

## **StandwithHer: A Joint Oxfam and African Union Initiative for Women's Safety and Dignity during the 2023 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence"**

### **I. Background Information**

Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to be a grave concern in Africa, affecting the lives of countless women and girls. According to UN Women, globally, it is estimated that 736 million women, almost one in three, have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both, at least once in their lives<sup>1</sup>. Statistics further show that, in Africa, one in three young women in Africa are married before they turn 18 and about 200 million girls and women have been subjected to female genital mutilation<sup>1</sup>. As part of the global commitment to address this issue, the African Union in partnership with Oxfam are coming together to launch a special initiative during the 2023 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The "StandwithHer" initiative aims to provide targeted funding to women's rights organizations in Africa, empowering them to lead impactful campaigns and projects to end GBV.

### **II. Initiative Overview**

"StandwithHer" is a time-bound initiative designed to harness the momentum of the 16 Days of Activism to combat gender-based violence. The focus is on supporting women's rights organizations in implementing innovative initiatives, advocacy, and communications efforts that address the root causes of GBV and contribute to creating safer and more equitable societies. The initiative will be implemented in the form of a dedicated rapid-response grant to support women's rights organizations starting from the 16 Days of Activism and up to 6 months thereafter. The total funding for the initiative will be USD75,000.

#### **Target Group**

The initiative will target 5 women's rights organisations – one of each representing the 5 regions of the continent (East, West, North, South, and Central). Each organization will receive USD15,000.

#### **Selection Criteria**

**The grantees will be selected based on the following criteria:**

- Women's rights organisations (network, grassroots, national or regional) that have a track record in implementing initiatives to address gender-based violence. Organisations led by young women will be encouraged to apply.
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- WRO that can present innovative initiatives to ending gender-based violence
- Organizations whose work is proximate to the beneficiaries
- Organisations from the 5 regions of the African Union

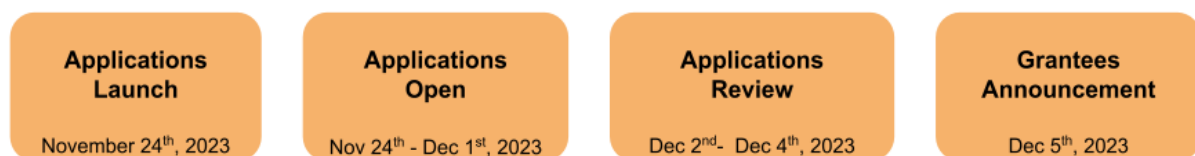
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

## The Process

The initiative will be announced during the advocacy walk launching the 16 days of activism for GBV, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2023 by H.E Dr. Nsanzabaganwa Monique, AUC's Deputy Chairperson.

Thereafter, the call for applications will be published on Oxfam website through a google form and shared widely through AU and Oxfam social media channels as well as through women's networks such as Femnet and GIMAC Network. A joint video of H.E Dr. Nsanzabaganwa Monique, AUC's Deputy Chairperson, and Fati N'Zi-Hassane, Oxfam in Africa Director will also be released on November 28th, 2023 to promote the initiative and encourage organizations to apply. Applications will be open for a week (24th November to December 1st, 2023).

To select grantees, a selection team comprising Oxfam and AUC's Gender and Youth Directorate team members will review the applications. Grantees will be announced on December 5th, 2023 and Oxfam will facilitate the granting process.



## Expected Outcomes

- Rapid deployment of funds leading to tangible outcomes within 6 months of the 16 Days of Activism.
- Strengthened capacity of women's rights organizations to address GBV at the grassroots level.
- Increased public awareness and engagement in the fight against gender-based violence.
- Advocacy efforts influence policy changes and demonstrate the importance of sustained commitment.
- Seed initiatives will have the potential for long-term impact beyond the 16 Days of Activism.