

Report

Women Deliver's Conference After-Action Review

JANUARY 12, 2023

Althaë Strategy
Sophie Romana & Kate Lee

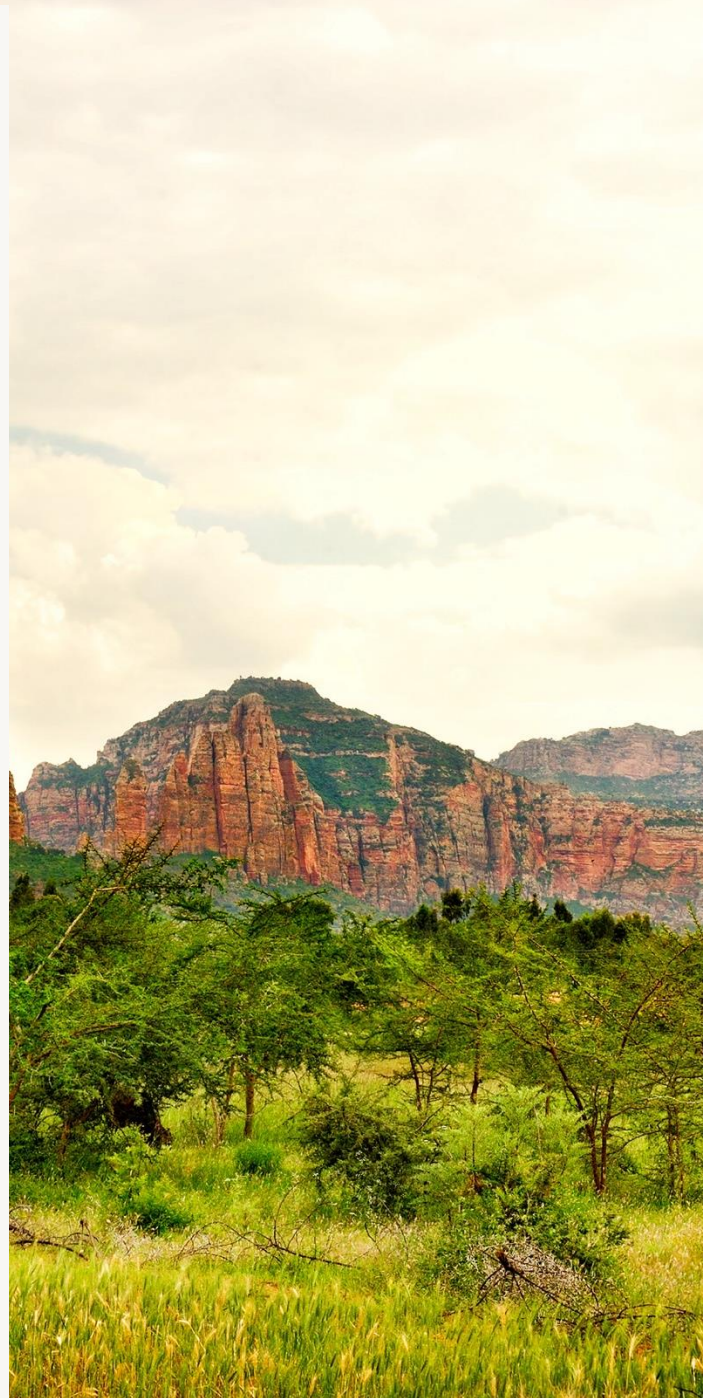


Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction.....	4
Methodology	4
Conference Overview	5
Findings	5
Necessity and Impact of Large Global Convenings.....	5
Effectiveness of the Women Deliver Conference.....	6
Organizational Effectiveness.....	9
Alternative Approaches.....	9
Recommendations for Conference Improvements	10
Recommendations for Organizational Effectiveness	11
Next Steps	13
Conclusion.....	13
Annex 1 – Interview Guide	1

Executive Summary

Althaë Strategy performed an After-Action Review (AAR) of the Women Deliver 2023 Conference (WD2023), encompassing a review of strategic, communication, and conference planning documents alongside budget, fundraising, social media, website data, and other analytics. This was followed by 47 key informant interviews with internal stakeholders, including Women Deliver Staff/Consultants and the Board of Directors, and external stakeholders, including vendors, funders and sponsors, sponsored delegates, Regional Convening Partners, program organizers, Rwandan government partners, and members of the WD2023 Advisory Group and the WD2023 Youth Planning Committee.

The AAR was grounded in OECD's Evaluation Criteria and focused on assessing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency of the conference goals and broader organizational objectives, including networking, partnership opportunities, learning, value-for-cost, and environmental impact.

Admiration of Staff: Stakeholders across groups recognized the incredible achievement of Women Deliver staff. That a global conference attended by over 6,000 could be executed by a staff of fewer than 30, many of whom, including the CEO, had not attended a conference prior to WD2023 and had only recently joined the organization.

Big wins: Most interviewees celebrated the pre-conference and the accessibility, representation, and youth participation at WD2023. Further, interviews highlighted the leadership of Women Deliver, in particular Maliha Khan's leadership as the new CEO in a complex environment.

Value of Global Convenings: Stakeholders unanimously recognized the value and power of global convenings. Further, they noted the critical role and value of the Women Deliver conference in the SRHR and feminist movement space.

Conference Objectives: Many stakeholders shared that the goal of the conference and the objectives were not well defined or not well-matched for a conference, and because of this, they could not determine whether or not these goals and objectives were achieved.

That said, most stakeholders believe the conference achieved its objective of creating space.

Focus and on Outcomes: Stakeholders were largely overwhelmed by the number of themes and events and suggested that future conferences would be more effective if they were thematic, and the number of events were streamlined. Further, stakeholders expressed a desire for the conference to be outcomes-driven with more transparency and accountability between conferences.

Mission & Identity: Stakeholders expressed confusion about the organization's mission and what the organization does outside of the conference. Women Deliver's identity-in-transition sparked similar confusion.

Organizational Health: To ensure the effectiveness of future conferences, Women Deliver must prioritize the health and structure of the organization itself. This includes focusing on roles and responsibilities, establishing knowledge and data management systems and processes, and hiring for key positions.

In summary, while **stakeholders believe there is value in global convenings**, there is a strong recommendation for a more streamlined, outcome-focused approach for future conferences. Further, **strengthening the organization's health** and defining the mission and identity of Women Deliver is essential for ongoing success and impact, as is creating effective partnerships.

Introduction

In July 2023, 6,300 people from over 170 countries attended the Women Deliver 2023 Conference (WD2023) in Kigali, Rwanda; an additional 10,000 people attended virtually. A post-conference survey carried out by Women Deliver found that 91% of respondents believe spaces like WD2023 are important to gender equality. At the same time, an internal post-conference evaluation identified the need to dedicate more time and resources to the conference's co-creation process and to strengthening the organization. The internal evaluation also found that additional resources are needed to provide interpretation, prioritize language justice, and improve the organization's transparency processes.

To further assess the value of WD2023 for attendees, stakeholders, and the organization itself and to strategically build future events on lessons learned, Women Deliver engaged Althaë Strategy to conduct an external, independent After-Action Review (AAR) of WD2023.

The aim of AAR is to critically answer the following questions:

- Are large global convenings necessary to further the objectives of the feminist movement and bring us closer to achieving gender equality?
- If so, is the Women Deliver Conference the right global convening?
- Can the objective be achieved more effectively and efficiently by some other means?
- What changes should be made to the conference's approach, process, and/or content?

The AAR also seeks to answer the following questions:

- What did WD2023 achieve? Did WD2023 achieve its 5 core objectives (1. Catalyze collective action; 2. Hold leaders accountable; 3. Empower the feminist movement; 4. Reframe who leads; and 5. Create space)? If not, why?
- What parts of the Conference contributed the most to the desired outcomes? What parts of the Conference contributed least or were detrimental to achieving the desired outcomes?
- What role, and to what level of importance, do convenings play in advancing gender equality globally?
- What are viable convening structures? And what role should Women Deliver play in potential future convenings?
- What went well in the design, preparation, and execution of WD2023? What could be improved, and how?

Methodology

Althaë Strategy conducted a comprehensive desk review of materials shared by Women Deliver, including the strategic framework, MEL framework, communications strategy, conference strategy documents, internal and external debrief documents, the WD2023 work plan, budget, fundraising documents, social media, and website. Existing data, including survey results and other relevant data and analytics, were also reviewed by Althaë Strategy.

Following the desk review, Althaë Strategy conducted 47 key informant interviews with stakeholders selected by Women Deliver. Interviews were conducted with internal stakeholders, including Staff/Consultants and the Board of Directors, and external stakeholders, including vendors, funders and sponsors, sponsored delegates, Regional Convening Partners, program organizers, Rwandan government partners, and members of the WD2023 Advisory Group and the WD2023 Youth Planning Committee.

For the interviews, Althaë Strategy designed a questionnaire¹ to evaluate relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency across the five individual/personal goals of networking, partnering, learning, value/cost, and carbon footprint. The framework for the questionnaire was based on the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Evaluation Criteria.



Figure 1- OECD Evaluation Criteria

Conference Overview

In July 2023, Women Deliver hosted the Women Deliver 2023 Conference (WD2023) in Kigali, Rwanda. The conference was the first conference hosted by Women Deliver in three years and the first post-pandemic convening by the organization. 6,300 people attended WD2023 in person, and more than 10,000 participated virtually; attendees represented more than 170 countries. Attendees included individuals, NGOs, national and community-based organizations, business and private sector leaders, government officials, UN organizations, multilateral organizations, sponsors, and donors. 30% of attendees were under the age of 30.²

Findings

Necessity and Impact of Large Global Convenings

There was a consensus that large global convenings play a crucial role in furthering the objectives of the feminist movement and bringing us closer to the goal of gender equality. Large global convenings, including WD2023, were described as more than “just” meetings or conferences but as vibrant, dynamic platforms that galvanize action, foster unity, and amplify voices.

By providing unique opportunities and an inclusive environment where individuals and organizations from various sectors and regions come together, share experiences, and learn from one another, global convenings fuel inspiration and motivation and allow for the cross-pollination of ideas, leading to innovative strategies and strengthened resolve. As such, stakeholders

¹ See Annex 1

² WD2023 – Survey results, September 2023.

shared that these convenings act as catalysts, accelerating progress by building a sense of global community and shared purpose, which is critical in tackling the complex, deeply rooted issues of gender inequality.

The collective wisdom, energy, and commitment harnessed at global convenings were described in interviews as vital for the feminist movement, as they ensure a continuous flow of innovative solutions and approaches, encouraging collective learning and progress towards gender equality. Stakeholders from all the groups interviewed shared that global convenings serve as powerful platforms for networking, enabling activists, policymakers, academics, and grassroots leaders to forge meaningful connections and elevate voices and issues. Additionally, global convenings were identified as important in that they capture the attention of the press, bringing the spotlight on critical issues, ones that are not necessarily front-page news, despite touching the lives of millions of girls and women.

Effectiveness of the Women Deliver Conference

The post-conference surveys and interviews with stakeholders found that the majority of individuals and organizations that participated in and/or attended the conference would do so again. There were questions raised; however, on the effectiveness of the conference. Much of the critique centered around the goals and objectives of the conference itself and the number of events and themes encompassed in WD2023.

Were the conference objectives achieved?

Many stakeholders shared that the goal of the conference and the objectives were not well defined or were not appropriate. Because of this, stakeholders shared they could not determine whether or not they were achieved and if the conference was effective. Stakeholders asked, “Empower the feminist movement. What part of the movement? To what end?” “How is success defined?” “What is the point of bringing 6,000 people together if you’re not meeting any of the objectives you set for yourself?”

There was near collective agreement that WD2023 achieved its objective of creating space. In the interviews, stakeholders pointed to the diversity of voices at WD2023, and the platform these voices were given to gather, connect, and speak. Stakeholders shared that WD2023 brought together a diverse group from across the globe, featuring strong representation from the global south and a significant youth presence (notably on almost every panel), as well as representing some intersectional groups. Stakeholders shared that this diversity enriched the discourse, introducing new perspectives and helping to break down barriers. Further, the intentional accessibility of the conference was universally praised, not only for the achievements during the conference but also for setting the bar higher for future global conferences.

There was a lack of consensus on whether or not WD2023 achieved its objectives of catalyzing collective action, holding leaders accountable, empowering the feminist movement, and reframing who leads. Several stakeholders shared that the speech given by Hungarian President Katalin Novák and how Women Deliver handled the situation undermined the organization’s ability to achieve these objectives. One stakeholder said, “How Novák was handled arguably did the opposite of empowering the feminist movement, reframing who leads, and holding leaders accountable.” However, other stakeholders shared that Women Deliver handled the situation in the best way possible.

Similarly, some stakeholders noted that the ambitious agenda and the objectives of empowering the feminist movement, holding leaders accountable, and reframing who leads were at odds with the attitudes and behaviors of some speakers and donors who requested VIP treatment (not to be confused with security protocols), e.g., different color badges, requests for private transportation, room upgrades, and last-minute speaking engagement cancellations relating to the perceived panel quality. Stakeholders shared that these requests did not go unnoticed and that, generally, Women Deliver dealt with them diplomatically and diligently.

Who is Women Deliver?

Further, when asked to evaluate the effectiveness of WD2023, stakeholders from multiple groups expressed confusion about the core mission and identity of Women Deliver. Participants and stakeholders were acutely aware of the 2020 crisis and the urgent need for Women Deliver to transform into a more diverse and representative organization within the feminist movement. However, there was uncertainty expressed regarding the organization's primary role. Questions arose: Is Women Deliver primarily a global convener, a technical organization focused on expertise and research in gender-related fields, or an advocacy group driving policy changes and social awareness? This ambiguity extends to the organization's activities between conferences; there is a general sense of confusion about what Women Deliver does in the intervals between conferences. Several stakeholders shared, "I am not sure what they do between conferences, anything?"

Overwhelming and Everything to Everybody

The number of events sparked mixed reactions; some attendees felt there were too many, leading to a sense of overwhelm, while others believed the quantity was just right, offering a breadth of options. The lack of clearly identifiable tracks was cited as frustrating, as was the multiplication or duplication of events around the same theme.

Further, nearly all stakeholders shared that they could not provide perspective on the effectiveness of the multiple streams, pre-conference, Regional Convenings, side events, concurrent events, etc., as they did not participate in all of these. Stakeholders shared that the number of events was incredible but that, in many ways, it was "too much."

Many stakeholders shared that they felt the conference was trying to be everything to everybody and that this diluted the effectiveness of the conference.

Communication

Communication emerged as a notable concern, with participants calling for more information in advance to better navigate the conference's offerings. Nearly all stakeholders shared that having a final agenda well in advance of the conference would have been valuable for many reasons including planning and networking. The app was heralded as both a win and a miss. While it was seen to enhance the experience, many expressed frustrations with the app, pointing to out-of-date information, information available on the app at the last minute, and challenges with accessing the app, including internet accessibility, the high cost of data plans, and a lack of universal smartphone ownership.

Carbon Footprint

While the value of in-person convening, especially post-Covid 19 pandemic, was acknowledged as critical to networking, learning and sharing experience, the question surrounding the carbon footprint of the conference needs to be addressed and possibly offset. Below is a rough estimate of the carbon footprint emitted by conference attendees based on their geographical repartition from the post-conference survey.

Region of origin	Carbon footprint (metric tons of CO2) per Round Trip	Number of people	Simple flight - Economy RT	Total Carbon footprint (metric tons of CO2)	Average annual carbon foot print at city of origin per person (metric tons of CO2)
Africa	0.73	3,843.00	Johannesburg - Kigali	2,805.39	5.3
North america	3.78	1,008.00	New york - Kigali	3,810.24	16
Western europe	5.43	630.00	Frankfurt - Kigali	3,420.90	7.7
Asia	4.29	378.00	Bangkok - Kigali	1,621.62	3.69
Latin America & Caribbean	8.11	189.00	Mexico City - Kigali	1,532.79	2.8
MENA	0.96	126.00	Cairo to Kigali	120.96	2.48
Eastern europe	2.7	63.00	Moscow - Kigali	170.10	12
Total		6,237.00		13,482.00	

Figure 2 - Estimated carbon footprint from flights

Networking

Networking, a key benefit of such conferences, was another area where views diverged. While some found ample opportunities to connect, others suggested that the conference could further facilitate networking in more structured or accessible ways.

Access to Donors

Access to donors, in particular, attracted a diversity of reactions from participants who had anticipated that they would be able to use the conference to engage with donors directly and hold them accountable to the disconnect between their high expectations from underfunded grassroots organizations while most of the budgets are allocated to larger INGOs. Donors interviewed also acknowledge this reality, noting the value added of larger INGOs in selecting, vetting, and partnering with local grassroots organizations.

Lack of Outcomes

A significant point of critique was a perceived lack of clear, tangible outcomes. While WD2023 excelled in bringing together diverse groups for dialogue and networking, there was the sentiment that the conference should be more outcome-focused. Stakeholders suggested that future conferences should emphasize setting specific, measurable goals and a clear framework for achieving them. Stakeholders shared that this shift towards a results-oriented approach would not only enhance the conference's impact but also provide a yardstick for evaluating its effectiveness, amplifying the real-world impact of the conference and making it a more powerful agent of change in the quest for gender equality.

Organizational Effectiveness

Stakeholders across groups shared that they were impressed with what Women Deliver was able to accomplish given the size of the staff, that a new CEO was executing the vision of the previous CEO, and that this was being done following a significant reckoning within the organization.

Donors and funders felt that the level of engagement in the preparation phase of the conference was lacking, with several missed opportunities to meaningfully engage them on the conference's objectives, how to achieve them, and who should be there to move the movement forward.

Staff shared their immense pride in having successfully pulled the event together and their unwillingness to do it again if “nothing changes.” Internally, the lack of central systems and clear processes led almost every team to create their own processes and systems in silos. This resulted in missed or slow communications, a lack of transparency, duplication of work, high transaction costs, reduced productivity, and reduced efficiency.

Stakeholders, including staff, pointed to understaffing and an absence of necessary resources. Accounting, finance, donor relations, and communication were among the functions identified as specifically requiring more staff and resources.

It was also noted that many of the program staff had to take on roles they were unprepared for, either in terms of expertise or workload.

Concern was raised about refocusing the efforts of the entire staff on the conference. While the need for “all hands on deck” was understood by staff and other stakeholders, there was concern about the impact this decision would have on the organization with respect to operations and relationships with partners, donors, etc.

Stakeholders did note that while decisions were made rapidly, constituents engaged in building the event felt that the organization lacked a true “partnership” spirit. Issues with communication around budget, protocol, perceived VIP guests, and staff turnover created friction.

Alternative Approaches

To enhance the effectiveness and reach of WD2023 and ensure that it remains a dynamic and impactful convening, the following alternative approaches were identified and discussed in interviews and in the desk review.

Outcome-Focused Strategy: Reframe the conference's strategy to be more outcome-driven. This involves setting clear, measurable objectives for each conference and using the subsequent gatherings to assess progress and achievements. An outcomes-focused strategy will not only provide clear direction but also enhance accountability and the tangible impact of the conference.

Theme-Centric Focus: Shift the conference approach to concentrate on a specific theme. This approach would allow for deeper exploration of pertinent issues and facilitate more meaningful discussions and outcomes.

Regional Convenings in Interim Years: Rather than hold Regional Convenings the same year as the large global event, introduce Regional Convenings during the intervening years. This approach would enable Women Deliver to enhance its global reach, bringing events to different parts of the world on a more frequent cadence. It would also serve to keep the momentum going, maintain engagement, and address issues more relevant to specific areas, thereby complementing the global conference and creating a link from local to regional and regional to global. This continuum would allow local and regional convenings to feed the conference agenda in a more focused fashion.

If this approach were to be pursued, stakeholders shared that the budget for Regional Convenings would need to be increased, focus should be placed on co-creating the convenings with local grassroots organizations, and tools developed for the global conference, the virtual platform and app, for example, should be leveraged.

Shorten the Interval Between Conferences: Reducing the time gap from three years to a shorter period could help to maintain continuous engagement and momentum. A more frequent conference schedule would ensure that the discussions and actions going in to and coming out of the conference remain current and responsive to the rapidly evolving global landscape.

Utilizing Global Platforms for Announcements: Leverage existing global platforms, such as UN meetings, for making significant announcements and sharing outcomes. This could provide broader visibility and integration with larger, ongoing international efforts, ensuring that the conference's impact extends beyond its own timeframe and audience.

Recommendations for Conference Improvements

The recommendations for conference improvements were largely focused on operations, staffing, and goals, and thematic in nature.

Better Define Goals and Objectives: Stakeholders across groups shared that the goal of WD2023 and the five objectives were unclear and did not have well-defined determinates of success. Further, stakeholders questioned what happens in between conferences. To this end, stakeholders recommended that the conference better define goals, objectives, and measures of success. Further, the conference should take an outcomes-oriented approach where Women Deliver articulates progress made both during the conference and between conferences, thereby holding Women Deliver and the conference accountable to commitments.

An outcomes-focused approach, with well-defined goals and milestones, is essential to measuring success and ensuring the conference's impact aligns with Women Deliver's overarching objectives.

Simplify the Structure: Address the issue of having too many events by simplifying the conference structure. This will make it easier for attendees to navigate the conference and engage more deeply with each session.

Create Connections: Create opportunities for partners and stakeholders to connect. For example, creating a regular cadence of meetings with Regional Convenings Partners with the goal of network building, trouble shooting, and information sharing.

Targeted and Focused Approach: Focus on a specific issue or theme to allow for deeper exploration and more impactful discussions.

Build Strategic Partnerships: Multiple stakeholders shared their desire for a more meaningful, strategic engagement with Women Deliver. Donors and funders see their role extending beyond the financial support they bring to the conference and would welcome the opportunity to engage more meaningfully with Women Deliver in designing the conference. Bilateral

funders brought into a meaningful engagement could become powerful allies when the movement is confronted with anti-rights activism.

Increase Staffing and Bring More In-house: Increase the number of staff dedicated to the conference planning and execution. Further, rather than turn to outside vendors, bring roles in-house.

Earlier Planning and Preparation: Initiate the planning process well in advance to ensure a more seamless and well-organized conference. Early planning allows for thorough consideration of the conference's themes, objectives, and logistical arrangements, leading to a more cohesive and impactful event. Additionally, earlier planning and preparation would allow for long-term partnerships with partners and vendors, thereby reducing the resources spent on conducting a competitive bidding process for every event, and it would allow for the streamlining of systems and processes.

Enhance Pre-Conference Communication and Information Sharing: Improve communication and information dissemination in the lead-up to the conference. This could involve regular updates, detailed information about sessions and speakers, and resources to help attendees prepare for the conference. Providing this information ahead of time will allow attendees to plan their participation more effectively, ensuring they can make the most of the conference experience.

Pre-Conference Engagement: Engage with potential attendees well before the conference through webinars, online forums, and discussion groups to build anticipation and foster a sense of community and shared purpose, setting the stage for a more productive and collaborative conference.

Enhanced Focus: The conference should sharpen its focus, ensuring that every element contributes meaningfully to the overarching goals. This includes streamlining sessions to avoid overwhelming attendees and concentrating on areas that have the most significant impact.

Integration with Global Initiatives: Announcements and key outcomes from the conference could be more effectively disseminated through existing global platforms, such as UN meetings. This approach would create a through-line, linking the conference's work with broader international efforts and ensuring continuity and visibility.

Ongoing Engagement and Communication: Keep the momentum and energy alive between conferences through better communication. Regular updates, discussions, and engagements can help maintain interest and involvement.

Dedicated Travel Coordinator: Appoint a travel coordinator who is sensitive to and knowledgeable about the diverse needs of attendees. This will enhance the inclusivity and accessibility of the conference.

Improved Use of Technology: While a good idea, the conference app needs refinement for better execution. Enhancements should focus on user-friendliness and reliability.

Networking Through Technology: Enhance the app to facilitate networking opportunities. This could include features for scheduling meetups, creating interest-based groups, or connecting attendees with similar professional interests.

Improve Donor Relations: Increase communication with donors. This includes improving communications on expectations, progress, goals, and outcomes, as well as accounting processes (invoicing, reporting).

Recommendations for Organizational Effectiveness

The AAR of WD2023 highlighted several organizational challenges that limited the effectiveness and efficiency of the conference. Addressing these challenges is an opportunity for Women Deliver to strengthen the organization itself and be able to execute future conferences more effectively and efficiently.

The ARR also highlighted the incredible passion and dedication of the Women Deliver staff to the mission of the organization and to WD2023. The time and energy the staff put into the conference were significant, and there was consensus that staff should not just be proud but should also celebrate a massive achievement. Further, The CEO's leadership, quick decision-making, and problem-solving capacity, as well as her ability to bring perspective in prioritizing emergencies, were noted by stakeholders.

Define Roles and Responsibilities: The ARR highlighted the need for greater investment in team building and defining clear roles and responsibilities. Women Deliver may want to consider hiring dedicated conference staff (either permanent or temporary), a COO, and a CFO (or CFO/COO). Further, Women Deliver may want to bring roles such as graphic design and communications in-house, rather than outsource to vendors and suppliers.

Invest Project -, CRM, - and Knowledge Management Systems: There is a critical need to create knowledge and data management systems and processes. As stated earlier, the absence of these systems and processes resulted in duplication of work, missed or slowed communications, slow response rates, balls being dropped, and frustration – all of which negatively impacted the effectiveness and efficiency of the team, the organization, and the conference itself.

Some teams used Asana and Salesforce. For these tools to be effective, they need to be used by the organization as a whole. Salesforce, for example, can be used by different teams for Customer Relationship Management (resource mobilization, scholarship management), program and impact data (MEL), and interfaced with accounting systems. Asana can be leveraged as a project management platform, providing planning tools and tracking milestones across teams and projects.

Rethink Composition of Teams/Committees: The Director's Committee was disconnected from functions such as finance, donor relations, and communication not just in the initial planning phase, but in ongoing preparations for the conference. Having a member of each of these (and other) teams would improve transparency and communication, enabling Women Deliver to be more strategic and proactive in planning and operations.

Vendor Relationships: While there was commendable collaboration with vendors, establishing true partnerships and longer-term relationships could benefit Women Deliver and vendors. The review also pointed out delayed decision-making processes that adversely affected various conference elements. Leveraging existing tools and technologies more effectively was identified as an area for improvement to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance coordination.

Women Deliver should also consider what tasks and workstreams should be done in-house and which should be accomplished with vendors.

Long-term Approach: Conference planning should be ongoing, with planning for the next conference starting before the current conference concludes. Focus should be placed on leveraging tools and resources for continuous improvement, building on lessons learned, accountability, and building long-term partnerships.

Identity: The review emphasized the need for Women Deliver to be clear on its mission and activities in the interim between conferences. Indeed, there is an underlying identity crisis within Women Deliver, oscillating between a focus on advocacy and technical expertise. This ambiguity extends to the brand's clarity, calling for a more defined and communicated identity.

True partnership spirit: In conversations with almost every type of stakeholder, the quality of the relationship with Women Deliver was mentioned as something that needs attention, and in some cases, urgent attention. Staff felt the extent of their contribution to the conference organization was unrealistic and poorly explained. Donors and philanthropic funders expressed frustration at the transactional nature of the relationship. Youth and grassroots organizations felt the disconnect between the conference's goals and how different attendees were perceived to be treated. All expressed the desire to engage in a strategic and more meaningful partnership with Women Deliver once the organization's new leadership has settled its mission and vision.

Climate change: While the majority of respondents see the value in large convenings, the carbon footprint of such a gathering has to be taken into consideration, and if Women Deliver continues to organize them on such a large scale, properly offset.

Next Steps

To ensure the effectiveness of future conferences, Women Deliver must prioritize the health and structure of the organization itself. A critical step is establishing dedicated conference staff, distinct from the program team, to focus solely on the logistical and operational aspects of conference planning and execution. Hiring a COO/CFO is essential to bring cohesion and strategic oversight to financial and operational management. It is also important that Women Deliver delineate the roles and responsibilities of staff. This will prevent burnout and operational inefficiencies and foster a more harmonious and productive work environment.

A key component of organizational health is building a culture of transparency and accountability. This requires developing robust systems and processes that facilitate clear communication and efficient workflows across all levels of the organization.

Furthermore, it is imperative for Women Deliver to clarify its mission and identity. This clarity will guide strategic decisions, align efforts across the organization, and enhance the impact of its initiatives. Clearly defining and communicating this mission will also enable better stakeholder engagement and support.

Women Deliver stands at a pivotal juncture. Engaging stakeholders, allies, and financial supporters in strategic conversations grounded in this review's findings offers an opportunity to fortify relationships and explore innovative partnerships. Leveraging the success of WD2023, Women Deliver can significantly shape the future of the feminist movement and assert its critical role within it.

Conclusion

The findings of the AAR highlight the remarkable achievement of the Women Deliver staff in organizing a global conference with over 6,000 attendees.

While the value of global convenings like WD2023 is undisputed, the feedback underscores the need for a more focused, streamlined, and outcome-driven approach for future convenings. Additionally, reinforcing the organizational structure, establishing systems and processes, making strategic hires, and clearly defining the mission of Women Deliver are essential steps toward enhancing its impact and ensuring continued success.

Annex 1 – Interview Guide

[illegible]