

# Celebrating Strength and Struggle

*A Decade of AkiDwA Making a Difference*



# AkiDwA END OF THE YEAR REPORT 2011

## Millstone and Achievements (2001-2011)

**2001:** A group of African women established AkiDwA with aim to address issues of discrimination, racism and domestic violence migrant women were experiencing in Ireland.

**2002:** First training developed by AkiDwA 'Understanding Racism and its Effect in Society' and delivered to community groups and schools. AkiDwA makes a submission to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform on the National Action Plan Against Racism with the Catherine McAuley Centre and the Islamic Cultural Centre.

**2003:** AkiDwA, present to the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights on the Immigration Bill 2002 and the implications of the Supreme Court judgement concerning the residency rights of migrant parents of Irish children.

**2004:** International Women's Day, AkiDwA visited women prisoners in Mount Joy prison. AkiDwA together with Dr. Ronit Lentin Initiated the Coalition Against the Deportation of Irish Children (CADIC)

**2005:** Nearly 17,000 migrant parents of Irish children receive residency status under the Irish Born Child Scheme in 2005. AkiDwA receives its first substantial funding grant from Social Entrepreneur Ireland. Three focus group discussions were held in Athlone to gauge and develop an understanding on female genital mutilation.

**2006:** AkiDwA holds a major conference to challenge the invisibility of black and ethnic minority women in Ireland. President Mary McAleese invites AkiDwA members to her Residence. 'Herstory', AkiDwA 1<sup>st</sup> publication of women's migration experiences on their journey to Ireland was launched by Melanie Verwoerd, South Africa Ambassador.

**2007:** AkiDwA CEO appointed to the Board of the Equality Authority to represent migrants within the state body board. AkiDwA launches research publication 'Black African Women in the Irish Labour Market.'

**2008:** Female Genital Mutilation: Information for Health-care Professionals Working in Ireland published with first-ever prevalence statistics of women having undergone the procedure living in Ireland. AkiDwA gains representation at the European level to further progress the aims of migrant women in Ireland. AkiDwA at this time began work with European Anti-Poverty Network and the European Women's Lobby. AkiDwA is a founding member of the European Network of Migrant Women and the Black European Women's Council.

**2009:** - AkiDwA and Irish Family Planning Association present on health and legislative issues of female genital mutilation to the Joint Committee on Health and Children. Minister of Health Mary Harney announces the consideration of legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation in Ireland.

**2010:** AkiDwA publishes the research report *Am Only Saying it Now: Experiences of Women Seeking Asylum in Ireland*. AkiDwA CEO is appointed vice chair of the National Women Council of Ireland

**2011:** AkiDwA celebrates a decade of work with migrant women and key stakeholders in Ireland. Ten year organisational review and evaluation completed. AkiDwA launches the publication, *Home and Away- "Migrant Women Transforming Ireland."* An exhibition based on the report travels throughout Ireland.

## **Introduction**

2011 brought new opportunities as well as challenges for AkiDwA. The introduction of the FGM Bill in the Dáil on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011 marked the significant progress of a key element of AkiDwA work since 2005. While the dissolution of the Dáil in February 2011 brought an initial halt to the Bill to prohibit female genital mutilation in Ireland, the bill was re-introduced in the Seanad in the summer, where it passed and moved on to the Dáil before the summer recess. AkiDwA met with the Refugee Applications Commissioner and discussed domestic gender guidelines, which led to discussions with ORAC's Policy Unit that resulted in AkiDwA being asked by ORAC to make a submission to a revision on their internal gender guidelines and an invitation to join ORAC's Customer Service Liaison Panel.

2011 saw an increase of public incidents of racism, including an incident where the Mayor of Naas stated publically he wouldn't represent his black African constituents. AkiDwA and other key stakeholders spoke out forcefully on the issues of racism and discrimination, AkiDwA CEO appeared on RTE, six one news on 25<sup>th</sup> November calling on commitment and political will by the government to address racism in Ireland.

During 2011 AkiDwA was involved in several international programmes including Maisha in Germany and ESK from Czech Republic, exchanging expertise and sharing best practice models of work with migrant women. AkiDwA participated in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Prevention of Racism, Xenophobia and Hate Crimes through Educational and Awareness-Raising Initiatives in Vienna.

In 2011, AkiDwA funding was reduced, which effected operations. Nonetheless, the organisation delivered on a wide range of activities at regional and national levels during 2011, many to mark the decade of work by AkiDwA since its establishment. AkiDwA commissioned an organisational review and evaluation of its ten years of work. The organisation's authority and remit in the sector were highlighted in the report, as well as the organisation's major achievements of the past decade. The evaluation found AkiDwA to be strongly rooted amongst community and migrant groups across Ireland. Women reported back on the meaningful and positive impact AkiDwA has had on their lives and the lives of migrant women living in Ireland. The organisation's ten years of capacity building training delivered at local levels with community partners was cited as crucial, and was seen as a useful template for migrant woman-specific training in many regions. AkiDwA overall successes and strengths as an organisation were rated by all those taking part in the evaluation at 79%. The organisation's policy and advocacy work took the organisation to a new level, which sees it now regularly liaising with Government and statutory agency decision makers, and working in coalition and partnerships with key NGOs active in the areas of migration, gender equality and human rights... A key strength of AkiDwA has been to support migrant's women's voices and work in solidarity with like-minded individuals to effect change.

AkiDwA moved to new offices provided under a lease with the Dublin City Council in March 2011. A consultant was commissioned to deliver a new strategic plan that covers the period from 2012 to 2015. The new plan has a focus on gender based violence, employment and gender discrimination work which the plan states will be delivered through awareness raising, capacity building, organisational restructuring and policy work.

### **1. Gender based violence**

#### **1.1. Female genital mutilation: work on legislation and the delivery of health training**

The Criminal Justice (Female Genital Mutilation) Bill was introduced early in 2011. The bill fell with the end of the then-government and was reintroduced early summer in the Seanad. AkiDwA welcomed the bill and lobbied legislators and government on remaining concerns with the bill as drafted, in particular around the capacity of the extraterritorial aspects of the bill. During the summer debates in the Seanad, where it was passed, and in the Dáil, legislators cited AkiDwA's on-going work in the area, our remaining concerns and our published statistics of women living in Ireland estimated to have undergone the procedure living in Ireland, originally developed by AkiDwA and the Royal College of Surgeon for the publication *Female Genital Mutilation: Information for Healthcare Professionals Working in Ireland*), with revised statistics from new raw data published in 2010. During the year training based on this handbook was delivered to over two hundred and thirty people and groups, including the Royal College of Surgeons Sexual Assault Unit, Trinity College Dublin's Sociology Department at Trinity College, Nursing Global Health and various other groups of midwives and post graduate students. A Community Dialogue Group on FGM was formed in Cork and three meetings held in 2011.

AkiDwA continued its partnership with Amnesty International in the END FGM European Campaign; the Migrant Women's Health Coordinator attended partner meetings in Rome and Brussels in 2011. The Steering Committee on FGM, reconvened in 2011 with AkiDwA taking on the role of the chair, the NSC reviewed Ireland's National Plan of Action to Address Female Genital Mutilation, it was noted in this review that three out of the five key areas of action have been substantially advanced during the lifetime of the plan.

## 1.2. Domestic Violence work

In 2011 AkiDwA sought partnership with the Immigrant Council of Ireland on the issue of access to independent status and domestic violence remedy for women experiencing domestic violence in Ireland subject to immigration control. This led to the formation of an NGO domestic violence forum which was called by the Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality on 5 October 2011 to present on issues of migrant women and domestic violence. AkiDwA's submission and presentation focused on the issue of barriers to domestic violence remedy experienced by women seeking asylum and protection living in direct provision.

Awareness raising has included addressing domestic violence from a community perspective and engaging all stakeholders, including community and religious leaders and migrant men's groups. AkiDwA has linked with a UK based organisation Black Association of Women Step Out (BAWSO) on domestic violence strategic approaches with migrant communities.

As part of the 16 days of Action Opposing Violence Against Women, AkiDwA, MISIP and Family Mirror held a seminar highlighting work and experiences of migrant communities in addressing domestic violence among migrant communities. At the event, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Councillor Andrew Montague, launched a poster on Taking Action on Domestic violence.

In 2011, AkiDwA continued to be involved on the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women and on the Observatory committee on Violence against Women.

## **2. Work on employment**

AkiDwA delivered three key employment projects in the last two and a half years, the Information Booklet on Access to Employment and Education for Migrants (2010), Multiple Discrimination of Migrant Women in Education and Employment in Ireland (2011) and three cycles of the successful mentoring employment scheme, the Door to Work Programme. Employment work in AkiDwA has been limited to specific project-funded work; the booklet and Door to Work programme were largely funded by the Equality for Women measure. The Equality Authority provided funding for the multiple discrimination projects.

Over 3,500 copies of the 2010 publication 'Information Booklet on Access to Employment and Education for Migrants' have been distributed across the country, to Citizen Information Centres, FAS (the Irish National Training and Employment Authority), public libraries, community groups and NGOs. The handbook formed the basis for training workshops for migrant women held regionally and in Dublin in 2010 on employment rights and entitlements. AkiDwA coordinated meetings for the Employment Stakeholder Forum, comprised of statutory agency, trade union and key NGOs and held its annual networking event Brain Gain in which seventy-four local and minority ethnic business professionals attended.

AkiDwA partnered with the Equality Authority for the "The Multiple Discrimination of Migrant Women in Education and Employment in Ireland" project conducted in late 2010 and early 2011. A series of focus groups and one-to-one interviews with migrant women informed a baseline survey report that explored experiences of multiple discrimination of African and migrant women in education, labour market programmes and employment in Ireland. AkiDwA is a member of the Equality Authority's Subcommittee on Stereotyping.

AkiDwA developed and has delivered a placement scheme in 2011, the 'Door to Work Programme,' which saw migrant women mentored, supported and placed in various organisations and businesses throughout Dublin. The aim of the project was to help women with qualifications better access employment in their field of work. Findings from the Door to Work programme were published on-line on AkiDwA website, to give women practical exercises designed to improve her presentation skills and increase her awareness of the recruitment environment. From January to June 2011, twenty-three public and fifty private companies and NGOs were approached to participate in the scheme and three awareness-raising meetings for migrant women were held. In total, AkiDwA received thirty-four applications from migrant women from eighteen different countries of origin and from them conducted twenty-nine interviews. Out of the twenty-nine candidates, twenty-two entered the programme. Popular career paths included accounting, media, information technology, community work and general administration. An information leaflet 'AkiDwA on Employment' and a briefing paper on improving access for migrant women to employment was developed. The Employment Coordinator's project funding ended in June 2012.

## **3. Gender based discrimination work**

Working regionally, nationally and internationally, individually and in coalition, AkiDwA has raised the issue of the need for a gender sensitive asylum process in Ireland and the need for domestic gender guidelines, including with the UNHCR Ireland, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, the Irish Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, the Department of Justice and Equality, the Reception and Integration Agency, the Ombudsman, COSC and Government Ministers. AkiDwA has lobbied for policy and practice reform in Ireland's reception and asylum system to make it gender sensitive, including a safe and

secure separate women's only Centre for women having experienced gender based violence, and independent complaints procedure for residents in centres and gendered cultural training for service providers working with vulnerable individuals seeking asylum.

In 2011, AkiDwA contributed to a NGO lobbying document, highlighting the need for a gender equal asylum system, and to a legislator briefing for new TDs and Senators on the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2010. AkiDwA, as part of a NGO forum working in the area of direct provision and asylum, participated in a legislator briefing session on the need for an independent complaints procedure in direct provision accommodation.

In July 2011, AkiDwA, with Amnesty International, met with the Commissioner of Refugee Applications and a senior member of their policy unit. On discussion was a European initiative, *Engendering the European Asylum Support Office* (the EASO was established May 2011). AkiDwA used this introduction to strengthen links with the Office of the Refugee Application Commissioner's Policy Unit, which led to further collaborative work, including a submission for an update of ORAC's internal gender guidelines. In late 2011 the UNHCR Ireland approached AkiDwA to discuss a possible training module for asylum adjudicators in Ireland on gender related persecution. The Policy Unit in ORAC submitted their revision to their internal guidelines to their management committee for review in 2011. AkiDwA was invited to join ORAC's Customer Service Liaison Panel in the third quarter of 2011.

In 2011 AkiDwA provided a submission to the Irish Council for Civil Liberties and the Irish Penal Reform Trust's shadow report of Ireland's First Periodic Review under the UN Convention against Torture, highlighting issues of safety and security in state-provided accommodation and the need for FGM legislation with extraterritorial effect.

In March 2011, AkiDwA developed and submitted to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights recommendations for their review of Ireland under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in which we highlighted safety and security concerns of women seeking asylum and protection who are living in direct provision accommodation. This submission was cited in the summary stakeholder report for UPR published in late July 2011.

In 2011 AkiDwA developed and conducted a small pilot study of NGOs and women's support services working with female asylum seekers presenting issues of sexual harassment in direct provision settings.

#### **4. Capacity Building**

Information and support was offered to women throughout the year. Thirty two individual clients were supported in one-to-one sessions. Areas of support included: immigration, crisis pregnancy, child custody, DNA testing, mental health, domestic violence, application for residency, and reference letters for work.

AkiDwA delivered a series of training sessions on sexual reproductive health in the following direct provision accommodation centres: Monaghan, Montague, Lissywollen, Athlone, Clondalkin Towers and Mosney, overall a hundred women received training. Support for the training sessions was given by the Crisis Pregnancy Agency. With support from Sisters of Mercy capacity building training was delivered to a total of 30 women (15 women in Monaghan and 15 from Mosney) by Partners in Catalyst

Before moving office in March, computer classes were delivered in a resource centre by a trainer; over thirty-two women participated.

Three meetings were held with migrant women leaders, on topics ranging from health to leadership strategies. During the year AkiDwA participated in a Grundtvig European partnership exchange programme with Maisha in Germany and ESK in Czech Republic, to have a better representation AkiDwA engaged women participant in this programme from Women of Multi-Culture Balbriggan, Diaspora Women Initiative, Women Integrate Athy and Beauty Ashes. Exchange programme were hosted in all three countries. In March 2012 AkiDwA organised and hosted the General Assembly for the European Network for Migrant Women, at which Alwiye Xuseyn AkiDwA representative in the network was elected as the chair of the network.

Three meetings were held with young migrant women during the year. The Community Dialogue on FGM Group held three training sessions during the year in Galway and Cork. AkiDwA, in conjunction with Doras Luimni, delivered training and a mapping exercise on the health needs of migrant women in Limerick.

## **5. Collaborative Work**

Collaborative work AkiDwA engaged with during 2011 is discussed extensively throughout this report and the ten year collaborative celebration work is discussed in the next section.

## **6. Organisational Capacity:**

The Organisation generated limited income during the year 2011. Funding from the Department of Community, Rural, and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Equality for Women Measure came to an end in June 2011. AkiDwA received a small grant from the Community Foundation Ireland and the Sisters of Mercy.

The board had a full capacity of 12 members at the beginning of 2011. Board induction training was delivered to all members. Six board meetings and six sub-group meetings, of the human resource and financial committees, were held during the year. The board took part in evaluation and review meetings and strategic planning sessions. New staff contracts were developed with the help of a solicitor, and a staff handbook was completed with the help of the Public Interest Law Alliance. The organisation had eight staff employed throughout the year. With support from Atlantic Philanthropies, four of the staffs' employment time was increased. Six staff meetings were held and staff supervision meetings occurred during the year.

A total of 10 activities were carried out to mark AkiDwA's decade of work. Highlights of the celebrations included the launch of Home and Away photo exhibition, that was supported by Dublin City Council, a conference, 'African and Migrant Women Between Racialisation and Agency that was supported by Trinity College Dublin, department of sociology and through Dr. Ronit Lentin, a seminar on integration inconjunction with Doras Lumni, Limerick, and a seminar on capacity building, of migrant women NASC in Cork, a seminar on New Communities on employment was held with ISU, Waterfordfor, in conjunction with Galway Refugee Support Group a seminar on migrant women's health needs was held in Galway and with Domestic Violence Advocacy Services on domestic violence seminar was held in Sligo.

A ten year anniversary fundraising and recognition dinner was held at Dublin's Gresham Hotel in September 2011, in which one hundred and seventy-four people attended. During this evening, AkiDwA honoured many of the individuals, groups and funders who have supported AkiDwA and its work over the past decade. A thanks giving service was held at the Dublin Central Mission, honouring past and present members and acknowledging the role of Dublin Central Mission's early and lasting support of AkiDwA' work and migrant women's concerns and access to their human rights.

The organisation held its Annual General Meeting on 26 November 2011.

#### **AkiDwA 2011 Board**

1. Tina Akinola Jinad: Chairperson
2. Monica Anne Brennan: Vice Chairperson
3. Jules Buckley: Board member
4. Binta Obola: Board Member
5. Hilka Becker: Legal advise
6. Beatrice Mbogo: Board Member
7. Frances Soney- Board Member
8. Amel Yusuf: assistant Secretary
9. Yasmin Kutub: Board Member
10. Melatu Okorie: Secretary
11. Vanya Theodora: Finance
12. Catherine Lynch: Board Member

#### **AkiDwA 2011 staff**

1. Salome Mbugua: CEO
2. Annemarie O'Brien: Office Administrator
3. Catherine Mahoro: Accountant & Funding Officer
4. Nobuhle Nduka: Advocacy & Networking Coordinator
5. Kerry O'Leary: Research & Policy Development Coordinator
6. Alwiye Xuseyn: Migrant Women's Health Coordinator
7. Zuzana Pavilkova: Employment Coordinator
8. Amaka Okonkwo: Development and Event Officer

#### **Volunteers:**

Ciiku Ngetho

#### **Interns:**

Luke Conlan  
Dilyana Kiryakova  
Jackie Sheltry

### **Financial Report**

#### **Financial Review of the Year**

2011 was the final year for AkiDwA strategic plan 2008- 2011. The organisation carried out arrange of activities though with additional activities to mark AkiDwA 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Taking up the recommendations from the evaluation the organisation began the process for the development of a new strategic plan 2012-2014, this was completed in early 2012.

**Akina Dada Wa Africa Limited**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

**Detailed Income Account for the year ended 31st December 2011**

	2011	2010
€	€	€
<b>Income</b>		
Atlantic Philanthropies	125,000	125,000
DCRGA	18,088	45,792
Pobal	33,753	49,937
Joseph Rowntree	50,000	50,000
Dublin City Council	-	9,000
Dept. of Social & Family Affairs	-	3,000
Gwanda Trust	-	5,000
Amnesty International	5,000	4,000
Crisis Pregnancy Programme	24,568	19,999
Sisters of Mercy	7,500	-
Europeans Women's Lobby	7,000	-
Leargas	14,400	-
HSE	-	44,000
HSE 2009	-	21,900
Sundry Grants	7,419	3,669
Pobal Capital Grant Released	490	745
Other income	10,463	8,207
<b>Total income</b>	<b>303,681</b>	<b>390,249</b>

**Akina Dada wa Africa Limited**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

**Detailed Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 2011**

	2011	2010
€	€	€
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Wages and salaries	243,089	199,690
Outreach and networking	65,199	22,488
Training and consultation expenses	6,717	5,209
Rent payable	4,065	16,001
Rates	303	-
Insurance	1,210	2,446
Light and heat	1,702	1,287
Postage & carriage	821	-
Repairs and maintenance	2,302	-
Project expenses	23,436	16,572
Printing and office supplies	3,289	10,371
Advertising	3,351	339
IT expenses	3,852	5,000
Telephone and communications	4,754	4,196
Facilitation and childcare fees	16,460	12,933
Conference expenses	-	2,900
Travelling and entertainment	5,301	-
Legal and professional	3,734	2,760
Bank charges	362	-
General expenses	1,427	9,703
Subscriptions	160	-
Depreciation on FF & Equipment	987	1,428
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>392,521</b>	<b>313,323</b>

**Akina Dada Wa Africa Limited**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

**Balance Sheet**  
as at 31st December 2011

	Notes	2011		2010	
		€	€	€	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	4		-		987
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	5	3,500		3,500	
Cash at bank and in hand		173,263		353,394	
		<u>176,763</u>		<u>356,894</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	6	(23,664)		(115,452)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>153,099</u>		<u>241,442</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>153,099</u>		<u>242,429</u>
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>153,099</u>		<u>242,429</u>
<b>Reserves</b>					
Other reserves			-		490
Revenue reserves account			<u>153,099</u>		<u>241,939</u>
<b>Members' funds</b>	7		<u>153,099</u>		<u>242,429</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 30th October 2012 and signed on its behalf by

  
Director

  
Director

The notes on pages 9 to 12 form an integral part of these financial statements.

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