



Terms of Reference (TOR)
Consultancy to Conduct an Impact Study of the African Women's Leadership Institute (AWLI)

1.0 Introduction

Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA) seeks to commission an impact study of the African Women's Leadership Institute (AWLI). The impact study will seek to critically analyze AWLI's legacy, effectiveness, broader implications, and guide the revitalization process. Therefore, AMwA is seeking an experienced feminist researcher or consultancy team to conduct this study.

Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA) is a Pan- African feminist leadership development organisation, established in 1985 with a bold agenda to center feminist consciousness, collective action and transformative change. AMwA's work is driven by an intersectional understanding of oppression that foregrounds agency, solidarity, and structural justice for African women and girls and gender-expansive persons in all their diversities. The organisation is committed to advancing a dignified and equitable feminist society across the continent.

2.0 Background

The African Women's Leadership Institute (AWLI) is grounded in feminist and transformative leadership theory and is underpinned by the Personal Mastery, Organising Skills, and Taking Action (P.O.T) framework. This approach blends self-awareness and consciousness-raising with practical organising and advocacy skills which nurtures women leaders who embody feminist leadership in both personal and public spaces.

Since its founding in 1997, AWLI has played a central role in shaping African feminist leadership, nurturing and supporting women leaders to build political consciousness, organise collectively and take transformative action. The institute equips African women leaders with the tools to challenge patriarchal systems, influence policy, and drive social change. AWLI has reached over 10,000 African women and girls in their diversity across Africa and the diaspora, creating a vibrant and influential network of alumni known as "AMwAzons". Between 2021 and 2024 alone, AMwA convened 16 AWLIs, engaging 345 participants across 17 African countries.

3.0 Justification

Globally, the context in which feminist leaders operate has been marked with rapidly shifting landscapes. We are witnessing democratic backsliding, shrinking civic space, economic injustice and resurgent anti-gender and anti-rights pushback, making it necessary for AMWA to pause and reflect on AWLI's relevance and effectiveness in equipping feminist leaders to navigate and respond to the complex and evolving realities.

As AMWA looks toward the future, it recognizes the importance of taking stock of AWLI's legacy and impact. This means understanding how the institute's leadership development model has been applied across diverse contexts, identifying gaps in thematic focus, pedagogy and assessing how well the institute addresses emerging feminist needs. In the face of rapidly changing political, economic, social and climate realities, this study is a critical step in ensuring that AWLI remains relevant, effective, impactful and capable of nurturing generations of transformative African women leaders.

3.0 Objective of the Study

The overall objective of conducting this study is to critically analyze the impact of the AWLI, its legacy, effectiveness, and broader implications for social transformation in Africa.

Specifically, the study will:

- Document the journey of AWLI in shaping feminist transformative leadership in Africa.
- Examine the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance in the AWLI model, pedagogy and thematic coverage in relation to feminist and transformational leadership development in Africa.
- Provide clear, actionable recommendations to guide reflection, decision-making, and the strategic revitalization of AWLI.

4.0 Scope of the study

The scope of the study will directly align with the study objectives and will include the following:

4.1 Review of the AWLI journey and legacy

- Conduct a desk review of key institutional documents and relevant materials
- Engage key stakeholders including Alumni, faculty, staff and partners to document the history of the AWLI, its vision and milestones over the years
- Examine AWLI's contribution in shaping feminist transformational leadership development across Africa



4.2 Assessment of Effectiveness, Efficiency, Relevance in the AWLI model, pedagogy and thematic coverage

- Analyze the AWLI model, POT framework, pedagogy and thematic coverage
- Assess the relevance of the AWLI thematic focus in relation to the current feminist needs and context
- Identify key strengths, gaps and areas that require strengthening and adaptation

5.0 Key Deliverables

- Submit inception report that includes methodology, data collection tools, workplan and timeline
- Submit draft study report
- Spearhead validation of the draft impact report
- Submit final study report

6.0 Duration of the Assignment

Interested consultants are invited to propose a realistic timeline that aligns with the scope of work and deliverables.

7.0 Consultant Qualifications

- Advanced Degree in gender studies, social sciences, political science, development studies or related field
- Demonstrate experience in feminist research, leadership and development
- Strong grounding in African feminist theory and praxis.
- Demonstrated experience in participatory research, tracer studies and feminist evaluation.
- Proven experience in adult learning methodologies.
- Excellent research, analytical and reporting skills

8.0 Expression of Interest

Interested applicants are invited to submit the following to consultancy@akinamamawaafrika.org by **16th March 2026** with the subject line **“AWLI Study”**

- A letter of interest
- A technical proposal outlining understanding of the Terms of Reference (TOR) with workplan and timelines.
- Financial proposal with detailed budget
- Curriculum Vitae of the consultant(s)
- Samples of previous written work relevant to the assignment