offices, Assistant County

Commissioners and CEC members achieved the two-third gender rule in 2020. While participation of women and men in selected decision-making positions in the public service for the period 2019 to 2020. Women Representation for the positions of Deputy County Commissioner, Assistant County Commissioner, Chief and Assistant Chief increased by 27, 210, 37 and 121 women to 52, 627, 436 and 1,714 women, respectively, in 2020.

WEL recognizes the importance of building an inclusive society that empowers the marginalized groups (women, children, youth, older people, persons with disabilities and geographical/regional inclusion) to reduce poverty and increase their participation in the economy. Availability of social protection schemes, catalytic funds, gender mainstreaming and affirmative actions are some of the measures that WEL's programs has put in place to address inequalities in the counties we participate. To achieve this, WEL has pushed for putting in place various programmes and measures that include gender mainstreaming, affirmative action, gender responsive budgeting, availing catalytic funds that support vulnerable groups, provision of social protection schemes (social assistance, social security, and social health insurance) among others in Kitui, Bomet and Kirinyaga; the former showing the most success. In that regard, WEL has committed to improve investments in transformational leadership and good governance.

Acknowledging efforts on gender, economic and social inclusion, the Economic survey 2020 report shows that the country has made significant progress in fostering financial inclusion over the past decade. The Country is the first in the East Africa region and third in the continent after South Africa and Seychelles in financial inclusion. Access to various financial products and services in 2018 and 2019 included the use of banks which increased due to higher up take of mobile banking. The increase was on account of rapid adoption of financial technology and innovations especially in

mobile money and mobile banking. In 2020, the use of digital app loans declined by 6.2 percentage points partly due to increased Government interventions. Celebrating that Kitui, Kirinyaga and Bomet are among the counties that have put in place policy frameworks specific to addressing sexual and reproductive health. Notably, Kenya is also one of the 21 countries in East and Southern Africa who have committed to providing comprehensive sex education and sexual and reproductive health services to adolescents and young people. Kenya experienced a decline in fertility from 5 children per woman in 2003 to 4 children in 2014. This can be attributed to the increase in contraceptive use whose prevalence rose from 39.3 percent of married women in 2003 to 58 percent in 2019. The effect of increased contraceptive use and decline in fertility is the decline in population growth rate from 2.9 percent to 2.2 percent between 2009 and 2019.

Appreciating that positive trends have also been witnessed with other population dynamics indicators such as infant and under five mortality rates which have declined substantially over the last two decades. This can partly be attributed to the increase in health service deliveries which improved from 40% to 61% over the same period. Overall, the positive performance of the above population dynamics indicators shows that the implementation of Kenya's Population Policy for National Development is on course and the country is moving towards the goal of matching the population growth rate to the available resources for sustainable development.

Recognize that WEL is recording

substantial gains in ending gender-based violence, child gender preferences, elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and harmful practices that negatively impact on girls and women future in Kitui especially alongside in Kirinyaga and Bomet.

To achieve these goals, programming should mainly focus on laws and legislations, drivers of FGM, and SGBV, gender equality, teenage pregnancy child and forces marriages among others. However, new forms of violence targeting women, such as cyber-violence, are also emerging. Sexual and gender-based violence increased during the period of COVID-19 lockdowns, creating a secondary pandemic across the country.

Noting that progress to achieve these targets is mixed, notably, child protection cases related to Violence Against Children declined by 11.2 per cent in the period under review. However, significant rise in cases of child labour (55.4%) and child pregnancy (52.7%) was observed. Notably, national trend in the number of adolescents (age 10 –19) presenting with pregnancy at first antenatal care (ANC) visit for the period 2016 to 2020 reveals a decline nationally by 16.3 per cent to 332,208 in 2020. Majority (94.7%) were those aged 15 – 19 years⁴ in the same period. Cases of FGM rose to 139 in 2020 from 74 in 2019, while gender-based violence in terms of physical abuse recorded 3,884 cases in 2020 from 2,189 in 2019. The proportion ever married for age 15–19 was 4.3 per cent for male and 11.2 per cent for females. The proportion of ever-married males aged 15-19 increased from 2.9 per cent in 2009 to 4.3 per cent in 2019, while that of females declined to 11.2 per cent in 2019 from 18.8 per cent in 2009. The county with the highest proportions of ever married males between ages 15- 19 was Mandera while Tana River had the highest proportions of ever married females.

However, noting that implementation of the Leave No one Behind activities in SGD Kenya Forum and Brot Fur Die Welt has been consistent despite little political response being in place. Women in rural areas and women and girls with disabilities, older women, women refugees, internally displaced women, and women migrants face high economic burdens in gaining access to opportunities in the areas of education, employment, and health care. These access-related challenges are frequently due to remote locations and inaccessible public transport systems coupled with high cost of services.

SUSTAINABLE

STRATEGIC

OBJECTIVES

Moving Beyond Activism

Advocacy & Training

In 2020, WEL moved beyond training and focused on building a group of informed, bold, knowledgeable and vocal community activists, unafraid of challenging the status quo and the social ordering of community norms and practices. The activists were empowered to question patriarchy and demolish structures that relegate women to second class position through sessions held in Nairobi, Bomet, Kericho, Nakuru, Bomet, Murang'a, Kitui and Kirinyaga. In these areas, WEL identified and engaged committed change agents to advocate for the eradication of violence against women.

By the end of 2020, WEL had enhanced the knowledge of over 10000 women and girls. In moving beyond training it was important to build capacity of community members and local actors to accelerate awareness on gender-based violence and ensure women access to justice.



Capacity building and community ownership

In 2020, the community with the local governments stepped in to ensure the continuity of WEL's work at the grassroots level to and that they took ownership of the process of eliminating violence within the society. WEL played a vital role in creating awareness on the underlying power imbalances between men and women that exacerbate VAW/G.

Through awareness, the activists continued to sensitize community members to realize the concept of power which include: power within, power over, power with and power to. This concept was used to demonstrate how understanding power and its effects can help prevent and reverse the upward trend on VAW/G. WEL adopted various strategies which included the use of communication materials, media and advocacy, training and audio-visual materials to pass the message. The communication materials used interactive methods such as card games and power posters in facilitating discussions. This was aimed at creating harmonious relationships in families based on mutual respect between men and women.

Social change is a process that takes years to attain and so does changing community norms and practices but it is not impossible to achieve behaviour, attitudes and mind-sets. WEL recognized the power of the media and advocacy in an effort to heighten and scale up the creation of awareness on the trends in sexual and gender-based violence. The organization leveraged the power of local radio programmes to reach a massive audience with the messages of peace and non-violent co-existence. As a result of the awareness created through the programs, community

activists have continued to receive cases of women whose rights have been violated and have become a support system as they seek justice for the survivors. WEL works in collaboration with the elders, chief's, health care workers, as well as the local police. At times WEL accompanied survivors to the police stations, rescued girls who ran away from facing FGM, beading of girls and early/ forced marriages). These change agents are WEL's ears and eyes on the ground and are considered gate keepers in their communities.

Celebrating Human Rights Champions

In recognition of their efforts to achieve justice and reparations for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, WEL selected a group of 50 women and men who in 2020, went beyond their call of duty to assist those in their communities whose human rights had been violated. Some not only volunteered their time and resources but also their homes to create a safe haven for women and girls who suffered from violence. Those publicly acknowledged were: law enforcement agents, paralegals, custodians of culture, community activists and health care workers who made sure that they handled all the cases brought to them with utmost professionalism.

WEL worked with some of the progressive custodians of culture and appreciated their efforts in enhancing peace in their

communities thereby greatly impacted the reach and effect of WEL's work on the ground. These key partners made it possible for us to inch closer to the realization of our mission and vision of a society free from all forms of violence.

16 Days of Activism Campaign

16 days of activism was an important part of WEL's work in 2020. WEL staff conducted various community dialogues forums, processions to escalate awareness on GBV as a women's human right issue at the grassroots, regional and national levels.

The main campaign theme for the 16 days of activism 2020 was "From Peace in the Home to peace in the World: Let's challenge militarism and end violence against women". The theme's focus was on challenging violations of women in conflict situations. The theme resonated with the global situation in the violence that followed in the sudden working-from-home condition alongside mass loss of jobs and livelihoods. An estimated 4500 women and girls were subjected to physical and sexual violence during the year. WEL realizes that in times of conflict and uncertainty, perpetrators use all sorts of means to justify SGBV as women's bodies are used as tools to taunt and humiliate as they assert dominance. WEL continued creating awareness through processions, drama outreaches and community dialogue forums.

During the 16 days of activism campaign period, WEL reached an estimated 1500 community members through dissemination of peace messages.



Advocacy towards Justice

Hope Restored

2020 goes down in the history books of WEL as one of the most successful and fruitful year for the Access to justice and women’s rights strategic initiative. The programmes partnered to offer legal aid to an estimated 200 women from different parts of Kenya who experienced difficult circumstances of a diverse nature ranging from sexual to domestic and physical violence to women’s property and inheritance rights violations. Besides provision of legal aid, WEL enhanced the capacity of health care workers and law enforcement agents whose aim was to enable them offer better services to survivors of GBV.



The Story of Purity

Purity (not her real name) is only 13 years. Her story best exemplifies what the Access to Justice is all about. Purity is a little innocent cutie who seems wiser than her age. She stares at people with a blank gaze looking a little unsure of her next move. Strangers terrify her. From her little sunken eyes, one can tell that little Purity has never known or experienced love in her short lifetime. She is unusually reserved as other kids her age. Though she longs to be embraced, human beings instill fear in her. When you stretch your arms to lift her, she coils in fear, and she becomes very restless and uncomfortable. She almost cries but even that she withholds. She does not speak much like children her age; in fact, she will only mutter one or two words in her mother tongue. She does not speak a word of English and even her Kiswahili is poor.

Purity’s story is heartrending. It is quite disturbing to realize how at the tender age of only thirteen she has gone through so much pain and agony. In December, most kids her age receive dolls or a bicycle and have tremendous fun with family and friends but she has no such memories. In December 2017, while she was 10, Purity was allegedly defiled by her biological father in what we would later learn was something he had done repeatedly. The very person she looked up to for protection, love and care had turned against her, becoming a monster she would rather be protected against and taken away from.

Four young boys going on with their business and doing what boys their age do during the month long break from school, witnessed what would be the most horrifying incident for them and the little girl. They

saw Purity’s father on top of her as she screamed in pain and fear. They ran to their mothers who in turn reported the matter to the area chief. A well- wisher rushed the girl to hospital then proceeded to report the matter to the Police. The well-wisher followed up to ensure that the police P3 form was filled and all the original documentary evidence including medical reports were submitted to the police for further investigation and prosecution.

After a while the accused was apprehended. Later, the area chief, received a group of unwelcome visitors in her office. The accused, accompanied by police officers and officers who claimed to be from the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D) threatened the chief to stop supporting the case and to ensure that she was returned to the custody of her twisted father. The well-wisher and the chief were told that the original P3 form, and key witness statements had gone missing, hence dissuading them from following up on the matter. Of greater alarm however was the charge sheet filled by the investigating officer which stipulated that the accused was charged of “subjecting the child to cruel punishment under section 18(1) as read with section 20 of the Children’s Act.” This was despite the clarity of the P3 form and the medical report clearly describing the injuries occasioned by the sexual violence to Annie. The P3 form had clearly indicated that the child was “defiled” and had a “ruptured hymen”. Cruel punishment under the children’s Act attracts a sentence of twelve

months or KES. 50, 000 fine. Defilement of Incest against a minor below 11 years, on the other hand, carries a punishment of life imprisonment. Purity would then be sold for a meagre KES. 10, 000 by her mother to another home early in 2018 to also try and hide out the case. The new family that would seem more accommodating would only have Purity silently go through the same ordeal she had before, now the perpetrator being the adopted father.

All the while, the threats and disappeared statements and P3 form would not deter the chief from pursuing justice for the girl. WEL took up the case and partnered with an advocate from a foundation who argued for the substitution of the charge sheet to reflect the actual crime/ violation that was committed against little Purity. The advocate also applied that Purity stays at a safe house to safeguard her safety and security. Family members of the accused including littles Purity’s biological mother all along supported him and hoped to convince the witnesses to drop the case and arbitrate the matter outside the court.

The successes of this case are many;

1. The charge sheet was successfully changed to reflect defilement
2. The accused is in remand as the case proceeds.
3. Our little Purity is in safe hands, enjoying playing like kids her age.
4. Purity has been going through counselling and is more receptive to visitors and well-wishers.

It may be difficult to restore her innocence which was violently robbed from her but there is hope. The last time we spoke to her, she had learnt some Kiswahili and English after interacting with other children and is attending school. Purity is now bubbling with energy. The wheels of justice may be slow but we are hopeful that our shining star Purity will find justice she so deserves.

This is just **1** of the
many complicated cases
that WEL has intervened in and ensured that victims of violence
find not only justice but are able to move on beyond the
incidents to become survivors. WEL receives many such cases



SUSTAINABLE

STRATEGIC

OBJECTIVES

“Protecting the rights of women is an extension of my service in defense of the nation.”
—Elizabeth Anyula,
Finance & Admin Manager

We as
Women’s
Empowerment
Link

stand in line for the women of Kenya and Africa,
for the strength of the whole community

-Project Officers

BUILDING

A

MOVEMENT

"To change the world, we must first change ourselves. By grounding our work in equity, inclusion, and justice, we will bring new people into our movement and create a culture that gets people excited and engaged."

-Virginia Nduta, Executive Director



Engaging a Broad Movement

Critical to our success in movement building is cultivating the skills necessary for staff and volunteers to work effectively with a wide range of partners and projects and members to create a culture where women from all walks of life feel included and valued; to build a foundation of equity and justice that informs all our work; and to promote ongoing education, training, and personal growth.

Women's Empowerment Link joins in solidarity with low-income communities, communities of peoples living with disabilities, peoples living with HIV/AIDS and other groups who are most impacted by the effects of gender inequality and inequity, including traditionalist communities.

Advocacy & Training

We aim at making the community aware of their rights and resilient in order to protect them and the community

Justice Movement & Partnership

Our working with legal aid partners, the government and law enforcers is a landmark victory to stop inequalities. Also, working with rescue centres and referral agents in order to prevent and address the pertinent issues.

Women in Business

It is necessary to make women economically empowered and independent to work out the gender imbalance in the communities as well as give them a chance to stand up for themselves.

The power of organized resistance and allyship is unstoppable. By building relationships and lifting up the voices of others across movements, we're building a larger, more powerful social movement that addresses not just women's rights and transformational leadership and governance, but also economic inequities.

It takes more than any one organization to drive progress on women empowerment and women-led solutions, defend the public and grassroots women offer investment solutions for development, and provide opportunities for all women of Kenya—it requires a broad, strategic, integrated movement.

Another innovative aspect of our movement-building work is collaborating with other foundations and our colleagues in the civil society organizations.

Together, we help create demand for strengthening of women and balance of rights and opportunities as well as efficiency methods and approaches to facilitate the shift to improved communities for all. an important complement to the policy advocacy, legal work, and public education funded through grantmaking.

“We must pursue every strategy available to achieve our mission, including the management of our portfolio. Our immediate focus is to accelerate prudent investments in women empowerment solutions working with our colleagues in organizations committed to advocacy and sustainability.”

—Mrs. Grace Mbugua, Board Chair

Together, we help combat violence against women and girls



Women’s Empowerment Link Statement of Program Allocations

December 31, 2020

Allocations by Program(s)

Projects	Opening Deferred Income 2020 KES	Grants Received 2020 KES	TOTAL 2020 KES	Grant Utilised 2020 KES	Closing Deferred Income 2020 KES
Action Aid	39	3,200,000	3,200,039	3,360,631	(160,592)
Triocaire	256	6,447,839	6,448,095	6,557,797	(127,702)
ICNL	-	1,041,942	1,041,942	910,164	131,778
NDI	1,676	-	1,676	-	1,676
Bread for the World	2,199,577	11,757,606	13,957,183	7,648,325	6,308,858
Jamii Thabiti - Coffey	115	-	115	-	115
PLAN International	1,374	4,328,228	4,329,602	6,287,134	(1,957,533)
UN Trust Fund	1,683,127	58,741	1,741,878	1,841,592	(99,714)
BSR	10,491	-	10,491	-	10,491
BHC	11,391,165	18,568,663	29,959,828	30,281,885	(322,057)
EQUITAS	2,451,291	12,283,547	14,734,837	9,326,219	5,408,618
UK Aid	1,553,508	5,589,541	7,150,332	6,328,493	821,839
Stay Alliance	-	1,168,575	1,168,575	769,637	398,938
SDG	1,158,265	2,435,000	3,593,265	3,589,318	3,947
UNFPA	-	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,553,791	(53,791)
ETP	-	1,485,000	1,485,000	944,068	540,932
TOTAL	20,450,884	69,863,681	90,314,565	79,419,054	10,895,511

Women’s Empowerment Link Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2020

ASSETS	KES	KES
Non Current Assets	2020	2019
Property and Equipment	2,305,506	2,242,414
Intangible Assets	202,533	253,166
Financial Assets	728,212	514,925
Total Noncurrent Assets	3,238,270	3,010,505
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	17,187,466	23,430,726
Accounts Receivables	562,648	5,145,308
Total Current Assets	17,750,114	28,576,033
Total Assets	20,988,384	31,586,539
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	882,020	1,422,563
Deferred Income	10,895,513	20,450,886
	11,777,533	21,873,448
Net Current Assets	9,210,851	9,713,090
FINANCED BY:		
Accumulated Fund	9,210,851	9,713,090
Total Capital & Funds	9,210,851	9,713,090

Women’s Empowerment Link Statement of Cash flows

December 31, 2020

	KES	KES
Cash flows from operating activities	2020	2019
Deficit for the year	(9,986,330)	(1,258,365)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation on fixed assets	604,257	564,893
Amortization	50,633	63,292
Operating surplus before changes in working capital	(9,331,439)	(630,181)
Changes in working capital:		
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	(540,542)	525,519
Increase in Receivables	4,582,660	(1,486,372)
Increase in Deferred income	(9,560,767)	7,765,307
Tax Paid	-	(15,277)
Accumulated funds	9,484,089	-
Net cash flows generated from operating activities	3,965,439	6,158,996
Cash flows to investing activities		
(Increase)/Decrease in Financial Assets	(213,285)	1,542,995
Additions to Property and Equipment	(663,974)	(249,560)
Net cash flows used in investing activities	(877,259)	1,293,435
Changes in Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	(6,243,258)	7,452.431
Cash and Cash equivalents at the start of the year	23,430,725	15,978,294
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	17,187,466	23,430,725

Women’s Empowerment Link Statement of Net Expenditures

December 31, 2020

Statement of Net Expenditures

	KES	KES
Income	2020	2019
Project Receipts and Donations	69,863,681	47,634,022
Other Incomes	297,212	426,963
Less: Direct Project Expenses	(52,767,491)	(30,493,276)
	17,395,421	17,569,728
Expenditure		
Personnel Costs	17,142,792	12,802,177
Establishment	3,949,091	3,130,085
Administrative Expenses	5,638,352	2,265,628
Depreciation & Amortisation	651,516	628,184
	27,381,751	18,826,074
Deficit for the year	(9,986,330)	(1,256,346)

The foundation for a strengthened community.

Our goals:

Solve the gender inequality crisis primarily through a successful transition to a resource-efficient, women-empowered economy that better serves people and nature.

Secure protections for women, promote healthy ecosystems and communities, and fight for transformative leadership and governance.

Expand opportunities for more people to explore, enjoy, and protect the community by supporting programs and policies that reach across economic, cultural, and community lines to get gender balance.

Build a diverse, inclusive community that reflects and represents today's Kenyan women and the general public and prioritizes important connections between economic empowerment and social justice.

Women's Empowerment Link, WEL

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