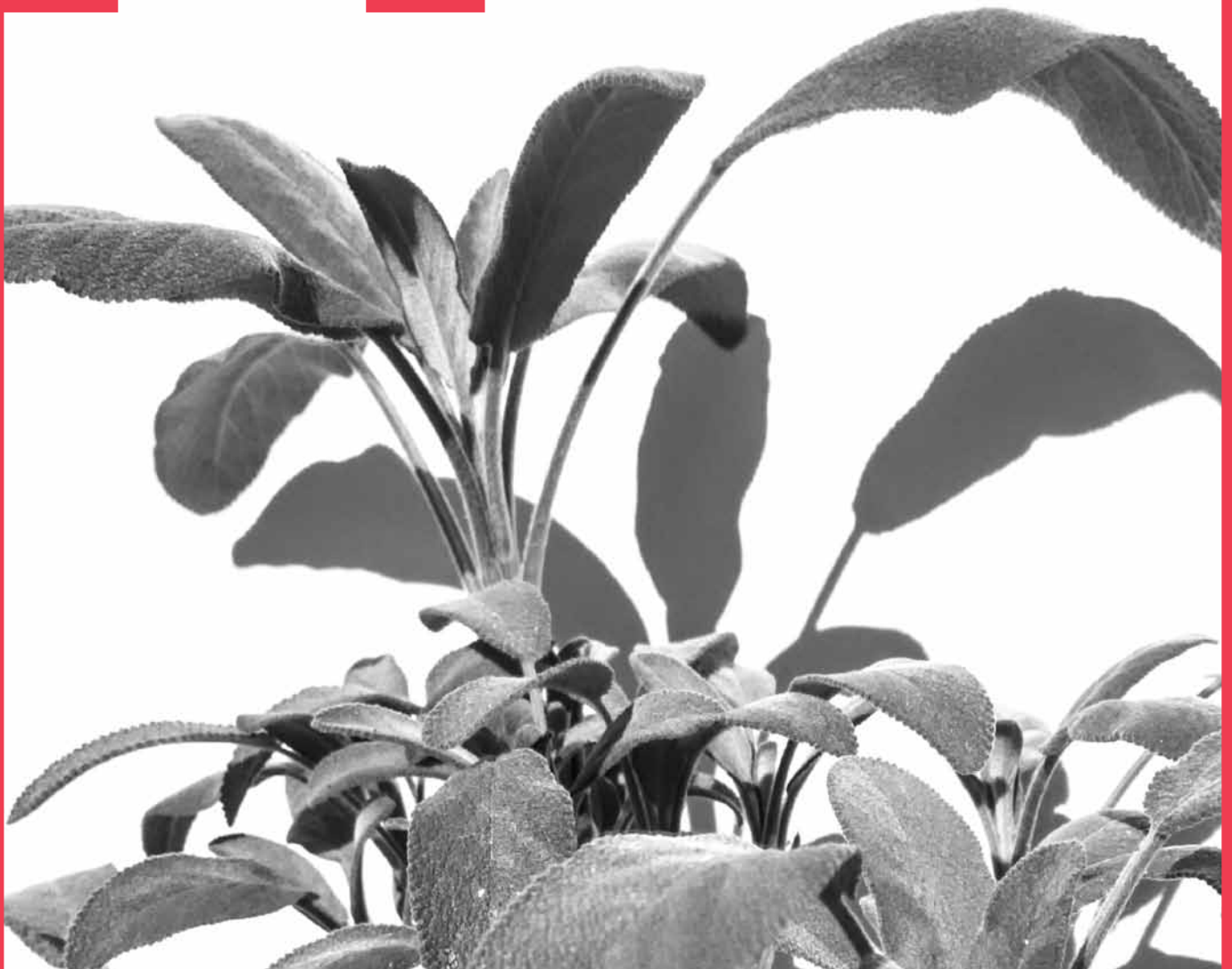


RECONSTRUCTION WOMEN'S FUND

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2018**



2018 AT A GLANCE:

OUR SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTIONS:

38

**GRANTS IN 12
TOWNS/PLACES**

6

STIPENDS

ORGANIZED

**7 LOCAL
PUBLIC EVENTS**

**1 REGIONAL AND
1 INTERNATIONAL
EVENT**

**HOSTED
1 DONOR JOURNEY**

**SECOND YEAR
OF THE CAMPAIGN
#HSCDIB**

**VISIBILITY IN LOCAL
AND INTERNATIONAL
CIRCLES**

WORKING ON OURSELVES:

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED DIRECTRESS TRANSITION

STARTED WITH THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

EVALUATION OF THE LOCAL PHILANTHROPY PROGRAM

**ADVANCED INTERNAL PROCEDURES AND METHODS
OF WORK**

WHAT WE DID IN 2018?

In the situation of having changes in the fund, it was important for us to preserve the institutional memory, to document and acknowledge enormous work and commitment of women who preceded us in building, maintaining and improving the fund, to introduce new perspectives, to remain always alert, in order to be able to timely and adequately respond in accordance with our resources, and to leave for the people yet to come after us useful information on our work.

We asked questions, problematized, opened discussions in different circles, provided support to those suffering unjust attacks. We kept running, working, thinking, sharing.

FUND HAS A NEW DIRECTOR!

After over 14 years Mirjana Mirosavljević Bobić left RWF. She withdrew from the position of RWF director she took in 2011.

„It is time for some other dreams and actions :) It was a great privilege, joy and responsibility and I am immensely grateful for being part of this wonderful organization and witnessing how it developed over all these years. In terms of formal links, I will remain one of four RWF founders.“

We are proud to present you our new director, Milica Miražić. Milica has been an activist of women's, LGBT and peace movement in Serbia for many years. She earned MA degree on Gender Studies and published a number of articles on feminist theory and politics. Previous work and activist experience of hers includes holding position of Program Coordinator in the Swedish foundation Kvinna till Kvinna, membership in the Administrative Board of the European Women's Lobby, position of gender equality officer at the Rectorate of the University of Belgrade, etc.

WHOM, HOW AND WHY DID WE SUPPORT, AND WHAT WE LEARNED FROM IT?

IN THE FIELD OF GRANTMAKING WE WENT ON WITH THE PROGRAMS:

GENERAL SUPPORT:

11 GRANTS

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
9.556.123 RSD**

SPECIAL FOCUS:

21 GRANTS

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
5.392.170 RSD**

STIPENDS ŽARANA PAPIĆ:

6 STIPENDS

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
432.500 RSD**

RAPID RESPONSE GRANTS:

6 GRANTS

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
492.000 RSD**

GROUPS WE SUPPORTED REALIZED ACTIVITIES IN 27 PLACES

(Bački Monoštor, Bela Palanka, Beograd, Bor, Bosilegrad, Vlasotince, Vrnjačka Banja, Gložane, Grdelica, Guberevac, Divljan, Dimitrovgrad, Zrenjanin, Ivanjica, Kruševac, Mošorin, Nova Varoš, Novi Sad, Pirot, Požarevac, Prijepolje, Prokuplje, Sremski Karlovci, Subotica, Užice, Čačak, Šišava-Lomnica).

16% of them are informal groups supported through Special Focus.

16% of grants we awarded to the groups that had no access to other donors (1 from General Support and 5 from Special Focus).

In the situation of shrinking space for the activities of civil society organizations and for women's activism, of limited access to information and means for work, of deterioration of the right to education and economic and political participation, of dispossession of public spaces and goods, of creating the climate of insecurity for those demanding accountability of authorities, when manipulations replace expertise, responsibility, personal and professional integrity, when right to autonomous thinking and acting is being denied, when militarization of society is being presented as the solution for systematic problems... it is important to support women's groups that understand what are the causes of our problems and do their best to empower others to join in the struggle for just society and safe environment.

HOW DO THEY DO IT? BY:

- creating and sharing critical educational, art, media and other alternative contents
- taking part in advocacy concerning women's/human rights
- reacting against violations of human rights, spreading hatred, fake news and hysteria
- resisting to individual and institutional violence and realizing counter/alternative practices
- resisting to processes of erasure of memories, documenting their history, creating critical narratives, demanding responsibility
- working on creation of safe spaces (physical and online) or securing existing alternative spaces
- organizing meetings of women and networking, building cooperation
- providing support to vulnerable and marginalized ones
- providing resources for work and autonomous political actions

SO, WHAT DID WE SUPPORT?

Public lectures and interventions in public spaces aiming to make them more accessible and open, festivals, music camps, performances, advocacy processes, public debates and campaigns, investments into spaces of encounters and learning, such as women's media library, and into educational programs, workshops, researches, publications, online portals, programs for builders, organizing meetings within communities, work with refugees, support after floods in substandard settlements, investing into safe environment and adequate support for women who experienced violence, actions of support for women strikers, networking and coordinating networks, etc.

WORKING ON MEL (MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING), WE DOCUMENTED RELEVANT OUTCOMES WHICH GROUPS ACHIEVED AT SEVERAL LEVELS:

AT THE VERY LEVEL OF GROUPS, ACTIVISTS REPORTED THAT THROUGH THEIR PROJECTS/ENGAGEMENTS IN 2018 THEY:

- deepened the understanding of problems they cope with (causal relations, structures, systematic processes, their own position and possible scopes of strategies they chose, as well as of possible backlashes of certain approaches...)
- maintained safety of their spaces, tested and improved methods and procedures of work, including those intended to prevent or sanction possible abuse of power etc.
- paid attention to strengthening capacities (human resources, finances, access to tools and information, preserving the existing infrastructure or advancing it)
- were visible, insisted on clarity and intelligibility of their politics

WHAT GENERAL SUPPORT MEANS FOR GROUPS?

“General Support decreases our dependency from other sources of finances when it comes to basic costs of the organization, and makes it possible to focus on our program activities.”

“Provides support for expenses other donors usually don’t cover, but which are crucial for functioning of the organization.”

“What was important for us was this always available and open communication, and that representatives of RWF were interested in our development, getting to know our work, rethinking practices and possible solutions, posing relevant questions. That directed us toward the big picture, without losing focus on the needs of our beneficiaries.”

“General support by RWF was a true discovery for us, in every sense – from being able to thoroughly prepare and realize workshops, having enough time for preparing the final report, to having RWF’s staff at our disposal all the time”

“Some international foundations insist on partnership with local authorities regardless of the political orientation of these institutions which set up priorities and topics that are crucial for them, and they are mostly conservative, clero-nationalist and fascist. We do not want to be partners to such state institutions and donors. RWF supports this decision of ours. And General Support enables autonomy, sustainability, certainty, improved capacities of the organization, along with efficient realization of our activities.”

“It has been directed in the time of the year when it is the most needed in order to ensure the continuity of services.”

OUTCOMES OF WORK WITH TARGETED POPULATIONS, IN REGARD TO NEEDS MAPPED IN THE FIELD:

- initiated processes of self-reflection and learning; knowledge and information made more accessible
- improved understanding of issues of complex social processes, politics and structures
- detected positive changes in attitudes and practices of targeted groups they worked with when it comes to important social problems, as well as increased sensitivity for problems of marginalized groups and improved political responsibility
- contribution to resisting patriarchal, militarist, nationalist and racist trends, creating alternatives to homogenous, hegemonic and monolith structures and perverted narratives
- created opportunities for getting to know each other, making alliances, mobilizing for solving problems faced by women primarily, but also by other members of society
- provided access to safe spaces and simulative environment
- provided specific services to women, which state does not provide at all or does it inadequately (SOS line, personal assistance for persons with disabilities, psychological and legal aid, etc.)

We know it's not all about the numbers, but rather about political sharpness, integrity and willingness to learn, experiment and persist. It is not a problem to change strategies and formats of work, if they are all rooted in clear feminist politics and result from strategic goals. Therefore, in 2018 we supported the groups which continued their work using tried and tested methods, but also ones which decided to change their ways in order to protect women they work with and themselves.

DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF GROUPS, APART FROM FINANCIAL SUPPORT, THEY ALSO HAD A CHANCE TO MAKE USE OF OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT:

DEVELOPING CAPACITIES AND EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE:

- networking with donors and other groups
- taking part in training on strategic communication with the Foundations for Peace network
- consultations when needed (team organization, access to finances, autonomy of space etc.)
- participation in the #HSCDIB campaign that improved their skills for advocacy and fundraising in the community
- contributing to the infrastructure and means for work, sending literature, providing space for meetings
- connecting groups with RWF's stipendists who contribute with their pro bono expertise

ACCESS TO OTHER SOURCES OF FINANCES:

- RWF hosted a donors trip for individual donors of sister foundation, which gave us a chance to advocate for different forms of support to local groups
- referring international donors to local groups
- provided recommendations when groups were applying to other donors

VISIBILITY:

- Promoting work of groups through our communication channels
- Depending on the subjects, we recommended groups for taking part in panels organized by other organizations and stakeholders

CARE ABOUT WELLBEING:

- Taking part in anti-stress program realized by partner organizations
- Having conversations when in situation of crisis
- Promoting ethical standards in relation to employees, volunteers and environment

MEET THE SUPPORTED GROUPS!

List of supported groups by programs can be found at [our website](#). ↗

HIGHLIGHTS:

Not to be disorientated, we supported ones setting up signpost – Alternative Girls' Center set up sign to the previously forgotten monument Sokolovica on Jastrebac mountain, dedicated to two murdered partisans women– Nada Marković and Mileva Miletić.

Despite the general trend to be the first and innovative, it was important for us **to preserve the memories of the work of women before us, and of our co-fighters – and to recognize their contributions**. Look for publication “Women Changing the State of Reality” in Serbian and English, which promotes activism of women with disabilities. (Also see their **Portal on Disability**) ↗

Mobilization of local community is crucial to solve the problem.

Get to know more about the work of Brest Cancer Center Jefimija, which has worked on raising awareness for years and contributed to the highest rate of positive responses to calls for screening for breast cancer in Serbia – the rate in Zlatibor county is 93%, while Serbian average ranges from 35 to 40%. They succeeded to mobilize and gather health institutions, hobbyist and humanitarian associations, women's organizations, various companies and their fellow citizens in the common struggle against breast cancer. Due to the holistic gender based approach to heling process, in the last couple of years there was a drop in mortality rate from breast cancer in Zlatibor county, and it is 8% lower than in the rest of Central Serbia.

In the hyper-production of mostly superficial and generic contents, **what matters are the contents that make you stop and think, that engage the audience and thoroughly shake up the normalized patriarchal perceptions**.

Do not miss the performance Epic Games: The Wedding of Emperor Dušan, produced by Hop.la! It intervenes into the rigid approach to school education and presents a successful experiment of critical reading of epic poems.

Restoring broken links in the region fragmentized by nationalism and markets requires mindfulness, eye for details, but also the ability to see the wider picture, persistence and patience. Project K&K at the website of Workers' Commune Links takes us through critical reading of books from the region of former Yugoslavia, sheds light on cultural-social-political underground, pushed out of the focus of the mainstream media, and builds alternative intellectual network of young critics and authors.

VISIBILITY AND LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

A LOOK BACK AT THE EVALUATION

From February to May 2018, Reconstruction Women's Fund evaluated its program of feminist philanthropy. We went through the process of evaluation with Mladen Jovanović from Niš.

“All supported groups said RWF wasn't like other donors. All of them recognized RWF primarily as their partner, a foundation that provides not only money, but also shares knowledge and experiences, and both gives and takes advices. In the relationship with supported groups, RWF plays the role of an active partner, and groups appreciate such relationship of equality.”

We will have to be even more persistent in raising interest for feminist politics, while insisting on self-criticism and reflectivity, avoiding traps of stereotyping, essentialism, generic approaches and sensationalism. It is important to keep including young women into the movement, as well as to have inter-generational exchange and learning. What was especially emphasized in the evaluations was the need to develop mechanisms for supporting activists in smaller places, who often feel lonely or rejected. Relationships within community are underlined as particularly burning issues that should be adequately approached.

We are thankful to the Trag foundation for the financial support for realization of the evaluation within the Program of small grants for capacity building of organizations.

PUBLIC EVENTS

SISTERS ARE DOING IT BEST

#SADIB14

Through solidary support for an activist who has contributed for years to the struggle against racist policies of displacing Roma people, to peace activism and struggle for the rights of animals, we used the opportunity to address the political issue of destroying health care system and inaccessibility of health services to growing number of people.

#SADIB15

At this event we raised funds for RWF and used the chance to connect our community with women's European sister funds. Building links and exchange of experiences are important for sustainability of activism. We hope that this meeting has opened the doors for local activists for some future cooperation, and improved their access to financial support and international public.

JOYFULNESS CRAZINESS ↗

Traditionally at the beginning of summer, for the ninth time already, Reconstruction Women's Fund organized Joyfulness Craziness, the manifestation which creates public spaces for exchange, socializing, solidarity actions and networking. This time we were in the Street Gallery. In charge for the atmosphere were Rock Camp for Girls, Lady K+ Dekadenca, The Bestbeat, DJ Nataša Vranić, TKV and Ivka Koraksić. TKV made a graffiti quoting Žarana Papić: "The principle is to cross the borders persistently", which you may see in the Street Gallery.

ACTIVIST EXCHANGE ↗

Exchange with peace activists from Palestine, N. Ireland and India

We organized an informal exchange with peace activists from Palestine, Northern Ireland and India at the social center Oktobar. It was a chance to hear firsthand testimonies of situation in these countries, and to get to know more about the work of peace activists and their ongoing struggles.

CAMPAIGN #HSCDIB

Publication #HSCDIB is available at [our website!](#) ↗

Importance of knowledge and literacy regarding money is a part of solution of major issues. Publication offers a possibility to better understand the reasons for starting this educational campaign, and guides us through the steps of understanding some processes and decisions.

Cycle II ↗

Press conference ↗

Campaign How Sisters Could Do It Best 2, among other issues, problematized the way of raising, managing and spending public money in the context of women's human rights. Therefore it was important to see how it is being used in case of national SOS line, and the topic of press conference held on 30th of November 2018 in multimedia center Šok zadruga 2 in Novi Sad was "Why Is It Important To Have SOS Women's Center?"

Fundraising actions:

I action: ↗

The goal was to raise money for making adequate working conditions for the organization that provides support to women survivors of violence.

#zaNoviSad

II action: ↗

It was intended to raise money and address issues faced by persons with disabilities, who are being neglected by the social protection system.

#zaPiro

KEY POSTS

8TH OF MARCH MAP OF EVENTS ↗

MAP is one of the ways to document and archive the history of organizing feminist and women's groups on the occasion of 8th of March! This year we celebrated 10th anniversary of making maps for this occasion!

THE ANSWER IS LOCAL: HOW PHILANTHROPY IN COMMUNITY CHANGES THE STRUCTURE OF POWER AND THE WORLD! ↗

"Individuals and communities might seem tiny, helpless in comparison to the growing global challenges. But mighty new networks of people getting organized occur, raising voices and offering new solutions. Such networks, including global philanthropy movement that keeps growing, reexamine previous concept of social changes as something that is being "done" to communities, as opposed to something that communities do or is being done together with them. On the other hand, philanthropy in community starts from the premise that every community does have some resources which, when joined together, can develop the most powerful of all forces: the force of trust!"

FOCUS ON FOCUS

We kept on with the Focus on Focus section, where you can find information on some of the prominent projects supported through Special Focus program.

War From A Child's Perspective ↗

Workers' Commune Links – KundK (Knjiga & Kritika / Book & Critique) ↗

Feminist Fanzine ↗

ARTTERROR: Diary About Plants ↗

Art Group Hop.La! – play Epic Games ↗

This Is Not A Home – Poetesses On Migration ↗

LICEULICE against Femicide ↗

CRITICAL LIFE

Critical Life 14: Interview – Wendy Brown ↗

“... important for theorists and activists to disrupt is the narrative and the image that walling produces on the inside: fictional and nostalgic images of a uniform culture, of whiteness, of a ‘time when life was good’ but that is now threatened by the vicious or hungry hoards from without. That image whitewashes our own hungers, needs and violence but also eliminates our own histories in places like the United States. We, a nation of immigrants, destroyed our own native population. It is more than a little ironic for us to take up the flag of nativism now.”

Critical Life 15: Jasbir Puar ↗

“My alternative conceptualization of the biopolitics of debilitation not only refers to the remaindering of what the liberal inclusion of disability fails to fully embrace, but also points to the forms of violent debilitation of those whose inevitable injuring is assumed by racial capitalism. I therefore seek to connect disability, usually routed through a conceptual frame of identification, and debilitation, a practice of rendering populations available for statistically likely injury.”

Critical Life 16: Sara Ahmed ↗

“In this book I was trying to address those who are trying to survive hostile institutions, not the institutions themselves.”

Critical Life 17 – Amira Hass: Occupation, Terrorism And A Yawn ↗

“As long as it`s Palestinian land, they know that sooner or later they`ll be able to buy a dirt-cheap villa with a fantastic view.”

THEY INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE US

Deborah Hunt: How Do I Reflect Our Times? ↗

“... it`s important for women to be able to join together, to share, to hear different radical ideas that have to do with culture, with health, it is important to be able to share, to network, to sometimes disagree, just to be able to push out our own personal envelopes...”

INTERNATIONALISM &

NETWORKS

FOUNDATIONS FOR PEACE NETWORK ↗

Annual network meetings offer a chance to discuss relevant political topics and take a stand toward donorship trends. Read the report from the last year`s meeting:

Lessons And Reflections From Indonesia: On Peace Funds From Indonesia, Palestine, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Georgia, Northern Ireland and Serbia ↗

“We also paid attention to global trends such as the so called development for democracy, which was nothing more than the contemporary practice of imperialism: first work on the development (of business environment, work models, technology, infrastructure etc.) which actually favors rich to become richer, i.e. creates the conditions that suit the best the elites and big investors, and democracy is expected to magically appear afterwards, helping deprived classes (without mentioning that different social classes need different democracies, and the one we are being served with is not the democracy that would question the existing systemic inequalities).”

PROSPERA ↗

RWF organized European meeting of women`s foundations – we hosted 19 foundations from 17 countries. The meeting was opened with an analysis of socio-political context in countries foundations are coming from, and concluded with an analysis of situation in the EU. We shared experiences how women`s movement and allies respond to the political context, and examined the roles of feminist foundations, as well as strategies, lessons learned and mechanisms of international cooperation. What we have seen as crucial subjects were advocacy at the EU level for more adequate investments in women human rights, safety of activists, development of professional community for monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), collective and individual self-care and burn-out prevention.

NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019 are dedicated to the development of a strategic plan for the next three years. Mladen Jovanović led the process. In the domain of analysis, consolidation and development of the organization we used the approach of development through transformation. In the domain of programs we decided to develop our Theory of change, which we will shape up in 2019.

General objective of RWF in the period 2019 – 2021 is to contribute to preservation, strengthening and advancing the impact of feminist, antimilitarist, antinationalist groups, initiatives and individual activists.

KEY FOCAL POINTS:

- **Contribute to the struggle against depolitization and dehistoricization of feminism through providing support for articulation and realization of political ideas and actions of feminist, antimilitarist and antinationalist groups in Serbia**
- **Expand the space for work of activist groups, advance freedom of speech and development of political dialogue through raising awareness of the problems and resisting to shrinking of space for political action**
- **Strengthen organizational capacities of local groups RWF supports, in order to make them more efficient, effective and sustainable in their work in the field of feminism, antimilitarism, antinationalism**
- **Ensure transformation and organizational development of RWF through strengthening and improving the quality of management, administration, relationships within teams and procedures**
- **Dynamics of realizing the strategic plan goals sees 2019 as dedicated to the consolidation of work of the new team, while 2020 and 2021 are to be dedicated to development of programs.**



WHAT'S NEXT?

We are experienced enough not to react by default, but choose well gauged and strategic reactions. It is important to hear and understand each other. We will work on clearer articulations, timely supports and connections. We will keep on insisting on linking theory and practice, as well as on passing on the knowledge and preserving the memory.

