

March 2023



Dear members, ambassadors, partners and sponsors,

As the 67th commission on the Status of UN WOMEN is kicking-off its meetings in New York City, **I am so honoured to announce that WOMENVAI, our dear NGO, was proposed for the Special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) in January this year.** Indeed, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on January 24th, 2023, recommended that the Economic and Social Council grant special consultative status to WOMENVAI as per decision made public here. **Formal grant of the status is due in June 2023.**

Founded in 2018, WOMENVAI began its journey in developing projects and advocacy across the globe, with a focus on Girls and Women of Least Developed Countries, counting on our women and men supporters to voice and raise awareness on Gender in STEM: yes you can make it, and yes we did it!

Thanks once more to all of you who contributed and still are standing by our side in 2023.

WOMENVAI focus has always been on achieving results: actual results that make a world where no one is left behind - a better, united world. A true challenge, as we all know.

'WOMENVAI may have gained this special status, but what is in it for me?' You might ask. Well, **join us at our 6th General Assembly in Bari, Italy, on March 10th** to find out. In the meantime, enjoy reading our news and picture yourself with the #EmbraceEquity posture just like WOMENVAI cofounders did, and send out to contact@womenvai.org!

Yvette Ramos - President of WOMENVAI

In this issue

- a. Editorial, by Yvette Ramos
- b. International Women's Day
- c. Invitation to our 6th General Assembly
- d. What is KID's VAI
- e. WOMENVAI at UCL Inception Week on Diversity and Gender Equality Action Plan
- f. Off to New York : WOMENVAI at CSW#67 UN WOMEN and UN Water Conference
- g. Recommendations To UN Water 2023 AND COP28, By Lylian Coelho
- h. UN Water Conference Side Events
- i. Interview of Katayoun F. H., Running a Law Firm in Iran From Geneva
- j. News from our Members and Partners around the world
- k. About Our Brand New Donor, OceanPact
- l. Last Minute News
- m. Wish to donate to the WOMENVAI Academy?



Invitation to our 6th general Assembly

March 10th 2023, University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy

University of Bari, Aula Magna Aldo Cossu

The day will start with an International Scientific Conference ("Gender issues: sectorial analyses and measurements"), to be followed by the KIDSVAI Workshop and will finish with the 6th General Assembly of WOMENVAI.

9am - 12:30pm

International Scientific Conference on "Gender issues: sectorial analyses and measurements", coordinated by Prof. Elisabetta Venezia, University of Bari Aldo Moro

Registration and Welcome address, by University of Bari Aldo Moro S. Bronzini, Rector and F. Romana Recchia Luciani, Coordinator of the PhD in Gender Studies /PI Horizon Seeds Italy.

Speakers include Y. Ramos, Womenvai France, P. Marone, University of Naples Federico II, M. Mariani et al., LUM University Italy, S. Viseu and M. Almeida, Business as Nature Portugal, Y. Rashed, College of International Transport & Logistics of Cairo Egypt, L. Zakowska, University of Cracow Poland, and L. Carrera, G. Mastrodonato, E. Venezia, University of Bari Aldo Moro Italy.

Join the conference online [here](#).

2:30pm - 4:30pm

KidsVAI Workshop by Womenvai, facilitated by Yvette Ramos

The KidsVAI workshop will "train-the-trainers" and engage members and partners in the KidsVAI project, which aims at raising awareness about Gender stereotypes in professional orientation with a focus on STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

5pm - 7pm

6th General Assembly of Womenvai (hybrid mode)

Join online [here](#) after your registration. Starting with a **Welcome note** by the president, recalling the goals of our NGO and presenting our brand-new ECOSOC status to the United Nations.

- **Breaking the Glass: Introduction of New Members and Their Projects**
- **Listing Voting Members Present and by Proxy**
- **Voting the Statutory Part of the GA**
- **President's Report (NGO activities in 2022) – Vote**
- **Financial Report for 2022 – Vote**
- **Proposals and Budget for 2023 – Vote**
- **Election of the Members of the Board - Vote**

Important! Participation is free of charge, but Registration is mandatory by [email](#).

Wish to vote as an active member of WOMENVAI, but can not attend? Please send your proxy to yvette.amos@womenvai.org. A form will be sent out so we can keep record of your vote.

For hotel bookings in Bari, please contact the Scientific coordinator of the conference, Elisabetta Venezia - Key area person for Horizon Seeds at Bari University - via email at elisabetta.venezia@uniba.it

More information on WOMENVAI [here](#).



**HORIZON
EUROPE
SEEDS**



**UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI BARI
ALDO MORO**





KIDsVAI: what is it about?

For over five years, our Swiss partner Swiss Engineering Geneva has hosted a few experimental workshops in primary schools in the State of Geneva, targeting young girls and boys aged 10-12 years. The objective is to raise awareness on gender stereotypes in STEM* careers (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) during sessions consisting of two units:

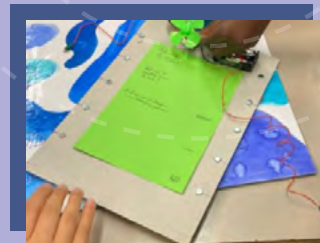
First of all, we help deconstruct gender stereotypes linked to technical professions: we, women, explain what we do as engineers and technicians in our daily job, thus putting the spotlight on possible role models for students.

The second part of the workshop is devoted to an electrical circuit assembly exercise, in which the kids work in a mixed team of 4 people, each with their own simple technical instructions.

So far, nearly 2,000 young students in Geneva were reached thanks to our partnerships where WOMENVAI brings in the method as well as the technical elements of the game.

We have also experienced with the same exercise, focusing on Girls only, in Mauritania (2021) and Benin (2022) - with over 100 girls attending our KIDsVAI workshop, with the support of the local Education Authorities and our ambassadors.

More on the project in Geneva [here](#).



WOMENVAI at UCL Inception Week on Diversity and Gender Equality Action Plan

In late September 2022, at the kind invitation of the GRRIPP of University College of London, WOMENVAI and UCLWES hosted a workshop based on Gender and Climate issues at the Centre for Gender and Disaster, IRDR, UCL.

A group of 30 Students met to debate and organize an action plan for one of the many challenges the world faces today.

The GRRIPP (Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice) aims at bringing diverse local actors and their experience to the table.

With core project partners based in LAC, Southern Africa, South Asia and the UK, their network will collectively and democratically determine an agenda for change.

UCL Women's Engineering Society (UCLWES) is a student-led society that is open to all regardless of gender with the collective aim of working in support of women in engineering. They focus on developing a long-lasting community and creating opportunities for our members through our events.



Off to New York : WOMENVAI at CSW#67 UN WOMEN



WOMENVAI will be present at the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which will take place from March 6th to 17th 2023 in New York City.

Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs from all regions of the world, including **WOMENVAI**, are invited to contribute to the session.

The priority theme this year is **“Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”**. We are proud to be invited with other Gender Trendsetters at the WSIS session “ICTs for Gender Inclusion” on 16th March 2023 from 11:30am to 12:45PM (GMT-5)

at the Conference Room A within the UN Building. More information on the CSW67 side events [here](#).
To register, please check-in [here](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO UN WATER 2023 AND COP28, by Lylia Coelho

Over 3 billion people live in agricultural areas with high to extremely high-water shortages. 1.2 billion of these people live in severely water-contaminated agricultural areas. Agricultural land per capita is now below 0.64ha. This is due to global population growth, reduced available agricultural land use per capita for crops and livestock. COP27 in Egypt and COP15 Biodiversity in Canada placed the Water sector as a key challenge for us. Working together, we believe we can achieve a fairer water and climate future - which the world needs and expects. We need to move from working in silos to working collectively across energy and other sectors and scales (national, regional, etc.), ensuring that the entire SDG6 included in the “Water and Climate” theme of the UN2023 Water Conference will include important Recommendations and action to COP28:

- **Nothing about us, without us**
- **Maintain financing for inclusion**
- **Local youth-led action around the world is making a difference**
- **Women experience climate consequences disproportionately and are agents of change in their communities**
- **Recognize Indigenous knowledge as a science**

Ensuring community resilience through resilient water and sanitation services is top priority for all countries – especially those with both insufficient access to water and sanitation and high exposure to climate risks. Recognizing the draft COP27 cover decision calling transformational approaches to enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change:

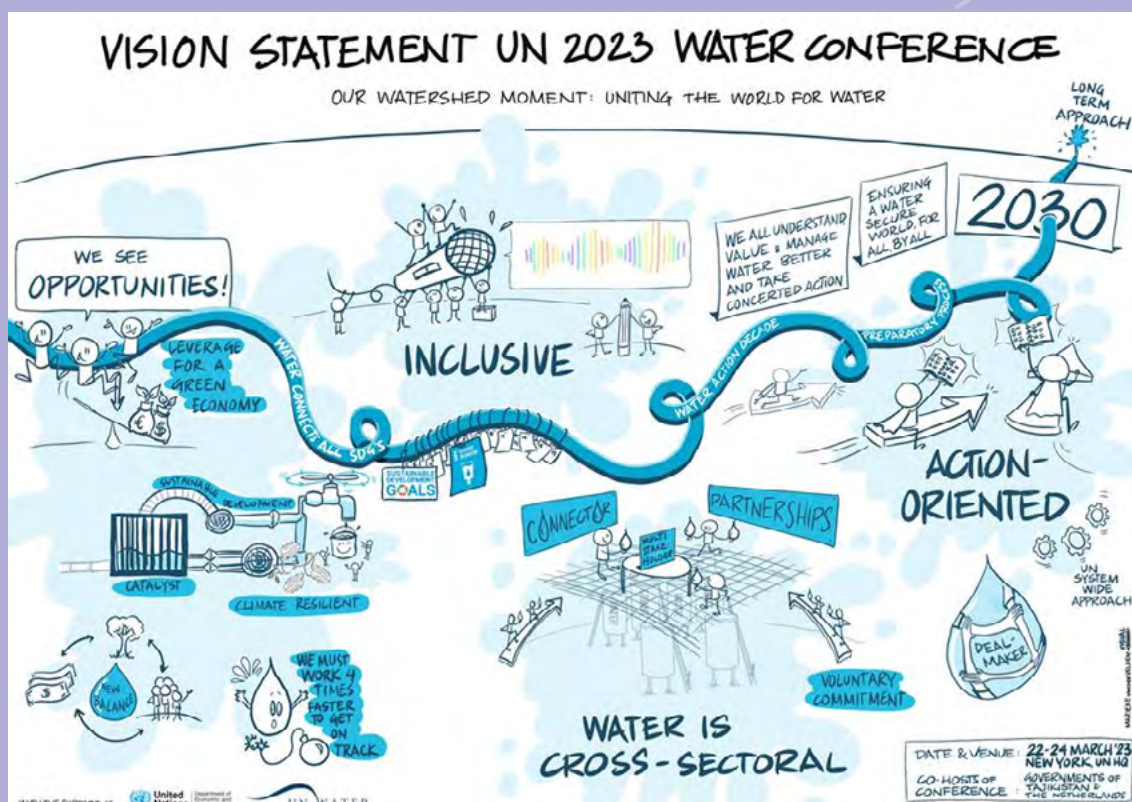
- **Commit** to advancing thorough, inclusive water solutions from both the public and private sectors.
- **Support** Parties in the formulation of the Global Goal on Adaptation at COP28 through the development of water-related resilience indicators, prioritizing the production and restoration of freshwater- dependent.
- **Expand** capacity-building networks and programmes – such as the resilient cities network, the UNFCCC Adaptation Academy , and the water resilient Coalition – to co-create inclusive, resilient futures for all
- **Advance** scientific understanding, research, and implementation of systemic approaches to water management - incorporating land, oceans, energy, food systems, human health & wellbeing – with local communities at the center
- **Join** the Fair Water Footprint at UN Water 2023! Fair Water Footprints harnesses the power of enterprise, finance, international trade and citizen voices to trigger the systemic change needed now to secure a liveable future.



A combination of capacity development and financing is crucial, as they are equally important. Financial investments cannot solve problems if you do not have the absorptive capacities. **Now we need YOU!**

UN Water Conference WOMENVAI Side Events

The UN 2023 Water Conference taking place at UN HQ in New York, 22-24th March 2023, will include over 200 side events organized by stakeholders from the across the Globe. WOMENVAI is proud to announce that its 6 side-events have been selected, both inside and outside the UN building. These will also be available virtually to participants from anywhere. The details are below.



At the UN Water Conference, WOMENVAI pledge is a call for action towards achieving Agenda 2030 success in Water&EquityForALL. As representatives of civil society, but also industries and other public/private stakeholders through our active Members, Ambassadors and Partners, WOMENVAI believes in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through Water & Equity For All.

Only 2% of the stakeholders who contributed to the Global Online Stakeholder Consultation (UN Water, October 2022) come from Women's Organizations, when we know that inequity in access to water services including safe water primarily affects girls, women, indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities, etc.

Through WOMENVAI academy and our KidsVAI programme, we call on actors to contribute to an accelerated implementation and improved impact on the field of not only SDG 6 but also SDG4 and SDG5 which are at the heart of our commitments. Known and unknown challenges in the field of water require innovative and transformative ideas and a "beyond business as usual" approach, that is why Women and Men working together in STEM* for SDGs solutions can bring efficient and effective implementation.

Interested in joining the movement? Email us [here](mailto:info@womenvai.org).

Date	Time (EST)	Title	Location
March 21 st	16:00-17:00	Women & Men with SDG6 – Training and Gender Action Plan in Leadership will Improve Sustainable Water and Sanitation Management	French Institute (Alliance Française), 22 E 60 th St #1077, New York, NY 10022
March 22 nd	14:00 - 15:00	Women & Men with SDG6 – Training and Gender Action Plan in Leadership will improve Sustainable Water and Sanitation Management	online
March 23 rd	08:00 - 9:15	The Source to Sea Approach: Ocean Literacy as a Powerful Tool to Address the Climate Crisis and Promote Sustainable Blue Businesses While Encouraging Cross-sectorial Partnerships by Bridging SDG 6 & SDG 14*	UN Building Headquarter, Side Event Room 23
March 23 rd	10:00 - 11:30	Climate-Water-Gender: the Unspoken Situation of the Brazilian Desertification Hubs	online
March 23 rd	13:00 - 14:00	Stakeholders' Analysis on Adaptation Measures to Future Sea Level Rise: Historical Background and the Contemporary Case of The Netherlands	online
March 23 rd	15:00 - 16:00	Transport Infrastructure for Water in Least Developed Countries: Socio-economic Relevance	Hotel 57, 130 East 57 th Street, New York, NY 10022
March 24 th	14:00 - 15:15	WOMEN 4OUR WATER- From Portuguese-speaking Countries to the World (Business As Nature Lead)	UN Building Headquarter, Side Event Room B

*events in partnership, not led by WOMENVAI

Interview of Katayoun F. H. - an Attorney at Law and Member of the Iran Bar Association, Running Her Own Law Firm in Iran While She Resides in Geneva, Switzerland



Katayoun is also a rapporteur at Oxford Reports on international human rights law and provides legal advice to a Swiss NGO. Prior to this, she was visiting lecturer of International Law at Allameh Tabataba'i University in Iran. She gained her **Ph.D. in International Law** at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in 2018. From 2005 to 2013, she worked for the **International Committee of the Red Cross in Iran** as the Head of the Communication and Cooperation Department.

Tell us about the status of women in Iran.

The answer depends on which aspect or legal regime is taken into consideration, and whether the law is considered with all its potentials or only by what it prescribes. For example, the Family Law was mainly founded on making differences between the two genders, however, it does not forbid individuals from agreeing on different terms that would be applicable between them. The right to education is, fortunately, guaranteed for all - without any distinction as to gender, but this does not mean that social issues have no impact on the choice of education. Data can provide a better picture on the matter. According to the most recent statistics, 49.18% of Iranian students in universities are women, but most of them select social sciences. Only around one quarter of students in the field of engineering are women.

What are the major challenges for women engineers and scientists nowadays in Iran?

I would say the main problem of women scientists and engineers in Iran is not necessarily linked to gender. It derives from the status and the role of science in society as a whole, on the one hand, and the isolation of Iran, on the other hand. Of course, the majority of university positions is still taken by men, and this has to change. But the main problem they face, I would say, is also shared by their male colleagues.

How do you manage to support local networks for girls and women being Geneva-based?

Of course, there is a high potential and high interest, at least from the Iranian side, both at the individual level and at the university level. So far, what I have done was limited to promoting scientific opportunities to individuals in my network- mainly related to the field of law. I would be very interested in expanding such exchanges in a more systemic way, where all interested women scientists and engineers can benefit from those interactions. This can be done, for example, by engaging with different universities that not only have always welcomed such an exchange, but are also mandated to do so.

News from our Members and Partners around the world

Introducing Marie Tamoifo Nkom, new member, Founding President of AJVC, committed to Youth, local communities and women leaders

AJVC is a Cameroonian non-profit organization whose main role is to work for the promotion of a healthy environment through the involvement and active participation of young people and women. Young leaders, members of organizations, volunteers, students, pupils, unemployed and graduates and non-graduates and young girls, indigenous and local peoples from the 10 regions of Cameroon.

Marie has contributed with AJVC in reconciling needs of nature protection with those of development (improvement of living conditions). Through approaches based on education, capacity building and transfer of know-how, awareness campaigns, advocacy actions and concrete initiatives in both rural and urban areas, the structure has been set up to ambition to make its contribution to the national, regional and international battle against the degradation of the climate of Biodiversity.

For over 20 years, Marie has participated in projects of the Congo Basin Countries, namely Cameroon, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Gabon. Marie Tamoifo is the Founding President of the Green Association of Cameroon (Association Jeunesse Verte du Cameroun) as well as the Sub-regional Coordinator of the Network of Young Leaders for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems (REJEFAC), with national representation branches in each of the ten countries of the COMIFAC/ Central Africa space. As an active member of the Conference on Central African Dense and Moist Forest Ecosystems (CEFDHAC), created at the initiative of the Ministers in charge of forests, civil society, the private sector of the Congo Basin.



«**We want a true sustainable partnership with WOMENVAI**», says Marie: « We did prepare our participation to COP27 at home prior to the global conference : LA COP CHEZ NOUS 2022, with nearly 400 participants online and onsite. Key stakeholders came including the new French Ambassador and Ministers of Environment, Forestry, Youth affairs, the WWF, the UNESCO. Through these events, **we want to engage young people, especially young girls and women most to be at the center of debates.** We need diverse people to be represented in our sessions, including role models, indigenous people, youth from the whole Congo basin subregion, to help codesign and monitor the public policies, and co-work on the implementation of the aligned activities. For this, we need support from developed regions, and WOMENVAI can contribute through our partnership ».

COP27 not only demonstrated taking action is of utmost importance on top of statements and commitments, but we have understood that together we are stronger and with all WOMENVAI network, we share same values and will to implement what we say, and tell about what we do: “We made it clear during the whole COP27 meetings, debates, sideevents, etc. - Everyone’s voice counts, and **my wish as an African woman leader, is to help transform lives of our Youth and Women who are the first victims of climate change in Africa.** I would like to start building a bridge with WOMENVAI and its partners, organizing in the next 2 years a Young Women in STEM* Competition, coupled with our annual event prior to the COP ». Keeping schools, universities, civil society and the private sector connected is key to boost women leadership and build stronger networks among us.

Let's try to make it happen soon for COP28!

* Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths



About Our Brand New Donor



Represented by Fernando Borensztein, Brazil.

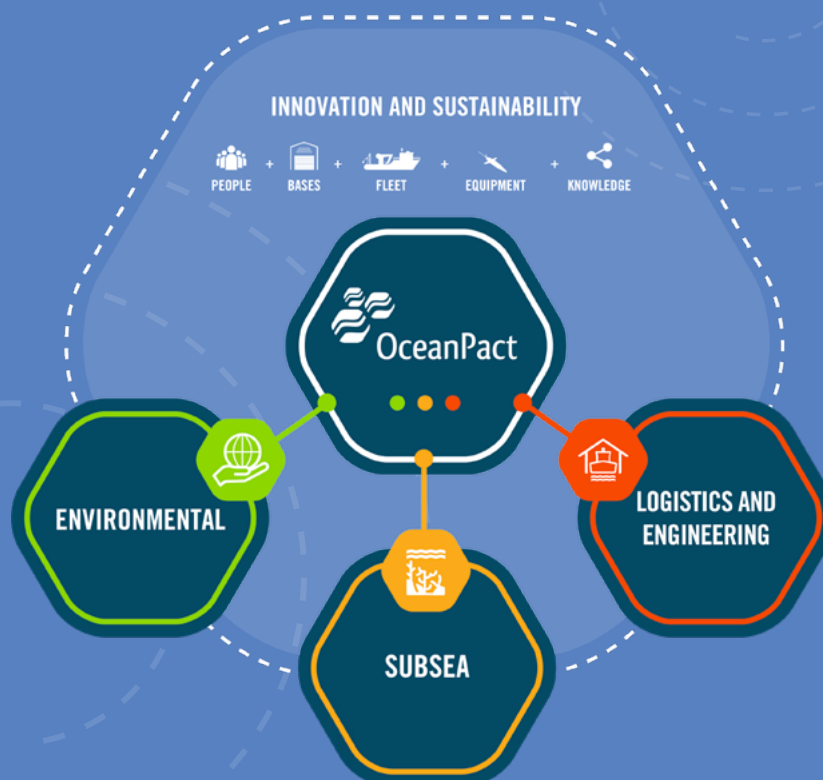
As an entrepreneurial Energy Executive, Fernando has over 20 years experience in leading cross-functional teams. Progressive, decisive, and innovative, he has been highly valued for his expertise in interpreting corporate vision and strategy to translate objectives into actionable plans. Strongly motivated, natural leader with a history of accelerated promotions, he is known for establishing and cultivating excellent working relationships with peers, industry associations, regulators, and community leaders.

Working for OceanPact since 2021, with the incumbency of setting up the energy transition and sustainability department, his role encompasses the identification of opportunities for business development in the areas of maritime/shipping decarbonization, offshore renewable energy generation, blue carbon sinks and Nature Based Solutions for carbon emissions offsetting.

Established in 2007, OceanPact is a Brazilian company dedicated to emergency management and response, providing services and chartering vessels for oil companies, ports, refineries and terminals, helping them comply with oil spill response requirements.

OceanPact plans and implements efficient and innovative solutions in the Environmental, Subsea and Logistics & Engineering areas, for the development of safe and sustainable operations at sea, on the coast or in the exploration of marine resources. Since it was founded, OceanPact has promoted protection, knowledge, monitoring and above all sustainable use of the sea, coast and marine resources. All its actions are aimed at highlighting the ecosystems where the company operates, the impacts caused by the inappropriate use of its resources and what can be done to preserve them.

OceanPact's environmental, social and economic strategies are based on the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and they are designed to promote healthy, sustainable and balanced relations between society and the sea. More information [here](#).



Last Minute News



World Summit of Information Society Opening day on March 13th in Geneva

We are organizing a session at 9am on the Innovate Stage under the ICTs and Gender Mainstreaming special track - KIDSVAI: Training the Trainers for Raising Awareness About Gender Stereotypes in Professional Orientation With a Focus on STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

Regional Forum on Sustainable Development - March 29th and 30th 2023 in Geneva

We are hosting a side event:

How to Ensure the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with Inclusive STEM Societies in the ECE Region?

As a selected side event, WOMENVAI stakeholders will have the opportunity to share ideas, perspectives, and best practices with a broader audience and engage in a meaningful dialogue with stakeholders from different sectors. Interested in contributing? Send us an email [here](#).

Wish to donate to the WOMENVAI Academy?

Please help our NGO grow and offer Girls and Women the possibility of choosing their future. Donate to KIDSVAI and the WOMENVAI Academy, so we can plan a series of workshops in 2023 with YOU!



Want to join as a NGO Partner, Sponsor or Ambassador ? Feel free to contact us at contact@womenvai.org

Who we are:

Executive Committee

Yvette Ramos, President, France/Switzerland
Liliane Dorveaux, Vice-President, France
Inès Aivazian, Deputy-Treasurer, France
Sophie Magner, Treasurer, Belgium/France
Lidia Zakowska, Secretary General, Poland

Ethics Committee

Soizic Vangrevelinghe, France
Denis Aivazian, France

Other cofounders

Ariane Barbier, France
Betty Bonnardel-Azzarelli, UK/ France
Lylían Coelho, Brazil/ France
Guillaume Pahud, Switzerland
Lidia Santiago, Portugal

WOMENVAI

contact@womenvai.org
www.womenvai.org