



New Field Foundation
Strategic Plan 2010-2014

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New Field Foundation contributes to the creation of a peaceful and equitable world by supporting women and their families to overcome poverty, violence, and injustice in their communities. New Field Foundation is currently focusing on sub-Saharan Africa and operates in support of Tides Foundation's international grantmaking.

1. INTRODUCTION TO NEW FIELD FOUNDATION

Founded in 2003, New Field Foundation grew out of the commitment and interest of its founding board of directors in supporting the creative initiatives of women and their families to overcome poverty, violence, and injustice in their communities.

During the last five years, our work has touched thousands of women's lives in sub-Saharan Africa through our unique and effective program that supports community-based grantmakers and rural women's organizations. The women involved testify to the transformative power of working together with access to capital, information and decision-making roles. Their organizations are forming networks and attracting widespread attention, their leaders weigh in on policy dialogues, and the women themselves are increasing food security and peace within their communities.

Over the next five years, New Field plans to continue supporting African rural women and their organizations to increase their resources, to build healthier families and communities, as well as to achieve food security, recognition of rights and the end of violence. Our main program, Rural Women Creating Change, in particular enables rural women's organizations and networks in West Africa to bring about significant change for large numbers of people in areas that have faced severe conflict and upheaval. We have long-term partnerships in our current focus areas of Casamance

(Senegal), Mano River Union (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone), and the Northern Niger River Basin (Burkina Faso and Mali).

In addition to a staff of five based in San Francisco, California, New Field Foundation relies on the expertise and leadership of three West African Program Consultants and a network of West African Local Advisors to shape the foundation's grantmaking programs, carry out detailed assessment and monitoring, provide technical services to partners when appropriate, ensure accountability and accuracy in reporting, and leverage additional resources for partners.



*It is important to nurture
any new ideas and initiatives
which can make a difference for Africa.
- Wangari Maathi, Nobel Laureate*

2. CONTEXT

Rural women produce more than half of the world's food, and provide immeasurable support to local communities. But despite the life-saving role they play, these women are seldom adequately appreciated or compensated.
- Ban Ki-moon, U.N. Secretary General, International Day of Rural Women, October 15, 2008

In sub-Saharan Africa, women have a major influence on the health and well-being of their local communities because of their central role in food production and rural economies.

When New Field Foundation started in 2003, human development indicators pointed to increasing levels of poverty, violence and injustice across sub-Saharan Africa, particularly for rural women. Female life expectancy and female adult literacy rates remained some of the lowest in the world, while women and girls also bore the brunt of food insecurity, conflicts and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

At the same time, African women were taking the initiative, across national, ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries, to transform their lives, and those of their families and communities.

New Field's approach helps deliver resources and innovation where they will have the most impact – into the hands of rural women's organizations – to support local farming systems that provide ongoing food security and economic prosperity for their communities and countries.

Solidifying and promoting this approach is critical to offsetting the potential harmful effects of international financial and government interests that are investing aggressively in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa, often with only their own economic and food security interests in mind.

New Field focuses on supporting initiatives by rural women in sub-Saharan Africa that enable their families and communities to live safer, more sustainable and satisfying lives. New Field chooses to concentrate its support in regions of West Africa that are going through transformation after years of conflict or other upheaval.

In particular, New Field piloted a new approach to channeling financial resources directly into the hands of rural women's organizations through community grantmaking. This five-year strategic plan builds on our desire to strengthen and expand this approach. New Field seeks to inspire others so that more resources directly benefit rural women's organizations, their families and communities.

3. MISSION & VALUES

New Field's mission and values have played a powerful role in defining our grantmaking programs and institutional development in our first five years. They will continue to shape and inform our work in the next five years.

Mission Statement

New Field Foundation contributes to a peaceful and equitable world by supporting women and their families to overcome poverty, violence and injustice in their communities.



Values

In support of our mission, we have identified the following core values that inform all aspects of our work:

- ❖ **Shared vision for peace and equality**
Joining together to share effort, knowledge and resources for peace and equality creates strength and accomplishment.
- ❖ **Women are central**
Even with the minimum of resources, women find the means to improve the well-being of their children, families, and communities.
- ❖ **Relationships grounded in respect and shared values**
Responsive relationships that include honest dialogue and empathy create the conditions for long-term mutual alliance, particularly during difficult times.
- ❖ **Collaborative and equitable decision-making**
Differences are healed and power hierarchies broken when people cross barriers to make decisions together, resulting in a vital and 'living' democracy.
- ❖ **Responsible stewardship of the earth**
Carefully cultivating soil, seed and water for future generations creates well-being and abundance.

4. HIGHLIGHTS

In its first six years, New Field has worked to establish itself as a thoughtful and effective grantmaking institution with a strong financial base, dynamic goals, an organizational structure grounded in African expertise, rigorous assessment processes, combined with responsive and flexible funding of initiatives that genuinely make a difference.

Accomplishments 2004 – 2009

- ❖ Identified a strategic focus on rural women, their organizations, families and communities.
- ❖ Funded 272 grants to 88 organizations totaling \$8.9 million, while building a \$10 million reserve.
- ❖ Supported ten local organizations in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal and Sierra Leone to establish community grantmaking programs that in turn provided 260 community grants and technical assistance to 135 rural women's organizations.
- ❖ With community grants:
 - 25 rural women's organizations in two war-torn districts of Sierra Leone produced food for local consumption, with a surplus for the national market.
 - A network of 1200 rural women in Casamance, Senegal, acquired land, secured rights, increased savings, and managed multiple projects benefiting more than 5000 people in their communities.
- 15 women's organizations acquired and operated equipment such as solar pumps, drip irrigation, and rice hullers, leading to increased crop production and income while reducing women's labor, and benefiting more than 1500 women members and their families.
- Six rural women leaders were elected onto rural councils to guide the allocation of resources in their districts.
- ❖ Contributed to ten community radio stations in Casamance that brought people together for dialogue and programs on peace and development in local languages.
- ❖ Enabled more than 60 rural women leaders to participate in and draw attention to the situation of rural women at international convenings.
- ❖ Appointed three program consultants and eight local advisors in West Africa to create an 'on-the-ground' presence and infrastructure.
- ❖ Established partnerships with six other foundations to fund rural women in sub-Saharan Africa.

Opportunities & Challenges 2010 – 2014

Opportunities

- ❖ Dynamism of women's movement in Africa, with growing role for rural women.
- ❖ Large number of rural women's organizations that have the structure and capacity to manage funds.
- ❖ Resourcefulness of rural women, with strong motivation to transform their situation.
- ❖ Process of political decentralization, offering resources and political leadership to rural women.
- ❖ African Union support for women's rights to make change possible.
- ❖ Rapidly increasing connectivity for rural women through cell phones and Internet access.

Challenges

- ❖ Lack of agricultural investments and policies that reach or are relevant to rural women and their families.
- ❖ Complexity of forces impacting women in Africa (e.g. climate change, natural resource exploitation and political instability), made worse by the global financial crisis and a rise in food and fuel prices.
- ❖ Growing interest of governments and business in African agriculture.
- ❖ Increasing violence against women, and the threat of a return to conflict in some areas where peace is fragile.
- ❖ Lack of status, rights, resources, and education for rural women, combined with heavy burden of work.
- ❖ Extremely weak infrastructure for access to markets, inputs, capital, and information.

5. FIVE-YEAR GOALS & RESULTS

GOAL 1: Expand the main program - Rural Women Creating Change - so that large numbers of rural women's organizations and networks in sub-Saharan Africa have agency over resources, information and policy.

2014 Results:

- ❖ Fifteen community grantmakers provide resources and technical assistance to 200 rural women's organizations benefiting 150,000 people.
- ❖ Rural women's organizations in focus areas create significant solutions to benefit their members, families, communities and countries.
- ❖ Key resources are allocated to rural women's organizations by local, national and pan-African institutions due to advocacy by twenty rural women's networks.
- ❖ Local language media advance peace and equity through the perspectives and voices of rural women and their organizations.
- ❖ The impact of Rural Women Creating Change at the community level is documented and disseminated at the local, national and pan-African levels.
- ❖ Funders and key players in the women's and social justice movements recognize the centrality of rural women and work with rural women's organizations in shaping policy and practices.

GOAL 2: Increase the capacity of New Field to collaborate with external partners and expand resources for Rural Women Creating Change through enhanced grantmaking, monitoring, infrastructure, and governance.

2014 Results:

- ❖ At least ten funding partners support Rural Women Creating Change with a cumulative total of \$2.75 million over five years, in addition to New Field investments.
- ❖ Expansion of grantmaking and program operations is guided by clear policies and strategies, with enhanced infrastructure and capacity.
- ❖ An innovative monitoring and learning approach informs New Field and its funding partners about the impacts and outcomes of community grantmakers and rural women's organizations.
- ❖ New Field has increased visibility and recognition through vehicles such as briefing papers, consultations, presentations and articles.



GOAL 3: Explore and fund innovative ideas and strategies to support African women in their desire to create an equitable and peaceful world for their families and communities.

2014 Result:

- ❖ Thirty promising initiatives and organizations receive funding from New Field. This pilot phase will contribute to the development of the future direction of *Seeding Solutions*.

6. PROGRAMS

Rural Women Creating Change

Through this program, New Field supports African rural women and their organizations to access resources and build healthier communities, with widespread food security, financial stability, recognition of rights and the end of violence.

Key elements of Rural Women Creating Change include:

- ❖ Providing long-term funding to rural women's organizations and networks.
- ❖ Concentrating grants on specific areas (see adjoining map) where women are experiencing major changes in their lives, particularly after conflict or other upheaval.
- ❖ Supporting community grantmakers to establish programs benefiting rural women's organizations with community grants and technical assistance.
- ❖ Stimulating exchanges between rural women's organizations and supporting their connections with funders as well as the wider African women's and social justice movements.
- ❖ Having locally based program officers in each focus area, together with local advisors and monitoring consultants.
- ❖ Committing 70% of New Field's annual budget to this program.



Rural Women Creating Change

Goal	Description	2014 Results
Local Organizing	Rural women's organizations and networks are securing resources and livelihoods that bring significant improvement to their families, communities and countries.	200 rural women's organizations and networks are managing growing revenues, while working in collaboration with 15 community grantmakers, ten national NGOs and three pan-African women's funds. Collectively, the rural women's organizations have doubled their assets over a period of five years to benefit more than 150,000 people, through such resources as increased organizational income, membership savings, community funds, food production, land title, natural resource management, and local government budgetary allocations.
Movement Building	African rural women's organizations and their networks are contributing to a dynamic movement of rural women who are creating social change.	Remarkable stories and images of significant changes to the status, rights, and resources of rural women and their organizations have reached one million people in rural Africa in their own languages and informed 1,000 organizations at all levels working for rural women.
Systemic Change	African rural women's leadership creates economic justice, gender equity and peace at local, provincial and national levels on a sustainable basis.	Twenty rural women's networks have contributed to policy and decision-making at provincial and national levels for durable peace, sustainable agriculture, and gender equity.

Seeding Solutions

New Field will pursue exploratory and flexible grantmaking through the Seeding Solutions program. The program reflects the founders' recognition that change happens in many ways, and that women and their families in sub-Saharan Africa pursue multiple paths so that they can live in a more peaceful and equitable world.

Key principles that will guide Seeding Solutions in the next five years include:

- ❖ Growth to approximately 10 – 15% of New Field's annual budget, including grants and operational costs.
- ❖ Short-term grant commitments of one to three years.
- ❖ First two-years dedicated to piloting the program.
- ❖ Financing the program from New Field's own resources, on the basis that Rural Women Creating Change has the potential to attract other funders.

Key concepts for the program are that it will:

- ❖ Be innovative, holistic, and creative.
- ❖ Be flexible, exploratory, and open.
- ❖ Provide support for emerging programs, tools, issues and technologies that are intended to enhance rural life for African women, their families and communities.

New Field's Theory of Change

- ❖ When rural women increase and manage their own resources, they use those assets to benefit their families and communities.
- ❖ When rural women organize and work together, they increase their knowledge and resources, improve their status, and become active in civic participation.
- ❖ Rural women need to be in charge of their own processes and tools for resolving conflict, if they are to take advantage of new opportunities.
- ❖ Rural women's organizations and networks have a significant role in national and pan-African initiatives and can shape resources, policies and processes that benefit large numbers of women.

Investments in women's self-determination and organizations create the conditions and resources for long-lasting change at local, national and pan-African levels.



7. CONCLUSION

New Field Foundation's main program – *Rural Women Creating Change* – responds to a growing recognition that women play a central role in rural economies and food security in sub-Saharan Africa.

Now is the moment to support an approach that builds local institutions – both community grantmakers as well as rural women's organizations – to effect local, national and pan-African change. By focusing its support on the leadership and agency of rural women and their organizations, New Field's approach results in long-lasting and systemic change benefiting large numbers of people.

Through new partnerships and collaborations, New Field plans to expand funding for this dynamic and unique program. In real terms, New Field projects its annual budget to increase from \$3 million in 2009 to \$4 million in 2014.

By 2014, New Field intends to ensure that at least 200 rural women's organizations and networks have direct ownership and management of financial and asset-based resources. These rural women's organizations will collaborate with 15 community grantmakers, ten national non-governmental organizations and three pan-African women's funds.

The net effect will be the doubling of resources for rural women and their families over a period of five years to directly benefit more than 150,000 people. In addition, New Field will have supported the dissemination of stories and images of changes to the status, rights, and resources of rural women and their organizations, reaching one million people in rural Africa and informing 1,000 organizations working for rural women.

New Field will also have assisted 20 rural women's networks to contribute to policy and decision-making at provincial and national levels for durable peace, sustainable agriculture, and gender equity.

In order to achieve these goals, New Field has developed an Implementation Plan that details how it will invest in the appropriate infrastructure, staff development, and internal systems to ensure that the organization has sufficient capacity to support the anticipated growth.

New Field Foundation's board, staff and program consultants are excited to enter an outwardly focused stage of development that furthers its mission and values. Through its programs *Rural Women Creating Change* and *Seeding Solutions*, New Field offers a collaborative and transformative approach to supporting rural women, their families and communities.

New Field Foundation - Who We Are

Board of Directors

Janis Burger, Board Secretary
Deputy Director, First 5 Alameda County
Ellen Friedman, Board Treasurer
Executive Vice President, Tides
Muadi Mukenge
Regional Director, sub-Saharan Africa, Global Fund for Women
Barbara Sargent
Executive Director, Kalliopeia Foundation
Tom Sargent, Board President
Principal, Equity Community Builders, LLC
Barbara Sieck Taylor
Executive Director, Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania

Staff & Program Consultants

Deanna Drake, Communications Coordinator
Yuri Futamura, Foundation Manager
Sarah Hobson, Executive Director
Emma Kamara, Program Consultant, Mano River Union
Meleah Mannix, Grants Administrator
Tabara Ndiaye, Program Consultant, Casamance
Mariamé Ouattara, Program Consultant, Niger River Basin
Zoë Rossing, Program Operations Coordinator
Zelene Wilkins, Program Consultant

New Field Offices:

San Francisco, USA
Dakar, Senegal – Focus Area Casamance
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso – Focus Area Niger River Basin
Freetown, Sierra Leone – Focus Area Mano River Union

Advisory Council

Kaari Murungi
Chair, National Human Rights Commission (Kenya)
Coumba Toure
Sahel Representative, Ashoka

Local & Regional Advisors

Ousmane Ba (Senegal)
Consultant, Monitoring & Evaluation
Fatoumata Batta, (Burkina Faso)
Co-coordinator for West Africa, Groundswell International
Mamadou Goita (Mali)
Executive Director, Institute for Research and the Promotion of Alternatives in Development
Jeanne Manguet (Guinea)
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Setcheme Mongbo (Benin)
Director of EMPOWER, CARE International, Benin
Andrew Musa (Sierra Leone)
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New Field Foundation operates in support of Tides Foundation's international grantmaking.

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