

# **WATERING THE LEAVES**

# **STARVING THE ROOTS**

**THE STATUS OF FINANCING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
ORGANIZING AND GENDER EQUALITY**



# Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots:

## The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality

by Angelika Arutyunova and Cindy Clark 2013



The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) is an international feminist, membership organization committed to achieving gender equality, sustainable development and women's human rights. AWID's mission is to strengthen the voice, impact, and influence of women's rights advocates, organizations, and movements internationally to effectively advance the rights of women.

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Initial research findings from this round were presented and debated during AWID's 2012 International Forum on *Transforming Economic Power to Advance Women's Rights and Justice*. For the first time, that Forum included a dedicated "Resource Mobilization Hub" that hosted dedicated sessions and debates on funding and resource mobilization. We also organized an evening plenary on "Tapping current opportunities and assessing challenges to mobilize resources for women's rights and feminists organizing around the world," where we 'tested' current research results and opened them for debate and discussion. Through their contributions and questions, session and plenary speakers and participants provided vital feedback and insights that we have attempted to reflect in this final version of the research report, though undoubtedly, there is still much to debate, nuance and further understand.

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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AI</b>	Amnesty International
<b>AWDF</b>	African Women's Development Fund
<b>AWID</b>	Association for Women's Rights in Development
<b>Beijing</b>	The Fourth UN World Conference on Women (1995)
<b>BIAAG</b>	Because I am a Girl
<b>BPfA</b>	Beijing Platform for Action
<b>BRICS</b>	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
<b>CAWF</b>	Central American Women's Fund
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CEE/CIS</b>	Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>CGI</b>	Clinton Global Initiative
<b>CIDA</b>	Canadian International Development Agency
<b>ConMujeres</b>	Consortium of Latin American and Caribbean Women's Funds
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>CSW</b>	Commission on the Status of Women
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>ESCR</b>	Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FCAM</b>	Central American Women's Fund
<b>FGE</b>	Fund for Gender Equality
<b>FJS</b>	Foundation for a Just Society
<b>G8, G10, G20, etc.</b>	Group of eight, group of ten, group of twenty, etc.
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GENDERNET</b>	OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality
<b>GFW</b>	Global Fund for Women
<b>GIFE</b>	Group of Institutes, Foundations and Businesses
<b>GNI</b>	Gross National Income
<b>GNP</b>	Gross National Product
<b>HIV and AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>HLF 2 / 3 / 4</b>	High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness 2 / 3 / 4
<b>IAWP</b>	Issues Affecting Women Programme
<b>ICAI</b>	Independent Commission on Aid Impact



<b>ICRW</b>	International Center for Research on Women
<b>IDIS</b>	(Brazilian) Institute for the Development of Social Investment
<b>IHRFG</b>	International Human Rights Funders Group
<b>INGO</b>	International NGO
<b>INWF</b>	International Network of Women's Funds
<b>ITAM</b>	Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>LGBTQI</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, and Intersex
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MFF</b>	Multi-Annual Financial Framework
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NPM</b>	New Public Management
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>OSF</b>	Open Society Foundation
<b>OSI</b>	Open Society Institute
<b>RUF</b>	Red Umbrella Fund
<b>SCWF</b>	Slovak-Czech Women's Fund
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>SRHRs</b>	Sexual and reproductive health rights
<b>SRRs</b>	Sexual and reproductive rights
<b>SRT</b>	Sigrid Rausing Trust
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women – subsumed into UN Women
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAW</b>	Violence Against Women
<b>WFN</b>	Women's Funding Network
<b>WfWI</b>	Women for Women International
<b>WHRD</b>	Women Human Rights Defender
<b>WITM</b>	Where is the Money for Women's Rights?

# Foreword

— Lydia Alpízar

One of the most profound social transformations of the past century is the deep and broad shifts in the status of women, and more importantly, in the worldwide acceptance of the notion of women's rights and gender equality as desirable goals. This incredible shift has occurred not by accident but by design – through the conscious and determined struggles of courageous women and the movements they have built. Through their activism and advocacy, our very understanding of what constitutes social justice has been indelibly altered, and the once seemingly normal forms of gender-based discrimination, violence, and exclusion are now at least recognized as problems, if not partially resolved.

The collective impact of women's movements and organizations has bridged theory and practice, the private and public domains, our norm structures and policy frameworks, from the remotest hamlets to global institutions. No other struggle for social justice has had quite the same depth or breadth of impact – and the proof of this lies in the increasingly violent backlash against women's growing equality seen in almost every part of the world<sup>1</sup> – from the rolling back of women's reproductive rights in the United States, to the lashing of jeans-clad young women in Sudan or Indonesia, the banning of girls' schools by the Taliban in northwestern Pakistan, or the killing of women's rights activists across Mesoamerica.

It is truly surprising therefore that women's rights organizing and movements have been functioning, often with quite minimal financial support, even as their experience and effectiveness has increased. Worst of all, many of the very strategies they originally advanced to meet women's practical needs and advance their position in society have been disconnected from the comprehensive approaches of which they were a part and isolated as "magic wands" that will empower women dealing with the deeper gender power structures that are at the root of gender inequality: micro-credit and micro-entrepreneurship programs, for instance, or quotas for

women in politics, or legal interventions on violence against women and girls. The steady and essential processes of organizing women, raising their consciousness, helping them analyze the root causes of their disempowerment, building women's collective power and collective strategies for change, supporting women to challenge the cultural and social norms that justify their subordination – in other words, the core elements of a sustainable long-term struggle for transforming the institutions and structures that perpetuate both gender and other forms of discrimination and exclusion – are considered too slow and difficult to measure, and receive little or no support, except from a handful of insightful and experienced donors.

AWID's series of inter-related research initiatives all attempted to address this central conundrum from different angles. In *"Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots,"* AWID's third FundHer report, we assess the new actors influencing overall development agendas, the factors affecting the more traditional sources of support to women's movements and organizations, the critical role of women's funds in sustaining such support, and the most recent data on the resource situation of the 1000-odd women's rights organizations from all regions of the world who participated in our 2011 FundHer survey. In *"New Actors, New Money: A Mapping of Recent Initiatives for Women and Girls,"* we present the results of our mapping of new donors making major commitments to work with "women and girls," to better understand this trend and its impact on women's organizations. Finally, in *"Women Moving Mountains,"* our survey of the aggregate impact of the organizations that received the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs "MDG3 Fund" grants, we demonstrate the kind of huge reach and transformative change that are possible when organizations working to build women's collective power for change receive serious resources for a decent length of time, applying strategies they have chosen, honed over time, or newly innovated, rather than donor-determined approaches.

Key to understanding AWID's analysis and recommendations in all these reports are the core assumptions and beliefs we hold, not only about the link between women's rights and resources, but also about what constitutes and produces the conditions for advancing women's rights and gender equality. These are founded in the insights and lessons that have emerged from the dedicated and innovative work of women's rights activists and movements over the past half a century worldwide. These are not rigid, immutable positions or uniform, universal prescriptions – as an international organization, with institutional and individual members from over 150 countries, we are particularly aware that the dynamics and manifestations of gender inequality, and its intersection with a range of other power structures (based on identities, economic power, location, and historical factors), are highly contextual. Following are the eight core propositions that inform the analysis and framing of this series of research reports:

**Our first proposition** is that gender power structures – and substructures – are best transformed through interventions in four key domains:<sup>2</sup>

- i. The internalized beliefs and attitudes of both men and women – what feminists call “consciousness” – where socialization processes from earliest childhood give women and men certain beliefs about their role in society, their power – or powerlessness - as well as their rights, privileges, and responsibilities.
- ii. The social and cultural norms that uphold and “normalize” gendered differences in access to resources, power, privilege, opportunities, and responsibilities. These norms are taught overtly in institutions like the family, clan, or tribe, or by religion, but more subtly reinforced in the school, workplace, or other spaces where the formal rules may in fact advocate gender equality, but the informal practices reinforce gender differences.
- iii. The formal laws, policies, structures and resource allocations that come through governments, law enforcement machinery, and regional and global multilateral institutions, where gender biases are often subtly embedded, or again, practiced informally.
- iv. Access to material and knowledge resources, as well as to rights and opportunities – this includes not only resources like land or employment or credit, but also education, health care, inheritance rights, training opportunities, the right to be in spaces where development agendas and budgets are shaped, and so forth.

We do not believe that women's position in society will change by simply acting in one domain - increasing their formal rights under law, or increasing their access to resources or income, or by changing social norms while internalized beliefs and formal laws and policies remain unchanged. Interventions towards gender equality and women's rights must somehow address all these domains of gender power.

**Our second proposition** is that deep, sustainable change for women's rights requires women's collective action and power. “Supply” driven approaches, such as empowering individual women with jobs, education, loans, or access to political office cannot achieve systemic, multi-domain change, though it might improve individual women's quality of life or voice in public affairs. Sustainable change in gender power can only be achieved by “demand” driven approaches, by mobilizing women, building their awareness of their strength and the possibility of change, and mobilizing their collective power to lead and act together for their vision of a more just social order. In other words, we believe – and indeed, have witnessed - that by building movements of women, with a strong consciousness of the roots of inequality, of social and gender power structures and the mechanisms that sustain and reproduce them, they will work together to seek a

wider, deeper, and more sustainable social transformation. This is, in essence, what we mean when we use the term “women’s rights organizing” or the “women’s rights approach”, to distinguish it from the instrumental, “supply” driven, approaches.

**Our third proposition** is that truly transformative change in women’s lives will result in giving them access to the full body of human rights as enshrined in internationally agreed human rights instruments and agreements. We do not believe that access to one set of rights – such as economic equality – will guarantee or necessarily lead to increased access to other rights. We seek a world where the full complement of rights – civil and political, economic, social and cultural - will become lived and experienced realities, not distant norms or inaccessible ideals. This is our vision of the ultimate goal of building women’s collective power, and of the better world that can emerge as a result of supporting women’s rights organizing.

**Our fourth proposition** is that women’s rights and gender equality cannot be left to or brought about by market forces – indeed, there is no evidence that they can, even in countries where neoliberal policies have been in place for decades, and women have become both a major part of the formal workforce or a major segment of the market. Ensuring women’s rights and advancing gender equality must therefore continue to be a priority concern and commitment of state actors, and of multilateral bodies at the international level. States exist because of their citizens, and the protection of the rights of citizens is a primary responsibility of the state. When half their citizenry are, by and large, denied equality in social, economic and political life, or continue to be targets of gender-based violence, states are the primary duty-bearers for the protection of women’s rights and prosecuting those who deny or violate their rights. As such, state and multilateral institutions must continue to be key targets of our advocacy, and will be held to account for

their record on protecting and advancing the rights of their women citizens.

**Our fifth proposition** is that even if states and multilateral actors carry primary responsibility for the protection and promotion of women’s rights and gender equality, the role of newer actors in development – especially the private sector – is shaping and influencing women’s access to their rights, or the violation of these rights, in very important ways that cannot be ignored. We therefore believe that engagement with these new actors by women’s rights organizations and movements is an essential strategy, but in a critical, considered way, that does not result in either cooption or uninformed opposition. We need to educate ourselves about the new realities and range of actors involved in development processes, especially those that deeply affect women, analyze the gendered impacts of these, and take informed positions that include critical engagement to influence these processes in ways that could advance our longer-term agenda.

**Our sixth proposition** is that the fruits of transformative change cannot be taken for granted, but must be defended, preserved, and sustained. Experience shows that even women’s rights victories that were won decades ago are under fresh threat of reversal – such as reproductive choice, access to basic education, freedom of movement. Backlash against women’s advances have emerged not only from traditionalists but from new sources like criminal networks and terrorists distorting religion. Women’s rights organizing and strong women’s movements are an essential bulwark against these forces, and are often the only force fighting to protect past gains.

**Our seventh proposition** is that these kinds of collective change processes for long-term social transformation in favour of gender equality cannot be built without resources, and hence our deep concern with the availability of resources for women’s rights organizing and

movement building. We recognize that many of the most successful women's movements in the world are largely self-resourced and financially autonomous – but the organizations that helped build these movements are not! They have all been supported by farsighted donors, governments, and philanthropists, and allowed to find the best pathways to change. Supporting such initiatives, in a world where wealth is being increasingly concentrated, and income disparities are increasing, is a broader social responsibility and an ethical imperative. We therefore believe that all those who proclaim their concern with advancing a more just, equitable and sustainable world, and particularly those who are currently advocating “investing in women and girls”, have a responsibility to resource women's rights organizing in appropriate ways and with serious money. They have a responsibility to invest in women's rights organizing. We challenge the myth that this approach doesn't deserve serious financial support because it is too slow – if we consider that patriarchy and its institutions are at least ten thousand years old, then the kind of changes that women's rights organizations and movements create in a matter of five or ten years must be seen as occurring at lightning speed!

**Our eighth and final proposition** is that mobilizing more resources for women's rights organizing and the longer-term struggle for gender equality is a collective responsibility. It should not be entirely up to women's rights organizations and movements, or other social justice movements, to convince others to invest in and support their work. It is also the responsibility of states, of the private sector, and of other actors from the donor community who wish to advance human rights and social justice, to learn what works best in creating sustainable results, and invest not only in the quick-return projects, but in the more difficult but transformative work on the roots of injustice. We believe that the current distortions in access to resources for women's rights groups is not the result of willful neglect, prejudice or discrimination, but a lack of

information and understanding of the issues at stake. We believe it is our role to help fill this gap, which is what this report and its sister publications hope to do. We believe it is our responsibility to help catalyze more informed conversations between all the concerned actors, and we hope that publications such as this will help us all move forward in that direction.

With this background to the analysis presented here, we invite you to read and ponder the information, ideas and analysis in this report, and to use it to launch new conversations. We also hope you will share with us your feedback and ideas, to help enrich and inform our future work.

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<sup>1</sup> Strikingly well-analyzed most recently by Deniz Kandiyoti in her “Fear and fury: women and post-revolutionary violence”, 14 January 2013, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/deniz-kandiyoti/fear-and-fury-women-and-post-revolutionary-violence>

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from the Gender at Work matrix first articulated by Rao, Aruna and David Kelleher, “Is there Life After Mainstreaming?” *Gender and Development: Mainstreaming – A Critical Review*, 13.2 Oxfam UKI (July 2005)

# Executive Summary

**It has been almost eight years** since AWID launched the initiative that asked, “Where is the Money for Women’s Rights?” The objective of this action-research effort was:

- To mobilize more and better quality resources for women’s rights organizing by generating knowledge and analysis of the funding landscape and the financial situation of women’s organizations; and
- To promote collective strategizing for resource mobilization from a feminist movement building perspective.

This report presents research findings and analysis gathered over the last two years to help women’s rights organizations and their funder allies make sense of the rapidly changing funding landscape and adapt their resource mobilization (and distribution) strategies accordingly.

## Three major trends impacting significantly on the funding landscape for women’s organizations have emerged in the last few years that require our attention and analysis:

1. The presence of “women and girls” as a priority—at least a rhetorical one—in nearly every funding sector and in the mainstream;
2. The upsurge of a diverse array of private sector actors in development financing and philanthropy; and
3. Corporatization and specifically, its impact on development agendas and financing.

As we approach 2015, with the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, as well as the conclusion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the upcoming launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a post-2015 UN development framework, many women’s rights organizations, movements and their allies are reviewing and reflecting on past progress and exploring visions for the future. With many parts of the world still reeling from the impacts of the financial crisis and economic recession sparked in 2008 and with the realities of changing world geopolitics, questioning of development strategies and the ideology that drives those strategies is well underway (though of course for some they have always been in question) and women’s rights and social justice activists are putting forward diverse understandings of development and its connections (or lack thereof) to economic growth. They are pointing to the critical need to better factor environmental sustainability as a central part of new development models, and opportunities to explore alternative strategies to those that have dominated in the past, promoting deep structural transformations.

While the debates are flourishing in some sectors, the model of development assistance that emerged out of colonial relationships, and driven by logic that prioritizes markets and economic growth, seems to be firmly re-entrenched. Recent international processes have strongly affirmed the roles of diverse stakeholders in development: not just states and multi-lateral institutions, but private sector actors, philanthropic institutions, individual philanthropists and civil society organizations as well. Mechanisms and sources of development financing and philanthropy are becoming increasingly diversified, but economic growth and return on investment are the priority, with human rights and wellbeing taking a backseat. Yet the context is complex precisely because of the increasing diversity of actors and agendas taking part. Just as states cannot be treated as a monolithic actor, neither can the private or philanthropic sectors. These actors represent a range of agendas and experiences, with powerful groups coming from both traditional donor countries and emerging economies, and thus presenting complex challenges and diverse opportunities in terms of leveraging support for women's rights.

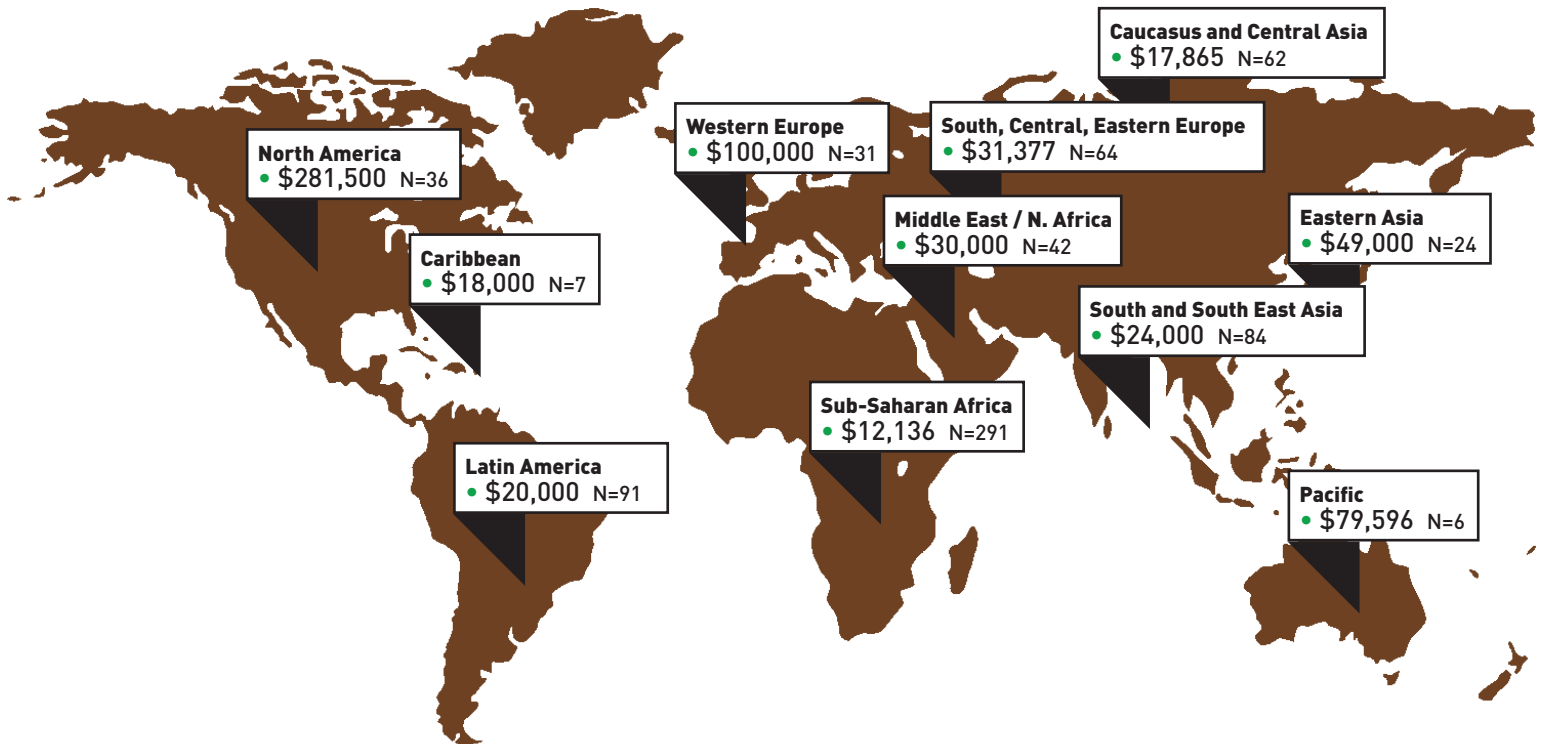
This growth and diversification of the actors involved in development is happening at a time when women and girls are in the public eye, and recognized as key agents in development as never before. Women's rights organizations are finding that in most international policy or funding spaces, we have moved beyond needing to raise the question of "what about women?" and instead must mobilize to inform and influence the debates on how best to support women and girls' full participation in development, while constantly pointing to the centrality of human rights as a guiding framework. Vast resources are becoming available under the broad umbrella of 'development' and there is significant interest in 'investing' in women and girls. Such interest provides a strong impetus for other civil society actors to expand their work with women and girls, though not always from a rights-based perspective. And yet in too many instances—in powerful agenda-setting spaces, in the mainstream media—feminist and women's rights organizations are mostly absent from the debates. This is not necessarily by choice—some of these spaces are quite exclusionary—but whether due to lack of interest, or barriers to engagement, the result is that the wealth of experience of women's rights organizing is not being used to inform the best strategies and initiatives to be supported as part of this broad trend.

The context is complex precisely because of the increasing diversity of actors and agendas taking part. Just as states cannot be treated as a monolithic actor, neither can the private or philanthropic sectors

## FINANCIAL SITUATION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS GLOBALLY IN 2010

Base: 740 women's organizations N = Number of Respondents \$ = Median Income in USD

- 140 countries
- 85% registered organizations



Now visualize these numbers in relation to some large international NGOs for the same year (2010)

\$ = USD

The median income of women's organisations in the sample

\$20,000

740 women's organisations – combined income

\$106 million

Greenpeace Worldwide

\$309 million

Save the Children International

\$1.442 billion

World Vision International

\$2.611 billion

background map: Vector Open Stock [www.vectoropenstock.com](http://www.vectoropenstock.com)



As the title of this report suggests, one of the striking paradoxes of this moment is that the spotlight on women and girls seems to have had relatively little impact on improving the funding situation for a large majority of women's organizations around the world. The 'leaves'—the individual women and girls—are receiving growing attention, without recognizing or supporting 'the roots'—the sustained, collective action by feminists and women's rights activists and organizations that has been at the core of women's rights advancements throughout history. The data presented and analyzed in this report demonstrate this phenomenon in some detail.

Data from AWID's 2011 global survey of over 1,000 women's organizations indicates moderate growth: median annual income doubled between 2005 and 2010, reaching USD20,000 and a full 7% (up from four in 2005) reported 2010 budgets of over USD500,000. Yet the large majority of these organizations remain quite small—not by choice, but due to challenges to mobilize the resources they need to fulfill their program plans and visions. Indeed, many organizations reported having had to cut activities or staff due to funding limitations. Women's organizations are primarily reliant on project support rather than on long term flexible funding, with 48% of respondents to AWID's survey reporting never having received core funding and 52% never having received multi-year funding. An important new finding that emerged in this most recent survey was increasing reliance among many women's organizations on self-generated resources, from income-generating activities, membership fees, or other sources. Survey findings also reflected that respondents most commonly received funding restricted for direct service provision, although groups themselves prioritized capacity building and women's empowerment programs. Direct service provision was not even among the top ten strategies used. This disconnect in priorities is a concern and makes self-generated resources more vital to pursuing strategies that external funders are less interested in supporting.

The spotlight on women and girls seems to have had relatively little impact on improving the funding situation for a large majority of women's organizations around the world

The large majority of women's organizations remain quite small — not by choice, but due to challenges to mobilize the resources they need to fulfil their program plans and visions

If the 'new' interest in women and girls is not translating to resources for women's rights organizations, what is happening among the more 'traditional' funding sectors for women's organizing? Private sector interest and approaches in development, philanthropy and women and girls is also infiltrating other development actors and funding sectors. Diverse funders – bilateral agencies, international NGOs, private foundations, and women's funds – have explored partnering with private companies or corporate foundations. AWID and Mama Cash have launched initial research to map these "new actors and new money" and findings will be available in late 2013. In the meantime, this report reviews major trends across different funding sectors.

## Bilateral and Multilateral Donors

Trends among bilateral and multilateral donors present a mixed picture for women's rights organizations. The 2012 review on Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) found that little actual progress has been made in increasing funding for women's organizations and gender equality. Official Development Assistance (ODA) was negatively impacted by the financial crisis, as well as by conservative influences in many donor countries, however total aid levels are beginning to rebound. Although a small 'drop in the bucket' compared to total aid, ODA to non-governmental women's equality organizations has doubled; Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK in particular registered significant increases from 2008 to 2011. The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the UN Fund for Gender Equality, managed by UN Women, have been important multilateral sources of support for women's rights work. Emerging economies are also playing a more active role in development assistance, generally through regional development funds with less emphasis on aid and more on trade, loans, technology sharing and direct investments. However, data on aid from emerging economies is still somewhat difficult to track and very little information currently exists on their support for women's rights and gender equality as well as on their financing frameworks and mechanisms.

ODA was negatively impacted by the financial crisis [but]...ODA to non-governmental women's equality organizations has doubled

## International NGOs (INGOs)

Interestingly, AWID surveys show a significant drop in the share of income that women's organizations report from international NGOs (INGOs), down from 14% in 2005 to 7% in 2010. This may be related to some of the strategies that many INGOs are using for resource mobilization, particularly in the face of challenges following the 2008 financial crisis. Rather than serve as 'intermediaries' and offer direct grant-making to local NGOs, more INGOs are expanding their own program implementation role, establishing or increasing the number of 'country offices' they operate and, in some cases, competing for funding with women's organizations.

## Private Foundations

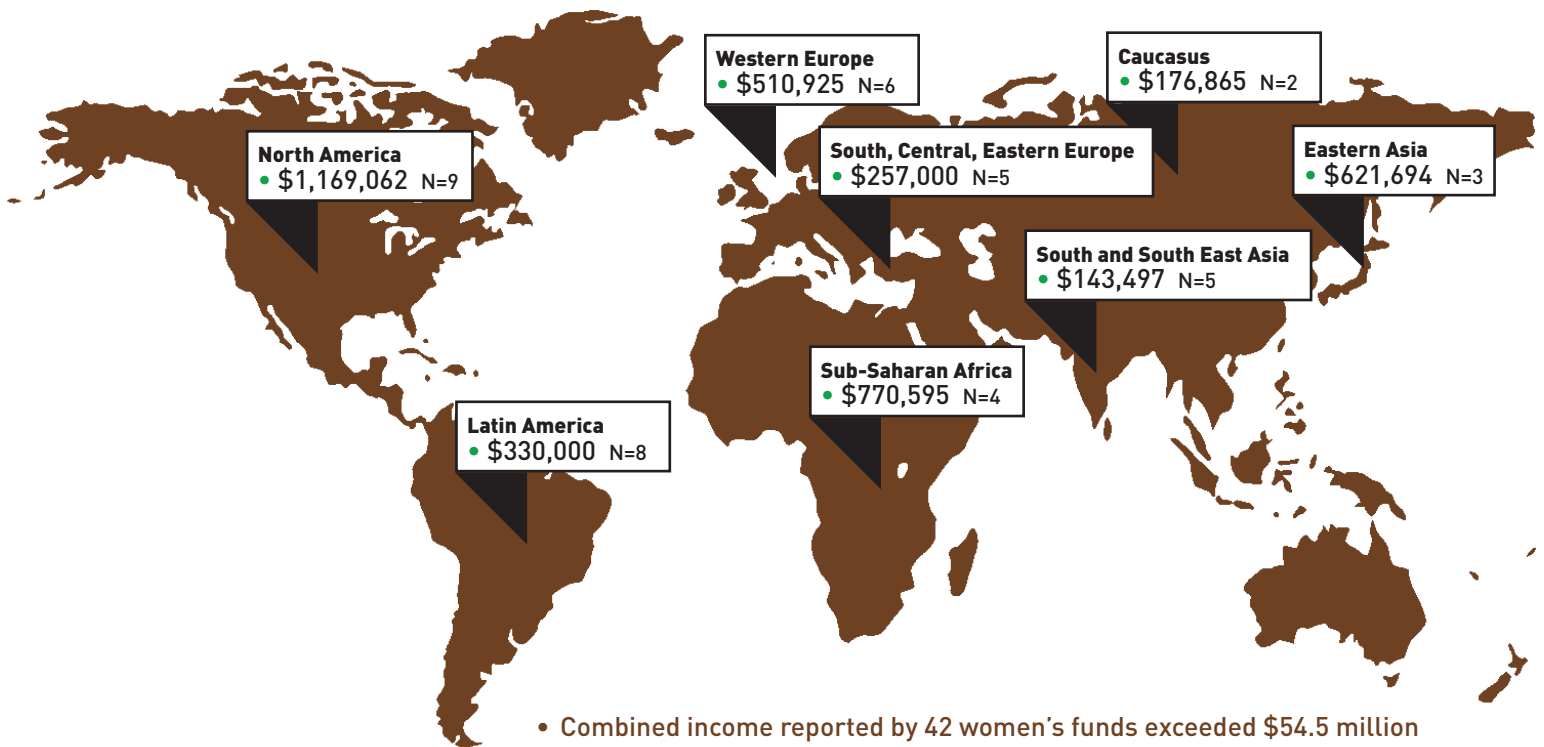
While private foundations remain an important source of support for many women's organizations, and a number of newer foundations in particular are highlighting their interest in women and girls, available data on US and European foundation giving in this area shows that it has been largely stagnant overall. A study of the top human rights funders named the same foundations that were among those most frequently mentioned by respondents to AWID's 2011 global survey: Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundation, Sigrid Rausing Trust, Oak Foundation, Gates Foundation and MacArthur Foundation. There are also a growing number of private foundations in the global South, though data on their giving is limited. The diversity among private foundations continues to pose challenges for influencing thinking and giving practices within this sector—beyond a handful of champions—to more significantly support women's rights organizing.

INGOs are expanding their own program implementation role, establishing or increasing the number of 'country offices' they operate and, in some cases, competing for funding with women's organizations

The diversity among private foundations continues to pose challenges for influencing thinking and giving practices within this sector—beyond a handful of champions—to more significantly support women's rights organizing

## FINANCIAL SITUATION OF WOMEN'S FUNDS GLOBALLY IN 2010

Base: 42 women's funds N = number of respondents \$ = Median Income in USD



- Combined income reported by 42 women's funds exceeded \$54.5 million
- 57% reporting income of \$500,000 or less
- Total grant-making by 37 women's funds was close to \$28 million

### Women's Funds

Recognizing the important role that women's funds have historically played in resourcing a broad diversity of women's organizations, AWID, in collaboration with the International Network of Women's Funds, for the first time conducted a detailed survey of women's funds to better understand their income and grant-making. The combined 2010 income reported by 42 women's funds in our sample exceeded USD 54.5 million. The majority of these funds, however, operate with relatively limited resources, with 57% of respondents reporting income of USD 500,000 or less in 2010. Total grant-making by 37 women's funds was close to USD 28 million in 2010. Key to their funding strategy has been an emphasis on flexible, core, multi-year support for women's rights organizing. For their own resource mobilization, many women's funds have been working to tap resources that are not as readily available for women's organizations. For example, AWID survey results confirm that women's funds in the sample relied on individual donations for 51.8% of their budgets (though the two largest international funds and two others based in the US account for most of these resources, so this data needs to be read in light of this reality). Some women's funds have been spearheading an array of collaborative resource mobilization and grant-making efforts, as well as carefully exploring opportunities to leverage resources or other supports from private sector actors.

## Individual Philanthropy

The final sector that we explore in the report is the field of individual philanthropy. There has been a proliferation of new faces and mechanisms in philanthropy, with strong growth in emerging economies as individual wealth is on the rise. In addition to the geographic diversity, women are increasingly significant actors in philanthropy worldwide, as are young people. Both of these segments could hold promise for women's organizations to tap. However other trends in the field raise potential concerns, including the philosophy of "philanthro-capitalism" linking the notion of social responsibility held by wealthy individuals to reliance on market mechanisms and measurable 'evidence' for distinguishing programs worthy of support. The growth of crowdsourcing has captured tremendous interest as a mechanism to facilitate mass participation in philanthropy; now even with a site dedicated to crowdfunding for gender equality (see [www.catapult.org](http://www.catapult.org)). While concerns have been raised regarding the kinds of projects that can be packaged to appeal to a crowdfunding audience, this type of mechanism has no doubt been opening new funding opportunities for some women's organizations. In general however, while growth and diversification of philanthropy is a positive trend, it is important that these private efforts not be seen as substitutions for state obligations to protect and fulfill human rights and allocate the maximum available resources, including through the framework of international cooperation.

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## Conclusions

Beyond painting a picture of the current funding landscape, this report puts forward several recommendations on how to engage with and address this landscape in order to mobilize more and better resources for women's rights organizing through a feminist collective resource mobilization approach.

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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

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#### 1. Move beyond the comfort zone: get educated on funder diversity

The funding landscape is diverse, complex and rapidly changing. Relying solely on the same donor allies of the past is not sustainable or possible any longer. There is a strong and urgent need to expand the pool of funders who understand the power and impact of women's rights organizations. This report recommends taking stock of who is informing funding agendas in the contexts where you work, or who is partnering with the development organizations you know. What are possible converging areas of interest, and what are the clear areas of conflict? Given historical challenges of working with and understanding private sector actors, this report recommends women's rights organizations assess how diverse funders are playing a role in their context and educate themselves on the tremendous diversity of relevant actors and initiatives to inform strong collective responses to manoeuvre in this new reality. It is important to be open to learning from emerging actors or groups that you don't know well. Ask yourself, who else in your community or field is doing work with women and girls, perhaps from a different perspective? What are the opportunities to engage them in a dialogue to find points of difference as well as commonalities? How can information and intelligence gathered be widely shared and used by other women's organizations? How can we continue to build joint/collective resource mobilization mechanisms that can help fund not only our individual group or organization, but our movements in this new funding landscape?

#### 2. Determine criteria and opportunities for critical engagement

Given concerns about the disparate agendas, motivations and ways of working of the private sector, and other newer actors in the funding landscape interested in

supporting women and girls, clear criteria are essential for determining opportunities to critically engage. AWID understands critical engagement as a means for women's organizations and movements to build political agency and capacity to 'be at the table', without letting ourselves be co-opted in the process. It means moving beyond reacting and adapting to funding trends and agendas, to contributing instead to more effectively shaping them. This does not need to imply embracing agendas at odds with our own, but a willingness to step into spaces that are unfamiliar, making a genuine effort to understand the perspectives of groups at the table and challenging our own assumptions before determining the potential that a particular actor or space holds for advancing women's rights agendas. In the current moment, we believe that critical engagement is an essential strategy and with clear guidelines to inform choices, more women's organizations can proactively engage relevant actors and spaces. Engaging may require a different style of working or different language (without compromising on core principles), and is likely to be a long-term undertaking.

### 3. Effectively communicate what counts when it comes to impact

Counting what really counts and offering the real story of our impacts is a key task for women's organizations and funders. Focus on short-term results and "return on investment" are easily quantified, 'visible' results at the expense of more meaningful change. Returning to classic distinctions in gender analysis such as "practical needs" and "strategic interests" can be useful for women's rights activists to orient actors new to the field as to why technical fixes to the practical challenges that women face are rarely enough to significantly improve their quality of life and change cycles of discrimination and violence. More compelling monitoring and evaluation systems that effectively speak to women's rights achievements and contributions are essential. For women's organizations, it is essential to be communicating our impact on our terms, but also in ways that others can understand what we do and the difference it makes in women and girls' lives. It is also important to communicate impact, not just as individual organizations, but as part of a broad movement that has achieved some of the greatest women's rights gains of the past several decades. Aggregate analyses, in collaboration with other women's rights organizations and allies can be particularly powerful in building further evidence about the relevance of supporting women's rights organizing and movements as a key driver for change.

Counting what really counts and offering the real story of our impacts is a key task for women's organizations and funders. Focus on short-term results and "return on investment" are easily quantified, 'visible' results at the expense of more meaningful change

## 4. Embrace bold, collaborative feminist resource mobilization

Recognizing the tensions and competition that resource mobilization has often generated, a collective approach among women's organizations is particularly important, whether in negotiating terms with donors, influencing their funding priorities and frameworks, or simply sharing with other groups insights on donor practices and priorities. Resource mobilization can be an isolating and disempowering experience, often one that adds to divisions within women's movements. An open recognition of that tension and work to overcome it are essential to move beyond rhetoric to practice on collective resource mobilization. Collaborative resource mobilization initiatives by groups working in networks, on common issues or territories, have proven to be an effective way to 'expand the pot' and sustainability of resources available for women's rights organizations and movements. At AWID we strongly believe that competition for resources generates further resource scarcity and limits our political power and agency. At a time when collaboration across donors in different funding sectors is on the rise, working with donor allies can have a ripple effect across other funders and sectors. It is vital to claim the space for informing and influencing funder agendas, indeed pushing back, where needed, on approaches that instrumentalize women and girls or overlook human rights commitments.

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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

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#### 1. If you're interested in women and girls or gender equality, women's rights organizations are a natural strategic partner

Women's rights organizations, with their grounding in diverse communities and contexts, in-depth analysis of problems of gender inequality and rights violations and history of experience and tested strategies to counter these problems, should be a priority partner for any donor interested in making sustainable change happen for women's rights and gender equality. There is no silver bullet. Just as a company might engage expert engineers when investing in building new technology, funders should tap the experts in the women's rights community to support framing programs that effectively benefit women and girls in the longer run.



## 2. Effective funding strategies look at quantity, quality and shared values

There is a need for funding strategies that take into account the diversity of women's rights organizing, including groups that may be smaller or harder to reach, working at the grassroots, which play crucial roles in transforming the lives of women and girls around the world. In that regard, the community of women's funds plays a tremendously important role, as have larger women's organizations that have a re-granting function. Consider existing intermediaries within women's movements to reach these smaller organizations you might not otherwise access.

Multi-year and core funding is key to facilitate strong results. Core funding is critical because it allows for flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and context, as well as investment in organizational strengthening and learning, which ultimately enhances impact. Flexible, multi-year commitments facilitate greater predictability of resources and financial sustainability allowing women's organizations to stay focused on programmatic priorities and plan more effectively.

## 3. Accountability mechanisms are critical for learning and improvement

Current tools for monitoring and accountability of financing for women's rights and gender equality are limited and need significant further development to take into account not just the quantity of pledged funding but the actual disbursement of resources and most importantly, the results that funding is contributing to. Ensuring that private sector actors are held accountable for the results of their programs for women and girls is similarly important, with a view to reinforcing that economic growth and profit are not the end goals of development. In this context it may be even more important for women's rights activists to monitor and influence the shape of a post-2015 development agenda, and how that agenda is potentially used as a tool for holding diverse donors accountable to development objectives.

Accountability works in multiple directions: just as grantees are accountable for the results achieved with resources from funders, funders are accountable to their grantees and to the broader constituencies they serve for making effective use of their resources. Spaces to discuss and unpack achievements and challenges faced by both funders and grantees are critical for enhancing these "multiple accountabilities".


# 1: Introduction

We are in a moment of significant, rapid, and even unprecedented change in the landscape of funding for development and social justice, which will have major implications for resourcing **women's rights organizations** and **movements\*** in the years to come. The extent to which women's rights organizations and allies understand the shifts, engage in relevant debates, and influence key actors is likely to impact their ability to mobilize needed resources to sustain and grow their work. Consequently, it is a critical time for feminist and women's rights advocates, organizations and movements - and our allies - to come together to shape funding agendas, and put forward our own visions and strategies for realizing women's rights and justice. It is also a time to ensure our presence in the spaces where decisions are being made on *how* to 'invest in women' and to draw attention to the long histories, vast experience and knowledge of women's rights organizations in transforming gender power relations. It is a time when the role of the private sector in development - particularly with regard to women and girls and women's rights - is growing, and we must debate this new reality and put forward shared positions and principles from which to critically engage with these powerful actors. But none of this can happen without an understanding of the larger economic and political context in which we are operating.

## 1.1 The Context

Volumes have been written on the nature of the global systemic crisis, particularly the crisis sparked in 2008 by the financial meltdown in many countries of the North and the economic recession that both exacerbated and drew attention to the interconnections between ongoing food, energy, climate and humanitarian crises.<sup>1</sup> While that crisis continues to evolve, with deepening impacts in the global South, the US, and the still-unresolved Eurozone crisis, its effects have also been felt in the worlds of philanthropy and development financing. For example, in most cases shrinking levels of gross national income (GNI) in donor countries have a direct correlation to shrinking levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA), which is generally a fixed percentage of GNI. The push for austerity measures and drastic spending cuts as a preferred response to the crisis has had a similar effect, in addition to turning many people in traditional donor countries against the idea of government spending for 'international aid' in a time of public service cuts. At the same time, the crisis seems to have pushed many entrepreneurs and profit-motivated companies to explore 'new frontiers'. The notion of "The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid"<sup>2</sup> has been gaining traction in recent years for instance, particularly the realization that women and girls make up the majority of those at the base.

\* Definitions of bold, italicized phrases can be found in the glossary of this report.



Even as there is more attention to and expressed recognition of the roles of women and girls in development and in the global economy, there appears to be both an aggravation of existing forms of violence against women and other women's human rights violations, as well as the emergence of new forms of violence, such as the epidemic of "femicides" – the killing of women – in regions like Latin America. Worst of all, much of this violence appears to be taking place with almost complete impunity.<sup>3</sup> Attacks on **women human rights defenders (WHRDs)** by state and non-state actors are on the rise. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders reports in her 2010 Annual Report that "women defenders are more at risk of suffering certain forms of violence and other violations, prejudice, exclusion, and repudiation than their male counterparts."<sup>4</sup> This trend and the accompanying impunity are growing in Mesoamerica at an alarming rate, but examples of violence against WHRDs are occurring in most regions of the world.<sup>5</sup> Violence and repression impact women activists and organizations working across the spectrum of human rights—for sexual rights, reproductive rights, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LBTI) rights, labour rights, political participation, right to live free from violence, access to justice, peace-building, as well as those acting to protect natural resources in the face of mega-projects like dams and mining, carried out in the name of development.

Across different regions violence against WHRDs is linked to several trends. Growing repression of social movements and **civil society** is manifest in a shrinking of democratic spaces and criminalization of political dissent – often using instruments developed for the "war on terror" and terrorism. Militarism as an ideology and a practice to deal with social and political problems has gained more and more legitimacy in recent years with the use of state force becoming commonplace both within and outside of so-called "conflict situations." Regressive religious political forces across all regions and religions, also known as religious fundamentalisms, use religion to mask political and economic interests and agendas to assert social control. The rise of fundamentalist ideas is accompanied by increased violations of women's human rights, particularly with limitations on women's bodily autonomy, sexual freedoms and reproductive rights.




Significant shifts in world geopolitics present us with an increasingly multipolar world order and an inadequate and outdated global governance system. With the rise of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and other emerging economies as powerful players on the global scene, the architecture and terms of engagement in international relations are being redefined, with significant implications for multilateral processes. Multilateral institutions, particularly the United Nations (UN), are relatively weak and discredited, with limited influence and resources. If they are to be an effective force in addressing the world's most pressing issues, they require significant reform. The upsurge of so-called public-private partnerships to advance development aims must be understood in the context of these power shifts, where many states are reinforcing their military power, but relinquishing or losing economic and social power to private interests or criminal networks. Thus in many cases the power of democratically elected bodies is overshadowed by institutions that have profit rather than public interest as their primary mission, and operate with inadequate regulation or mechanisms of public accountability.

This context has galvanized vast public mobilizations around the world challenging authoritarian regimes and economic injustice. Yet the ultimate impact of these mobilizations remains uncertain. In the complexity of the current landscape, tapping the power of collective action is crucial, yet because many feminists and women's rights activists and their organizations are working within contexts of increasing risk, conflict and security concerns, with minimal access to resources - their room to manoeuvre is severely constrained. Supporting their work and collective strategies to make sense of and navigate in a rapidly changing context is key for advancing women's rights.

## 1.2 AWID's Roles and Priorities

It is a similar set of contextual realities that led AWID to launch its *Where is the Money for Women's Rights? (WITM)* initiative in 2005. Through the WITM initiative, we have seen the tremendous power and change that is generated when women's organizations come together, in many cases with like-minded donors and other allies, to share and debate their issues of concern around resources for women's rights work, generate rigorous evidence to back-up these concerns, and find some areas of common ground and strategize jointly to mobilize resources. At the same time, the continuing reality for many feminist and women's rights groups around the world is scarcity of resources. As we bring the WITM initiative to a close with this report, we hope other women's organizations and women's funds will build on this foundation of work to further explore its central questions and search for new answers.



It is not that AWID has entirely abandoned the field, however: in our new strategic plan for 2013-2016, we will build on the foundation of our WITM work, but shift focus to stronger engagement with diverse funding sectors. We will continue to prioritize **feminist resource mobilization**<sup>6</sup> — a collective approach of women’s organizations and movements to influence the agendas and priorities of diverse funding sectors to catalyze greater resources for women’s rights organizing. As the “ecosystem” of the funding landscape grows increasingly diverse - reflecting an interplay of individual philanthropy, international development assistance, government and private sector actors, as well as civil society – this collective approach is particularly vital, since it becomes increasingly difficult for individual organizations to navigate this complex terrain and diverse funding priorities and modalities. AWID is currently undertaking new work in this area that we hope will contribute to influencing funder agendas and priorities to expand and improve their support for women’s rights organizing and strengthening accountability to human rights standards and internationally-agreed development goals. We will continue to work with other women’s rights organizations and allies to make the links between different funding sectors, develop and strengthen our capacity and agility to understand their interests and locate entry points, and most of all, to jointly strategize on ways of engaging with the diverse actors, processes and spaces shaping funding agendas.

For this approach to succeed, we must go beyond a focus on the resources needed today and turn our attention to mobilizing resources for advancing women’s rights agendas *in the longer term*. This means amplifying our political voice in key spaces and continuing to be explicit about the critical role of feminist and women’s rights organizations, in all their diversity, in shaping solutions to broad development problems. We hope this report strengthens our capacity to make this case – that it highlights some important next steps in our collective struggle to mobilize sustainable, significant and effective resources for women’s rights and gender equality.

Now more than ever, as the world speaks of the power of 'investing in women', the experiences and perspectives of these organizations, historically closest to transformative work and major achievements for women's rights, must not be overlooked or under-resourced. The collective wisdom, knowledge and experience of these women's rights activists and advocates should not be made invisible and marginalized, once again

### 1.3 The Focus on Women's Organizations

Although our action-research on access to funding has been known as *Where is the Money for Women's Rights?* (WITM), our focus all along has actually been on women's organizing, on the resources available for processes that build women's collective power to make transformative changes. We did not believe it was enough to simply ask about the resources flowing towards women's rights work. Instead, we have been specifically concerned with the resources reaching organizations or groups "with a primary focus on promoting women's rights, gender equality, and/or empowerment."<sup>7</sup> We believe these groups play a crucial strategic role in advancing women's rights and sustaining past achievements. They are groups rooted in social movements with extensive histories of building knowledge, practice and innovation for creating positive changes in women's lives over time, from the grassroots to global levels. Now more than ever, as the world speaks of the power of 'investing in women', the experiences and perspectives of these organizations, historically closest to transformative work and major achievements for women's rights, must not be overlooked or under-resourced. The collective wisdom, knowledge and experience of these women's rights activists and advocates should not be made invisible and marginalized, once again.


Our belief is confirmed by recent independent, academic research on strategies to combat violence against women. This research has shown that across 70 countries "the autonomous mobilization of feminists in domestic and transnational contexts—not leftist parties, women in government, or national wealth—is the critical factor accounting for policy change. Impact of global norms on domestic policy-making is conditional on the presence of feminist movements in domestic contexts, pointing to the importance of ongoing activism and a vibrant civil society."<sup>8</sup> While some funders express preference for supporting large international development organizations, equating scale of operations and institutional capacity with impact, AWID - along with many other feminist and women's organizations - has been working on innovative, aggregate analyses of impact that speak to the difference women's organizations make for women's rights. Through their adaptation to contextual shifts and diversity of strategies to tackle problems facing women over the long-haul, women's organizations challenge the structural dynamics that perpetuate gender inequality and oppression. Providing an aggregate analysis in this sense also debunks the myth that women's rights organizations or their impact are necessarily small scale. It makes clear the vital roles that women's rights organizations are playing to transform the lives of women and girls, the communities where they live, and the cultures that perpetuate discrimination and violence.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.4 The Research

AWID's WITM action-research initiative started in 2005 with the intention of taking stock of the funding situation for women's organizations around the 10-year anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Since that time, we have sought to identify funding trends that impact on women's organizations, and to provide a general picture of the financial situation of these organizations around the world. It has also sought to engage both donors and women's rights activists in dialogue - strategizing around how to mobilize more and better quality resources for women's organizations from a movement building perspective.

This report builds on that history. With an updated analysis of the highly diverse and changing landscape of development funding and philanthropy, the report shows the resource mobilization implications for women's rights organizations. In addition, it highlights recent trends across funding sectors that have historically been the most important sources of funding for women's organizations. Keeping with past tradition, the report (chapter three) includes data on the funding status of women's organizations, based on results from our 2011-2012 global survey of women's organizations. This is the fourth such survey AWID has conducted since 2005 – and the first to be conducted in five languages, thus reaching the largest sample to date. The results provide a snapshot of the financial situation of over 1,000 women's organizations from all regions of the world. Considering the important role women's funds have played in supporting a vast number of women's groups, especially small grassroots-based initiatives, the report also includes highlights from our first-ever joint global survey of women's funds,<sup>10</sup> with detailed data on their fundraising and giving patterns.

WITM has consistently sought to bring together these 'two sides of the coin' – trends that we can track, identify and analyze in the funding landscape, and information compiled from a significant number of women's organizations. WITM has never been about fundraising techniques, i.e. about how a particular organization can persuade a particular donor to give them money. Our goal in doing this is to provide insight into the reality of resource dynamics, their reach and distribution among women's organizations. There is no simple, straightforward response to the question "where is the money?" But unraveling the dynamics that shape where and how resources are distributed, as well as how women's organizations approach resource mobilization, has been at the heart of AWID's work in this area. We consider this a critical political dimension of the struggle to advance women's human rights and justice, since control and distribution of resources is inherently political. Resource patterns are clear indicators of who and what counts, i.e. which constituencies, interests and agendas are privileged and which are marginalized or excluded.



How successful have we been in achieving this broader goal? Over the years, this action-research initiative has in fact succeeded in contributing to mobilizing more and better quality resources for women's rights organizations from different funding sectors by providing relevant data and analysis. In many instances, the work has significantly influenced the shaping of a different discourse used by both women's organizations and donors, about funding for gender equality. Major donors in this field, such as the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have cited the research directly in their rationales for creating large new funds<sup>11</sup> linked to women's rights. Both donors and women's organizations working regionally and nationally have adapted and replicated the research to reflect a more localized analysis of global trends, and to shed light on specific funding dynamics impacting women's organizing in their contexts.<sup>12</sup> Our reports have been cited and used numerous times by the UN and other multilateral institutions.<sup>13</sup> The research has also been adapted by donors and groups working on specific themes: violence against women, women's labour rights, sexual and reproductive rights, etc. to draw attention to funding realities and challenges. Overall, the WITM initiative has contributed to putting money and feminist resource mobilization on the table as a core part of the agendas of women's rights groups and our allies.

## 1.5 The Purpose

This report is intended for a broad audience, including women's rights activists, advocates, supporters and donors from different funding sectors, as well as those just learning about the women's rights landscape and funding trends. The purpose of the updated analysis presented in this report is threefold:

1. To provide women's organizations with information they need about the shifting funding landscape, to inform their own resource mobilization, anticipate and prepare for the trends that are coming, using an approach to feminist resource mobilization that is about collectively leveraging more resources for women's rights organizing.
2. To provide funders with information on trends or sectors they may be less familiar with, to inform their own thinking and strategizing to encourage an increase in resources for women's rights organizing.
3. To put pressing questions on the table that we consider feminists and women's rights organizations and allies need to seriously engage with, to inform their joint strategies to increase resources for women's rights and gender equality at large, and particularly for women's rights organizing.



- <sup>1</sup> Alpizar, Lydia, et al. *Context and Trends Influencing the Funding Landscape for Gender Equality and Women's Organizations & Movements*. Toronto: AWID, 2010. See also AWID's brief series "Impacts of the Crisis on Women" Web. 10 April 2013. <http://www.awid.org/AWID-s-Publications/Impact-of-the-Crisis-on-Women>.
- <sup>2</sup> Prahalad, C.K., and Stuart L. Hart. "The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid." *Strategy + Business*. First Quarter/26, 2002. Web. 10 April 2013. <http://www.cs.berkeley.edu/~brewer/ict4b/Fortune-BoP.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup> UN HRC. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences*. New York: UN HRC, 2012. Web. 10 April, 2013. [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/A.HRC.20.16\\_En.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/A.HRC.20.16_En.pdf).
- <sup>4</sup> UN HRC. 2010. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Margaret Sekaggya*. New York: UN HRC, 2010. 16th Session, UN Doc. A/HRC/16/44.
- <sup>5</sup> The global picture of violence against WHRDs is difficult to quantify, owing to the nature and dimensions of violence directed at WHRDs as individuals and collectively as organizations. The 2010 Annual Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders cites that of the 350 communications sent to governments per year between 2004 and 2009, 1/3 (or 105 annually) concerned women defenders and those working on women's rights or gender issues.
- <sup>6</sup> For more on this framework see Kerr, Joanna. *The Second FundHer Report: Financial Sustainability for Women's Movements Worldwide*. Toronto: AWID, 2007. Web. 10 April 2013. <http://www.awid.org/Library/The-Second-Fundher-Report-Financial-Sustainability-for-Women-s-Movements-Worldwide>.
- <sup>7</sup> This was the definition of "women's organization" used to filter respondents to AWID's global survey, although clearly such definitions are open to interpretation and can encompass a wide variety of groups.
- <sup>8</sup> See Htun, Mala, and S. Laurel Weldon. "The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975–2005." *American Political Science Review*, 106.3 (2012): 548-569.
- <sup>9</sup> See Batliwala, Srilatha. *Women Moving Mountains: How Women with Resources Can Change the World*. Toronto: AWID, 2013 (forthcoming).
- <sup>10</sup> This survey was completed in collaboration with the International Network of Women's Funds (INWF) – a network of 45 women's funds – of which 43 members participated in the 2011 survey. For more information on INWF go to: <http://www.inwf.org/>.
- <sup>11</sup> Such as the MDG3 Fund, launched in 2008 with an initial budget of 72 million Euros, and the FLOW Fund, its successor, with a budget of 80.5 million Euros.
- <sup>12</sup> Similar research has been conducted by the Fiji Women's Movement, South Asia Women's Fund, Fondo Alquimia and Fundo Elas in the Southern Cone, among others.
- <sup>13</sup> For example see Commission on the Status of Women. *Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Expert Group Meeting*. New York: United Nations. Web. 10 April 2013. [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/financing\\_gender\\_equality/EGM%20Report%20Final.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/financing_gender_equality/EGM%20Report%20Final.pdf); and DAC Network on Gender Equality (GenderNet). "Innovative Funding for Women's Organisations." (2008):32. Web. 10 April 2013. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/40954592.pdf>.

# 2: Key Trends

## Shaping the Funding Landscape

Three major trends impacting significantly on the funding landscape for women’s organizations have emerged in the last few years that require our attention and analysis:

1. The presence of “women and girls” as a priority—at least a rhetorical one—in nearly every funding sector and in the mainstream;
2. The upsurge of a diverse array of private sector actors in development financing and philanthropy; and
3. Corporatization and specifically, its impact on development agendas and financing.

### 2.1 TREND ONE: WOMEN HAVE ‘ARRIVED’: VISIBILITY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN MAINSTREAM DEBATES AND AGENDAS

In 2005, women’s rights activists and donor allies told us how they felt the mood had changed – that funder interest in women and women’s rights had faded since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Fast forward a few years to 2010 and onwards, and we see “investing in women and girls” increasingly heralded as a keystone strategy for women’s economic empowerment, and indeed, for broader development and economic growth. We hear variations on this discourse from actors as diverse as the World Bank, *Newsweek*, and Walmart.<sup>14</sup> Funding agencies and international NGOs have increasingly adopted the language of “investing in women” via new policies and programs. Corporate actors are emphasizing women as a key constituency of consumers, economic agents and small-scale entrepreneurs. Mass media feature stories on the power of women in addressing social and economic problems, and feature special coverage and stories of key challenges/issues faced by women and girls around the world.

With so much talk about women and girls, in many spaces, women’s rights movements and organizations are no longer simply getting women on to the agenda. Instead, the emphasis is shifting to influencing how these agendas get framed and implemented, to ensure that they effectively translate into more resources in women’s hands, for advancing women’s rights.

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The need to monitor translation of rhetoric into resources is not new. A principal challenge with tracking funding for women’s rights is that donor definitions of women’s issues, women’s empowerment, women’s rights and gender equality tend to be quite diverse and fit into an array of thematic clusters. One study of Official Development Assistance (ODA) found that, related to gender equality, donors tended to lack well-defined priorities and objectives and rarely had specific, dedicated and well-resourced budgets in place.<sup>15</sup> A striking example is the World Bank: while promoting its 2012 *World Development Report* on Gender Equality and Development, its 2011 investments in “social development, gender and inclusion” actually decreased from 2010 levels and made up less than two percent of the Bank’s annual budget.<sup>16</sup> Among newer actors in this field, it can be difficult to see whether publicized partnerships and commitments to women or women’s rights are followed through with actual resources.

One study of Official Development Assistance found that, related to gender equality, donors tended to lack well-defined priorities and objectives and rarely had specific, dedicated and well-resourced budgets in place

Who is Talking About Women?	What Are They Saying?
USAID	“A woman multiplies the impact of an investment.”
Newsweek	“Businesses are starting to understand what development experts have long known: investing in women pays dividends.”
The World Bank	“Countries that use the skills and talents of women would have advantage over those that don’t.”
Movement 360 (Brazil)	“Investing in women’s empowerment creates a virtuous circle that benefits their families and the communities where they live.”

## 2.2 TREND TWO: MAJOR 'NEW' PLAYERS: THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AND PHILANTHROPY

“Development cooperation is no longer the exclusive domain of states or international organizations. We now rely on the contributions of the private sector, foundations, academia and civil society”

Jan Eliasson, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General.<sup>17</sup>

**Private sector**\* resources have long accounted for a significant share of financial flows to developing countries, consistently higher than ODA from donor countries.<sup>18</sup> Yet, when WITM began its research in 2005, the private sector was hardly considered relevant in terms of resources for women’s rights. At that time, according to our 2006 global survey of women’s organizations, they represented less than 1% of the funding sources of survey respondents (and increased only to 2% in our 2011 survey). Seven years later, not only are numerous private sector actors speaking of “investing in women and girls”, they are partnering with development organizations, administering large development programs, talking about expanding women’s membership in their board rooms and supply chains, and having a real influence on defining funding agendas, priorities, and practices. The engagement of mainstream corporate and state-sponsored media outlets as part of this trend has also been one of the characteristics of this new moment. All of this has important repercussions for women’s rights organizations and other CSO actors as well.

By “private sector” we are referring to diverse organizations or companies that operate on a “for-profit” basis. Their growing role and influence in global development processes demands that we better understand the diversity of actors and the mechanisms of their engagement in development and their potential impacts on women’s organizations.

To speak of the private sector in monolithic terms would be misleading and simplistic, given the multitude of actors mobilizing and allocating resources toward development. They span from large transnational corporations like Exxon Mobil, Coca-Cola or Unilever, to major financial actors such as Goldman Sachs; smaller corporations working in multiple countries, national businesses like the Tatas in India, social enterprises, cooperatives, media, etc., and “professional services firms” such

\* Definitions of bold, italicized phrases can be found in the glossary of this report.

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as KPMG or PriceWaterhouseCoopers, who are increasingly contracted by large donors to manage development contracts, including grant administration and evaluation.<sup>19</sup> Spaces such as the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), where private sector actors proliferate, are increasingly setting the tone and agenda of the funding discourse on women and girls, and on broader development issues as well. At the same time, many large INGOs and bilateral development agencies are increasingly present in private sector spaces encouraging private engagement in development. One example is the 2012 Business Social Responsibility Annual Conference that included participation from Plan International, World Vision, ACDI/VOCA, Environmental Defense Fund and Women Deliver.<sup>20</sup>

While we focus in this section on the growing involvement of the private sector in development and philanthropy, it is important to note that many of these initiatives take the form of public-private partnerships, which have long been the strategy of choice. Combining public and private funding can be seen as a way to pool needed resources in tough times, when the financial health and future of states and international organizations that have historically led financing for development is increasingly fragile. However there has been little scrutiny thus far of how the private sector, driven mainly by the profit motive, is influencing development priorities and practice, and ‘delivering sustainable development results’ themselves. Nor have we entirely understood the accompanying effects on the public sector, given that decades of neoliberal economic policies and privatization of public institutions and resources - sometimes paired with protracted civil or military conflict - have significantly reduced the role of the state as the key development actor in many contexts. Additionally, there is a lack of accountability mechanisms for the actual disbursement of committed funding, implementation and results of such partnerships, which should adhere to existing international human rights agreements. This seepage of the private sector into the development terrain is possibly the next frontier, but should not confuse us into imagining that the private sector is emerging as the key investor in development. In fact, if we look at some of the largest global development funds that identify as public-private partnerships, in many cases public contributions still far outweigh those of the private sector counterparts. For example, of the more than USD 19 billion contributed to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria between 2001 and 2010, approximately 95% of this was public funding and just 5% from private or other sources.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the GAVI Alliance, a public-private partnership focused on increasing children’s access to immunization in poor countries received 24% of funding between 2000 and 2010 from private sources, while 76% was from public sources.<sup>22</sup>

If we look at some of the largest global development funds that identify as public-private partnerships, in many cases public contributions still far outweigh those of the private sector counterparts

Are these private sector actors a source of innovation and resources, or a threat to advancing women's rights? Given their diversity, we can find evidence for both possibilities. What seems clear is that with a proliferation of new and different actors funding development initiatives that target women and girls, clarity around who determines development priorities and agendas is critical. Crucial also are accountability mechanisms to ensure that those who profess to support women and girls' empowerment can account for the results of their efforts and also be accountable for their business practices, which must be in line with existing international human rights and environmental agreements.

## 2.2.1 Examples of Private Sector Investment in Women and Girls

Below we share just a few examples of the diversity of initiatives reflecting private sector interest in women and girls. Where available, we have also included critical reflections that have been raised regarding some initiatives.

### Coca-Cola + UN Women

UN Women (then-UNIFEM) and the UN Global Compact<sup>23</sup> launched the “Women’s Empowerment Principles — Equality Means Business” in March 2010. The aim of this initiative is to serve as a “roadmap for business to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community.” Coca-Cola is one of more than 400 companies to commit to the Women’s Empowerment Principles. In this context, Coca-Cola and UN Women announced a partnership in September 2011. By that time they were already collaborating “at the country level to identify potential programmes in areas such as business skills training programs for women-owned recycling cooperatives and women-run shops.” Both partners expressed that “each organization will bring their expertise and capacity to the table through concrete on-the-ground programmes”. The partnership aims to support women entrepreneurs in 12 countries: Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Haiti, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa and Thailand.<sup>24</sup>

It does not appear that the partnership includes any actual financing from Coca-Cola to UN Women, but the terms of the partnership have not been made public.

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## The Third Billion Campaign

"Prepare Women to Drive Global Economic Growth" launched by Petra Coalition\* is a campaign by a global alliance of corporations, governments, non-profit organizations, academics, foundations and individuals dedicated to helping prepare and enable one billion women to more fully participate in the global economy by 2025. The campaign's title comes from the notion that over the next decade, the impact of women will be at least as significant as that of China's and India's respective one billion plus populations. According to the campaign, the main resources needed that are preventing women to reach their full economic potential are increased access to: finance, education, markets and legal protection (better land rights/property ownership, working conditions, end violence against women). The campaign presents women as "smart economics" and a "smart investment" to bring more prosperity to the planet. Their priority issues include access to legal protection, access to finance, access to education and training, and access to markets.<sup>25</sup>

\* La Pietra Coalition: Launched in 2009 out of a gathering convened by Vital Voices Global Partnership (a non-profit organization that grew out of a US government initiative established by Hillary Clinton and Madeleine Albright) and New York University with the support of Paul E. Singer Family Foundation. It has more than 100 members from NGO leaders, scholars, international and corporate leaders.<sup>26</sup>

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## The MasterCard Foundation + the Kenyan Government

At the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative, the MasterCard Foundation launched a partnership with Equity Bank Kenya, the Equity Group Foundation and the Kenyan government, committing USD 15.5 million to support over 600,000 Kenyan women and youth, who are unemployed or not part of the banking community, to get jobs and increase productivity. The three-year program includes financial education and one-on-one mentoring and training for select "high-potential entrepreneurs". Scholarships were also to be provided for top-performing students at risk of not completing secondary school. As part of the program, Equity Bank agreed to make available up to USD 200 million in credit for the women and youth trained, with the Government of Kenya set up a fund of approximately USD 40 million "for financial institutions to engage in lending to youth".<sup>27</sup>

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**DFID**  
+  
**Nike Foundation's  
Global Girl Hub**

Established in February 2010, the Girl Hub initiative aims to “unleash the Girl Effect” by linking experts and advocates to large-scale development programs, increasing the involvement of girls in the design of policies that affect them, and pushing adolescent girls further up the development agenda. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has committed GBP 12.9 million to the Girl Hub through the 2013-14 fiscal year. Nike Foundation is providing GBP 870,000 of direct funding, with a further GBP 1.5 million of in-kind funding. “Girl Hub has focused on delivering results in Rwanda, Nigeria and Ethiopia through family planning, getting direct assets to girls, building assets for girls in humanitarian settings, and research and data disaggregation.”

The video campaign produced as part of the broader initiative called “the Girl Effect” has been widely used within DFID and elsewhere to make the case for gender equality. It has had a significant impact in shaping the discourse that many donors and development actors use now to refer to the role of girls in development. However, the campaign has been critiqued by the UK’s independent aid watchdog, the Independent Commission on Aid Impact (ICAI), which noted that the “Girl Hub could end up initiating many individual projects that do not link together to bring real, substantial change for girls”. The ICAI also cited “poor budgeting and financial monitoring, along with weak accountability mechanisms and the absence of anti-corruption and anti-bribery policies” as further concerns.<sup>28</sup>

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**Walmart's Global  
Women's Economic  
Empowerment  
Initiative**

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation launched “The Global Women’s Economic Empowerment Initiative” in 2011. The program focuses on empowering women across Walmart’s supply chain. It aims to increase women-owned businesses, to help 60,000 women in factories gain skills to be active decision-makers in job and family (there is no mention of women’s rights or well-being for women that work in factories), strengthen job training, and increase gender diversity in Walmart accounts. The initiative will allocate USD 100 million over five years to support programs in India, China, Bangladesh, Latin America and in the US.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, the Walmart Foundation launched the “Partnership for Women’s Prosperity” in the US with six US-based women’s foundations/funds, allocating USD 3.35 million in grants.<sup>30</sup> Such an effort is a good example of the tremendous complexities of these initiatives. Walmart is offering new resources for programs supporting women at a time when they are a major target of labour rights campaigns and anti-corruption initiatives in the US and around the world that are demanding fair wages, maternity leave and compliance with other basic worker rights for women and men.<sup>31</sup>



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## Goldman Sachs — 10,000 Women

Launched in 2008 as a five-year initiative, 10,000 women was created “to provide a business and management education to underserved female entrepreneurs in developing and emerging markets”. Women can receive training through the program from five weeks to six months in areas such as marketing, accounting, and writing business plans. Participants can also access “mentoring and post-graduate support by partner institutions, local businesses and the people of Goldman Sachs”. An evaluation of the program in India by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) pointed out some results that could be promising beyond just training and creating women entrepreneurs. For example, the evaluation mentions that some women in the program now “meet monthly to contribute to a different social cause with their time and money”. Other graduates expressed that the program has “...helped them better appreciate the importance of nurturing their employees. They described how they were providing employees with safety nets for support in difficult times, salary advances to pay children’s school fees or on-the-job training to increase their skills”.<sup>32</sup>

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## The Avon Foundation

Founded in 1955, the Avon Foundation initially focused on breast cancer and emergency relief, adding its “Speaking Out Against Domestic Violence” program in 2004. Since its inception, the Avon foundation raised and donated more than USD 910 million worldwide, although the majority of its grant-making is US-based.<sup>33</sup> At the 57<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) session in 2013, the Avon Foundation organized its second Avon Communications Awards: Speaking Out About Violence Against Women, recognizing five groups for their “work to bring attention to the need to end violence against women”. The five awardees are from Pakistan, Tanzania, Nepal, Peru and Ukraine.<sup>34</sup> As part of the Avon Foundation’s mission, it seeks to “co-venture” with corporate actors, meaning that co-venture partners can publicize, “*that a specific portion of its sales of certain products or services will be donated to the Avon Foundation*”. With a focus on general awareness-raising and concerned with protecting its own brand integrity, Avon explicitly refuses co-ventures with: non-fiction books, CDs or DVDs relating to domestic violence or breast cancer promoting specific attitudes, prevention methods or cures associated with these initiatives; firearms; liquor (excludes wine and beer); tobacco; partnerships with religious organizations and partnerships with political organizations, campaigns or candidates.<sup>35</sup>

## Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)

The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) has emerged as a powerful space for setting agendas around development financing and, increasingly, funding for women and girls. The CGI brings together leaders from public, private and civil society sectors, “to foster partnerships, provide strategic advice, and drive resources toward effective ideas” to address global challenges.<sup>36</sup> The CGI does this through “Commitment[s] to Action,” understood as “plan[s] for addressing a significant global challenge” that can be financial or non-monetary and generally involve cross-sector partnerships.<sup>37</sup> In total, members have made more than 2,100 commitments that “when fully funded and implemented” reach USD 69.2 billion.<sup>38</sup> A review of all commitments made at CGI since its founding in 2005 shows a total of 123 commitments for “women and girls” totalling over USD 1.6 billion.<sup>39</sup> The majority of these commitments have been made by corporate funders or in partnerships between corporate, public and/or philanthropic actors.<sup>40</sup>

## 2.3 TREND THREE: IMPACTS OF ‘CORPORATIZATION’ ON DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS AND FINANCING

### 2.3.1 Infiltration of business approaches and solutions into development and philanthropy

In AWID’s 2005 *FundHer* research report, we spoke of the increased ‘corporatization’ of the funding community as an important trend. This analysis focused on corporate management models that were filtering through donors to the non-profit sector - onerous and highly limited ‘results-based’ monitoring and evaluation systems,<sup>41</sup> and increasing specialization within the funding community on narrow solutions, to cite just two facets. While these trends are intensifying, there is actually a much broader shift underway in the way development itself is being financed – what might be called a change in emphasis from aid to investment. This shift is reflective of the growing influence of private sector paradigms (and their very diverse approaches and priorities), as well as rapidly changing notions of what development is or should be. At the one end are progressive civil society actors who argue for development cooperation that fulfills state commitments to human rights (including labour rights) and environmental standards. On the other end of the spectrum are development agencies coupled with private sector in development, in search of ‘best solutions’, which emphasize that the most effective use of ODA funds is to “spark” private

There is actually a much broader shift underway in the way development itself is being financed – what might be called a change in emphasis from aid to investment. This shift is reflective of the growing influence of private sector paradigms (and their very diverse approaches and priorities), as well as rapidly changing notions of what development is or should be

investment.<sup>42</sup> Former World Bank President, Robert Zoellick, articulated this position most succinctly: “In a world Beyond Aid, [development] assistance would be integrated with – and connected to – global growth strategies, fundamentally driven by private investment and entrepreneurship”.<sup>43</sup>

Many social movement actors and women’s rights advocates, frustrated with the trend of tying “development” so integrally to measures of economic growth and a failed neoliberal economic model, are actively debating other approaches and exploring how to construct political-economic systems that are built on principles of equity, sustainability, human rights and well-being.<sup>44</sup> The bottom line is that in order to advance sustainable development, structural transformations to the mainstream market-oriented pro-private sector model of development must be achieved. Intervention of corporate actors in development can hinder such transformations due to their self-interest in maintaining neo-liberal models. Thus, women’s rights and other social movements’ agendas to engage and influence these actors cannot mean that we leave aside the need to continue working for such structural transformations.

While numerous factors are contributing to the growing focus on “investment” approaches to development, it is clear that the growing voice of private sector actors, particularly corporations, is a driving force. The evolution of thinking around “corporate social responsibility” (CSR) has been highly influential in framing the role of the private sector in development. Initially the ‘charity’ or ‘philanthropy’ arm of private companies, a more recent trend in CSR is the notion of “shared value creation,” recognizing the interdependence between business and society and aiming to create value for both.<sup>45</sup> The global financial crisis seems to have also driven more companies to seek new markets and sectors, often resulting in their entry into arenas earlier occupied solely by mainstream development actors such as governments and NGOs. “Market-Based Solutions”<sup>46</sup> in countries like Ghana (Voltic Cool Pac’s water supplies to low income customers), or Uganda (Afro-Kai’s agricultural trading and possessing offered to farmers) are examples of such expansions by companies.<sup>47</sup> The drive to reach “untapped markets” is not necessarily suspect. These initiatives have frequently resulted in expanding and improving services for rural populations, broadening the reach and accessibility of technologies, and increasing access to goods and credit. Yet questions persist as to how the profit motive will play out in relation to internationally agreed development goals, environmental and human rights standards and in the longer term sustainability of some of these gains.


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Alongside the rising influence of the private sector is the declining credibility of civil society actors in many areas. Scandals relating to major non-profit organizations (for example, the Red Cross)<sup>48</sup> and micro-credit institutions (such as in India in the recent past) have exacerbated critiques of the NGO sector as inefficient and wasteful, reinforcing calls to apply 'private sector efficiency standards' to development and humanitarian programs. These responses are based on un-examined assumptions that market and business models are more efficient, effective and appropriate – or, indeed, more honest and transparent - for delivering development. A recent paper describes the influence of “New Public Management” (NPM) approaches to development, starting in the late 1970s. This school of thought sought to apply private sector practices — such as linking resource allocation to performance or results measures, competition, frugal use of resources, etc. — in the public and non-profit sectors. The prevalence of accounting or “professional services” companies (such as Price Waterhouse or KPMG) in development, and the corporatization of donor practice today - where defined, measurable results are the priority, often at the expense of flexible, more complex approaches that respond to contextual realities and shifts - is part of the legacy of NPM. The role of these firms has evolved from auditing corporate accounts to applying similar auditing mechanisms to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of development projects<sup>49</sup> and doing actual management of such projects as well.

### **2.3.2 The “Investing in Women and Girls” trend**

This narrow and linear “cause-effect” logic and focus on returns on investment is clearly visible in many “investing in women and girls” initiatives that display a limited or instrumental understanding of what leads to women’s economic empowerment and political participation. Our analysis of the messaging about women and girls shows conflicting tendencies: on one side women are portrayed as victims - of violence, poverty, conflict, trafficking; and on the other, they are strong and heroic, endowed with a superior capacity to transform their communities, societies, and the world at large. This is an important feature of the “investing in women and girls” discourse, which is largely focused on individuals, and the change individual women or girls can make in their schools or communities; the promise is that individual women entrepreneurs can help reinvigorate entire economies. These individuals are worthy of investment to the extent that they deliver benefits to their families, communities and society at large. The concept of women’s rights is largely missing, as is the ethical imperative of ensuring women’s human rights, and the obligation of both state and non-state actors to protect and promote these rights.




So what does “investing in women and girls ” actually mean to the diverse range of actors and interests arrayed behind this broad agenda? AWID, Mama Cash and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs are collaborating in an effort to map and analyze some of the new initiatives adopting this framework, to better understand how non-traditional development actors are supporting work related to women and girls. The final results of this mapping will be available soon, but our initial analysis suggests that the mechanisms they use to engage in projects related to development or women’s empowerment are as diverse as the sector. They include funding for existing projects or organizations, but more frequently seem to comprise a combination of training and technical assistance (leadership development, business education, facilitating access to technology, etc.), funding and launching their own initiatives, or in-kind support through partnership with a development organization.<sup>50</sup>

How should women’s rights organizations view this trend? At one level, it is difficult to argue against a new infusion of resources for women’s empowerment, given widespread cuts in budgets for public services, and the limited reach of poorly-resourced women’s organizations. Many of the interventions promoted by private sector actors and other donors who are ‘newer’ to working with women and girls are unquestionably delivering real, concrete, short-term benefits for individual women. Scholarships, access to health services, training, access to small loans— all of these have positive impacts in women’s lives. What is crucial, though, is that they begin to look at their interventions through the lens of human rights, women’s rights, and most importantly, what women’s rights organizations have learnt about the structural roots of gender power that continue to subordinate, marginalize, or exclude women and girls. They must begin to embrace an analysis of the deeply embedded socio-cultural factors that shape norms and expectations of women and girls, and how these limit their ability to use and benefit from the training or resources provided by such projects in the longer run. Interventions designed without an appreciation or understanding of what has been learnt in the struggle for gender equality over the past century are likely to find that hoped-for gains don’t materialize as quickly as hoped, or do not translate into sustainable empowerment. Without this process of learning – which requires a considerable degree of humility and respect for those who have been advancing this work, in many cases through sustained struggles for much longer - there is a real risk that “investing in women and girls” will soon be deemed a “failed strategy” and consigned to history.

### 2.3.3 Growing power to shape development agendas

Beyond individual projects, it is particularly important to unpack how the power of private sector actors — expressed directly through resources or through their influence on discourse — shapes development agendas and priorities. One example of the power of ‘emerging’ donors to shape the agenda for women and girls is “The Girl Effect”, championed by the Nike Foundation since its founding in 2004, in collaboration with the NoVo Foundation, United Nations Foundation and Coalition for Adolescent Girls. Nike has led the way in framing the potential of girls as a force for reducing poverty: “This isn’t a social issue. It’s smart economics.”<sup>51</sup> The Nike Foundation prioritizes four areas: ending child marriage; delaying sexual activity and preventing pregnancy; completion of secondary education and transition to employment; and access to economic assets. Helped by an attractive video and powerful if simplistic messages, “The Girl Effect” has captured the imagination of diverse institutions and resonates with thousands of individuals who find the straightforward narrative appealing—girls as the saviours, the solution to problems in the world. The video presents the idea that if you give a girl education and resources to become a small entrepreneur, she will transform her family and community along the way. It is an uplifting and hopeful message, but a very troubling one for anyone who has worked in real communities with real girls living in poverty, who know the answer is much more complex. Many women’s rights advocates have been particularly frustrated by its focus on the individual girl, using her as an instrument to achieve the ‘greater good’, and thus inadvertently questioning the value of movement-building and collective approaches to change that have proved far more sustainable and transformative of social norms in many contexts. AID Watch, for instance, argues that the girl effect plays into stereotypes of women as natural caregivers and reinforces perceptions of “women’s work” and “men’s work,” neglects crucial macroeconomic issues, and prioritizes the wellbeing of the economy over the wellbeing of women.<sup>52</sup> And yet, with the tremendous momentum and resources that the girl effect initiative has generated, many international NGOs and some women’s organizations have become partners, hopefully with options to continue expanding and nuancing the ways in which girls are integrated into the development agenda.



While more detailed analysis is needed, there are worrying examples of the way recent initiatives focused on women and girls have reduced women’s rights agendas—as reflected in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Cairo Program of Action on Population and Development, and other internationally-agreed development goals—to a “lowest common denominator” level, in order to appeal to potential funders or reach out to the broader public. Economic empowerment, for example, is reduced to support for small entrepreneurs or micro-credit activities; the barriers to equal rights and access to education for girls is sidestepped through a focus on scholarships; and trafficking of women is conflated with sex trafficking and sex work, without a comprehensive view of poverty- or conflict-induced migration and trafficking practices linked to agricultural, domestic, care-giving and other work.

One recent example of the growing power of private sector donors, and also of such a narrowed agenda, is the London Summit on Family Planning, convened in July 2012 by the UK government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with the United Nations Population Fund. The clout and convening power of the organizers reportedly resulted in new financial commitments of USD 2.6 billion to support women’s access to contraceptive information, services and supplies.<sup>53</sup> Critics have noted, however, that this well-resourced initiative effectively addresses only a very narrow slice—lack of contraception—of the very complex issue of family planning, to say nothing of the more comprehensive range of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The reluctance of some donors to engage in ‘controversial’ discussions on other key dimensions of this agenda, such as access to safe abortion, does not bode well for advancing the full array of women’s sexual and reproductive rights.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, the Family Planning 2020 initiative has emerged from the London Summit, in order to “sustain the momentum from London and ensure all partners are working together to achieve and support the goals and commitments announced at the Summit”.<sup>55</sup> In response, concrete commitments have been made to the initiative by developing country governments, donor governments and private foundations, civil society organizations, the private sector and UN organizations and multilaterals. Several women’s rights organizations also participated in the Summit and some have continued to be involved in Family Planning 2020 because they recognize and have been working to influence the potential impact of such a major investment of resources in the field of sexual and reproductive health. It will be important to reflect on and learn from this experience as it advances, as well as monitor the actual delivery of donor commitments and their impact.

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- <sup>22</sup> Gavi Alliance. n.d. Web. 8 April 2013. <http://www.gavialliance.org>.
- <sup>23</sup> The UN Global Compact is a sort of voluntary corporate social responsibility initiative launched by the UN in 2003. It comprises businesses/corporations that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/index.html>) in the areas of human rights (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/humanRights.html>), labour (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/labour.html>), environment (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/environment.html>) and anti-corruption (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/anti-corruption.html>). The idea is to encourage businesses to operate in ways that respect these internationally agreed norms and rights, that benefiteconomies and societies and do not damage the environment. Over 10,000 companies from about 130 countries have signed the Global Compact so far.
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# 3: Who is Funding Women's Organizing?

## A look at the Diverse Players and Their Approaches

In chapter two of this report, we named some of the key trends impacting on the funding landscape for women's organizations, looking at some of the more traditional, or well-known, funding sectors and the modalities of their support for women's organizing and gender equality. Building on the history of AWID's FundHer reports, we offer a brief overview of some of the recent contextual forces and dynamics impacting five different funding sectors: Bilateral and Multilateral agencies, International NGOs, Private Foundations, Women's Funds, and Individual philanthropy.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of each sector, but rather some key highlights and illustrative examples of what we think women's organizations should know - particularly in light of the trends and shifts discussed in the previous chapter.

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### 3.1 TRENDS IN BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL AGENCIES

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*Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* was the theme under review at the 56th session of the CSW in 2012, with the objective of assessing progress made against conclusions agreed to at CSW 2008, which had the same theme. These earlier recommendations included the need to significantly increase financing for women's rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment, through ODA, national government resources and other types of donor support. In spite of some important advances (for example the continuation of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, the creation of the UN Fund for Gender Equality and some specific bilateral funding mechanisms such as the Dutch MDG3 and FLOW Funds), the 2012 review found that little actual progress has been made in increasing funding for women's organizations and gender equality.<sup>56</sup> In fact, AWID's surveys show that women's organizations reported only a small increase in the share of their income from bilateral and multilateral agencies: from 23% of reported income in 2005 to 27% in 2010, or a mere 4%.


### 3.1.1 The state of official development assistance (ODA)

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) brings together 24 donor governments and the European Union (EU) as members. Among other activities, the DAC monitors and produces statistics on aid flows, including ODA from their members. "ODA flows comprise contributions of donor government agencies, at all levels, to developing countries ('bilateral ODA') and to multilateral institutions".<sup>57</sup> These resources may reach women's organizations directly, but more often reach them very indirectly, channelled through multilateral agencies and special funds, through international NGOs or through sub-contracts and grants from recipient-country governments. Considering that ODA is the primary source of public funding for development for many countries, it is vital for women's organizations to monitor and have a say in its use, even as ODA continues to be dwarfed by private financial flows.

Thanks to strong leadership from the OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (known as GENDERNET), there has been a significant increase in the scope of data available on ODA for gender equality and gender equality institutions. GENDERNET produces annual reports on "Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment" with general analysis as well as detailed data available for each OECD-DAC member. This data is a crucial tool for on-going monitoring, accountability and engagement with bilateral donors.

While many of the overall trends related to ODA are discouraging, there are important signs of hope for women's organizations, both in terms of significant increases in the level of ODA reaching these organizations and with continued support for women's rights and empowerment by key donor allies, despite tough economic times.


**Feeling the squeeze of recession:** Although 2010 saw ODA reach its highest-ever level at .32% of GNI or USD 128.7 billion, by 2011 that upward trend came to an end. Largely due to economic recession in donor countries, ODA as a share of GNI fell to .31% or USD 133.5 billion. The OECD anticipates stagnation in aid flows in the coming years as impacts of recession continue to be felt.<sup>58</sup> Smaller aid flows also contribute to decreases in the number of countries receiving aid – evident, for instance, as a result of aid cuts made by Spain<sup>59</sup> and the UK<sup>60</sup>, among others. The rationale for such cuts often relates to enhancing the effectiveness of aid through sharpening focus, but it has created serious problems for women's organizations in countries that donors are leaving.



Of the countries that have historically been strong supporters of women’s rights and women’s organizations, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark remain among the few donors that have actually *surpassed* the established aid target of 0.7% of GNI of donor countries.<sup>61</sup> The Netherlands, once a solid member of this group, dropped out in 2012 when its government made drastic cuts made to the development aid budget. In 2013, the UK is projected to be the first member of the Group of 8 (G8) to reach the 0.7% target.<sup>62</sup>


In many donor countries the impacts of the financial crisis on development cooperation are being compounded by other emerging issues. These include the growing popularity of conservative political forces, committed to shrinking or eliminating international aid, manipulating and amplifying the insecurities and anxieties of their citizens, and growing cynicism about aid effectiveness. This trend is visible in Sweden, Spain, Canada, and the Netherlands. In the face of growing public antipathy and insularity, even well-intentioned donor governments are having a much harder time defending aid budgets. In the Netherlands, for example, a 2012 poll reflected that 80% of the public supported decreasing development aid<sup>63</sup> - a tide that actually translated, recently, into the Dutch international assistance budget being cut by EUR 1 billion, or close to 20% of the total 2013 Dutch aid budget.<sup>64</sup> In the US—important because it is the top donor in total dollars, though not as a percentage of GNI—a public opinion poll cited foreign aid as the top government expense that should be cut.<sup>65</sup> It remains to be seen what the real impact of the so-called US “budget sequester” will be on its ODA. In Spain—among the top supporters of “women’s equality organizations and institutions”<sup>66</sup>—following the recent transition to a conservative government, and the economic adjustments made in response to the fiscal crisis, the Foreign Affairs Ministry’s allocation for development cooperation in 2013 represents a 23.4% decrease from their 2012 outlay.<sup>67</sup>

Canada has been a major supporter of women’s rights, dedicating an unusually high proportion of its aid - e.g. 43% of all screened aid for 2010-2011 – to gender equality, which it categorized as a “principal objective”.<sup>68</sup> But the influence of the recently elected conservative government is already evident: the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.<sup>69</sup> While the Canadian government claims to remain committed to its development priorities, critics argue that this merger is part of a conservative strategy to align development aid with Canada’s trade agenda. No doubt many other donor countries will be watching this experience and considering the potential of such a merger in their own context.



**Gender mainstreaming approaches continue to predominate ODA for gender equality:** According to the latest analysis from OECD-DAC, over USD 63 billion, or 69% of the total sector allocable aid in 2010-2011 was screened using its Gender Equality Policy Marker.<sup>70</sup> This represents close to double the volume of aid screened in the 2006-2007 period and includes reports from donors that previously had not used the marker. (France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and the United States).<sup>71</sup> Of the total screened aid, USD 20.5 billion (or 32%), marked gender equality as a principal or significant objective. Of that USD 20.5 billion, just USD 3.2 billion (16%) of this aid went to gender equality and women’s empowerment projects as a “principal” - or primary – objective.<sup>72</sup> The remainder went to projects that have gender equality as a significant objective – in other words, to initiatives with a gender mainstreaming approach.

This is problematic, because numerous studies have shown that gender mainstreaming has very mixed results in terms of its effectiveness and does not always result in empowering women. As the *Gender & Development Journal’s* Beyond Gender Mainstreaming Learning Project revealed, this is in part because of resources: lack of specific budget lines for gender mainstreaming makes real investments in this area difficult to identify, and in some cases, the focus on gender mainstreaming has been used as an argument to reduce stand-alone women’s rights programming, leading to an overall reduction of resources for women’s rights. Lack of political will to prioritize mainstreaming, as well as small, ill-positioned and disempowered mainstreaming teams within organizational power-structures have also challenged the effective advancement of gender mainstreaming. Actual impact has been difficult to identify, while the *practice* of mainstreaming itself has varied enormously across diverse institutions.<sup>73</sup> One reflection within UN agencies is that these large bureaucratic organizational cultures have tended to reduce mainstreaming to technical planning and “bean-counting” procedures, without the more dynamic, interactive and responsive approach that was originally envisioned for this strategy.<sup>74</sup>



**ODA to women’s organizations and institutions is on the rise since 2008, though still small:** The OECD-DAC tracks ODA specifically dedicated to women’s equality organizations and institutions (which include both non-governmental and governmental organizations, such as national women’s machineries).<sup>75</sup> While there has been close to a 20% decrease in resources committed to all women’s organizations and institutions since 2008, from USD 515 million to USD 406 million in 2011, there has actually been a significant *increase* in the resources committed to *non-governmental* women’s equality organizations. The share of these resources reaching civil society women’s organizations has more than doubled from close to 25% in 2008 to over 64% in 2011. In dollar terms, that has meant an increase from USD 130 million in 2008 to USD 263 million in 2011. Although this is a positive sign, clearly, the number of women’s rights organizations that can actually apply and have access to these kind of resources is limited, given the significant institutional requirements these donors demand, and the size of grants normally provided.

Based on the available data, only the US has shown a substantial decline in funding to non-governmental women’s organizations in 2011. The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK register significant increases from 2008 to 2011.<sup>76</sup> Interestingly, AWID’s 2011 global survey shows that the European Union/Commission, USAID, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and CIDA were the most frequently named sources of support by our respondents.

## European Union Support for Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Gender equality and women's rights are recognized in several official policy documents of the European Union as well as in documents specific to gender equality issues.<sup>77</sup> European women's rights organizations and NGO platforms have been advocating for greater accountability and demanding that the EU increase its internal and external funding to women's rights and gender equality.<sup>78</sup> They say that overall (internal and external) funding to promote gender equality has actually decreased since the 2000-2006 financial period and that for 2007-2013, only 0.37% (EUR 3.56 million of EUR 975 billion) of the EU budget has been dedicated to "budget lines and spending categories earmarked for promoting women's rights and gender equality."<sup>79</sup>

Between 2007 and 2013, EU development cooperation actions around gender equality have been funded through geographical instruments at national and regional levels and through thematic instruments such as "Investing in People" and the Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.<sup>80</sup> Of these, "Investing in People" is the only instrument that explicitly earmarks funding to gender equality in EU external relations, with EUR 57 million representing 5% of the total budget for this program. The instrument's mid-term review acknowledged this insufficient funding and suggested an increase of EUR 10 million for 2011-2013. The same review expressed that funding targeted to women's rights appears limited because women's rights are considered a cross-cutting issue in all areas of intervention. For the Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, just EUR 18.7 million has been specifically allocated for gender equality and women's rights.<sup>81</sup>

In addition to advocating for more funding directed to actions that promote women's rights and gender equality in the next multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for 2014-2020, these organizations and networks pointed out the need for the EU to recognize the importance and value of financially supporting civil society organizations, and particularly women's rights organizations. Women's rights organizations and networks also pushed for greater accessibility in the funding application process for these resources.

So, what has happened with the new MFF for the period of 2014 to 2020? The external financing instruments reflected there "mostly rely on gender mainstreaming and fail to define clear financial allocations for reaching the gender equality targets."<sup>82</sup> The lack of a systematic tracking system for monitoring and evaluating data about EU external actions in support to gender equality objectives "(both in terms of funding as well as of impact and effectiveness) represents a further obstacle in assessing the gender impact of MFF and related instruments."<sup>83</sup>

### 3.1.2 Mixed picture from the champions in bilateral funding for women's rights

Figure 1



**Sweden:** In 2010, SIDA disbursed USD 4.12 billion in ODA, of which USD 315 million were allocated to the Democracy, Human Rights and Gender Equality sector—5% of which (USD 15.75 million) went to women's equality institutions and organizations.<sup>84</sup> SIDA committed to maintaining or increasing aid in future years through its Global Gender Equality Program. Sweden was the only DAC donor to announce a rise in their aid budget for 2013, which is expected to reach USD 5.8 billion.<sup>85</sup>



**Norway, Sweden, and Denmark** remain among the few donors that have actually surpassed the established aid target of 0.7% of GNI of donor countries.



**The Netherlands:** Since 2008, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has launched three major funds dedicated to supporting women's rights and gender equality and with a special focus on supporting women's organizations:

- i. Between 2008-2011, the MDG3 Fund made a historic investment of EUR 82 million to support 45 projects (34 of which were implemented by women's organizations, networks or funds).
- ii. Funding Leadership Opportunities for Women (FLOW), launched in May 2011, with EUR 70 million to support work between 2012-2015 on women's security, political participation and economic empowerment. A full 23 of the 30 successful applicants to FLOW are women's organizations, networks or funds.
- iii. In August 2012, the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Fund was established with EUR 125 million available for 2013-2015 to support initiatives that are aimed to make cost-effective, life-saving interventions and to improve sexual and reproductive health and rights.<sup>87</sup>



In 2013, the **UK** is projected to be the first member of the Group of 8 (G8) to reach the 0.7% target.

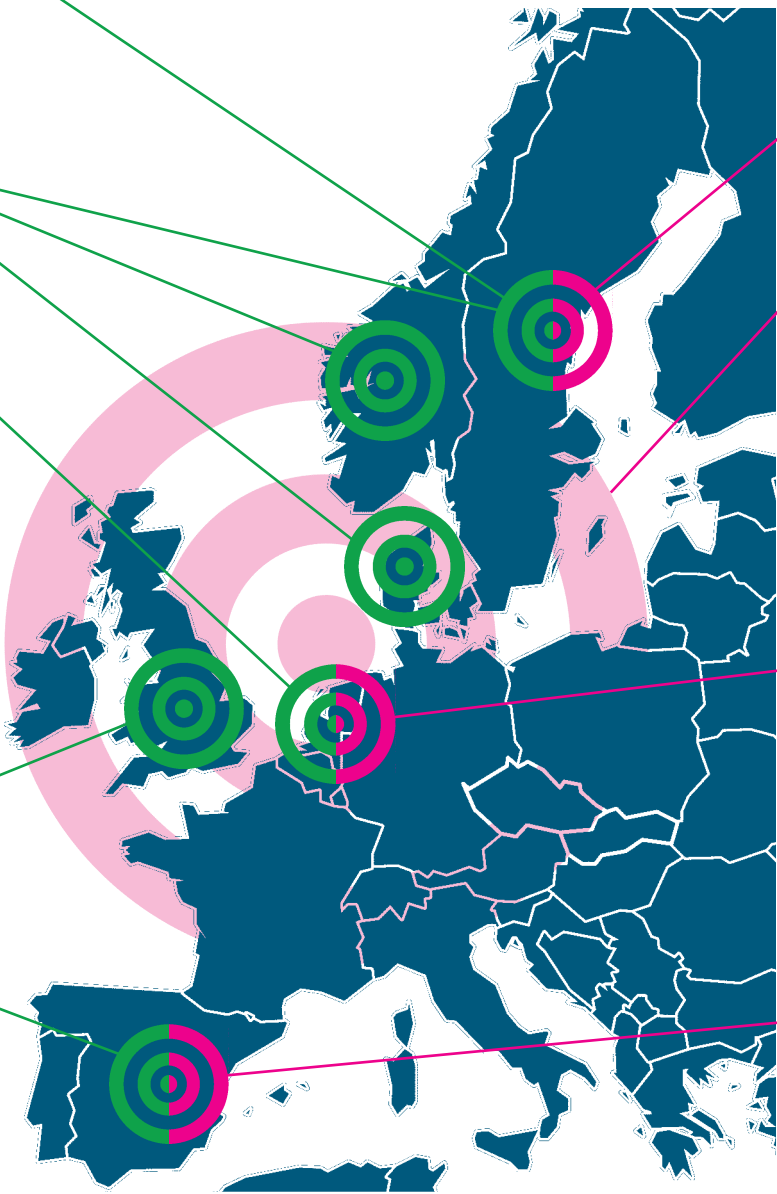


**Spain:** although the current economic situation has translated into a significant decrease in ODA, it is important to acknowledge the contribution that Spain has made to support gender equality and women's organizations. Before the change of government, not only did they provide major support for the UN Fund for Gender Equality (USD 65 million), but in 2010 they were the top bilateral donor to women's equality organizations and institutions, and in 2011, they gave the second-highest level of resources to that sector among all OECD members.<sup>86</sup>





The **Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden** and the **UK** register significant increases from 2008 to 2011. Interestingly, AWID's 2011 global survey shows that the European Union/Commission, USAID, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and CIDA were the most frequently named sources of support by our respondents.



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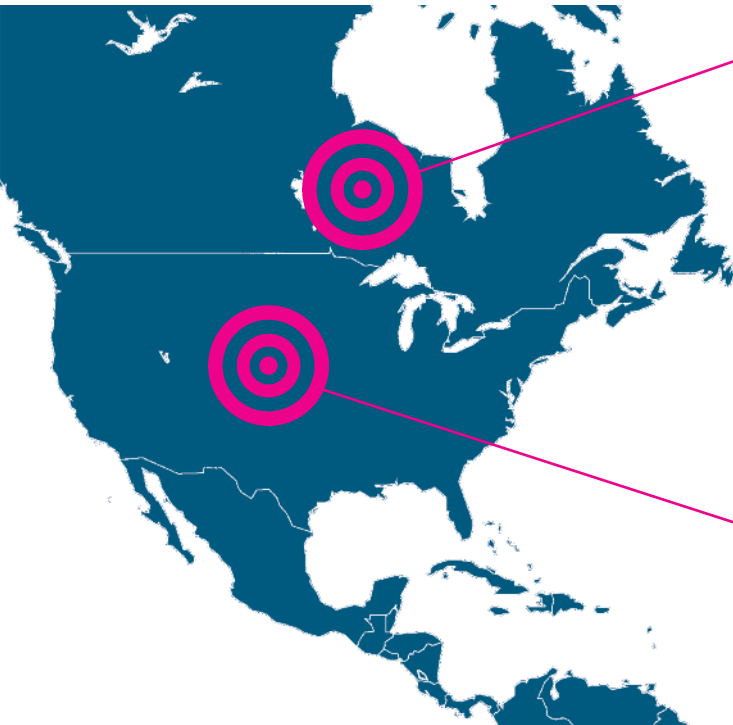
**Sweden, Spain, Canada,** and the **Netherlands.**

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In the **Netherlands**, for example, a 2012 poll reflected that 80% of the public supported decreasing development aid - a tide that actually translated, recently, into the Dutch international assistance budget being cut by EUR 1 billion, or close to 20% of the total 2013 Dutch aid budget.

**Spain:** among the top supporters of "women's equality organizations and institutions" in 2013 represents a 23.4% decrease from their 2012 outlay.

Figure 1 Continued



**Canada** has been a major supporter of women's rights, dedicating an unusually high proportion of its aid - e.g. 43% of all screened aid for 2010-2011 - to gender equality, which it categorized as a "principal objective."


But the influence of the recently elected conservative government is already evident: the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade OECD DAC.

Based on the available data, only the **US** has shown a substantial decline in funding to non-governmental women's organizations in 2011.

Women's organizations report small increase in income from bilateral and multilateral agencies: from 23% in 2005 to 27% in 2010, or a mere 4%.

Over USD 63 billion, or 69% of the total sector allocable aid in 2010-2011 was screened using its Gender Equality Policy Marker.

Although 2010 saw ODA reach its highest-ever level at .32% of GNI or USD 128.7 billion, by 2011 that upward trend came to an end. Largely due to economic recession in donor countries, ODA as a share of GNI fell to .31% or USD 133.5 billion.



There have also been interesting shifts among other bilateral agencies not commonly identified among the top supporters of women's rights. For example, despite the downward trend mentioned above in terms of its funding for women's equality organizations, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched a new "Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment" in March 2012.<sup>88</sup> Though it is unclear what impact the policy will have on resources, women's rights advocates inside the agency believe it holds important potential, particularly considering that it is the first such policy in 30 years.<sup>89</sup> Australia is becoming increasingly visible as a supporter of gender equality, with the Agency for International Development (AusAID) increasing its aid budget substantially<sup>90</sup> and putting a new gender strategy in place as of 2011 setting out four key pillars: access to health and education; women's voice in decision-making, leadership and peace-building; economic empowerment and livelihood security; and ending violence against women and girls.<sup>91</sup>

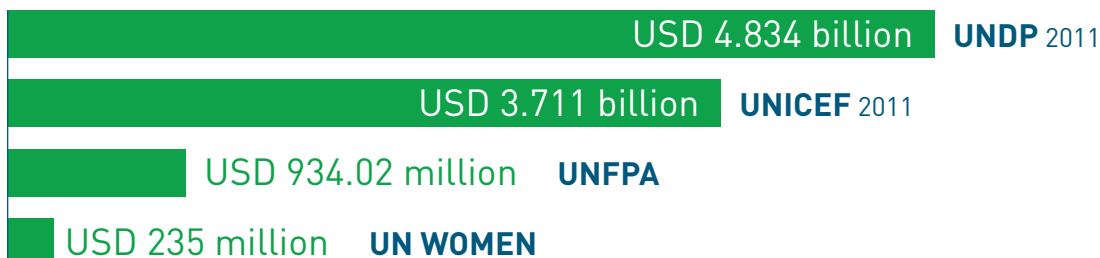
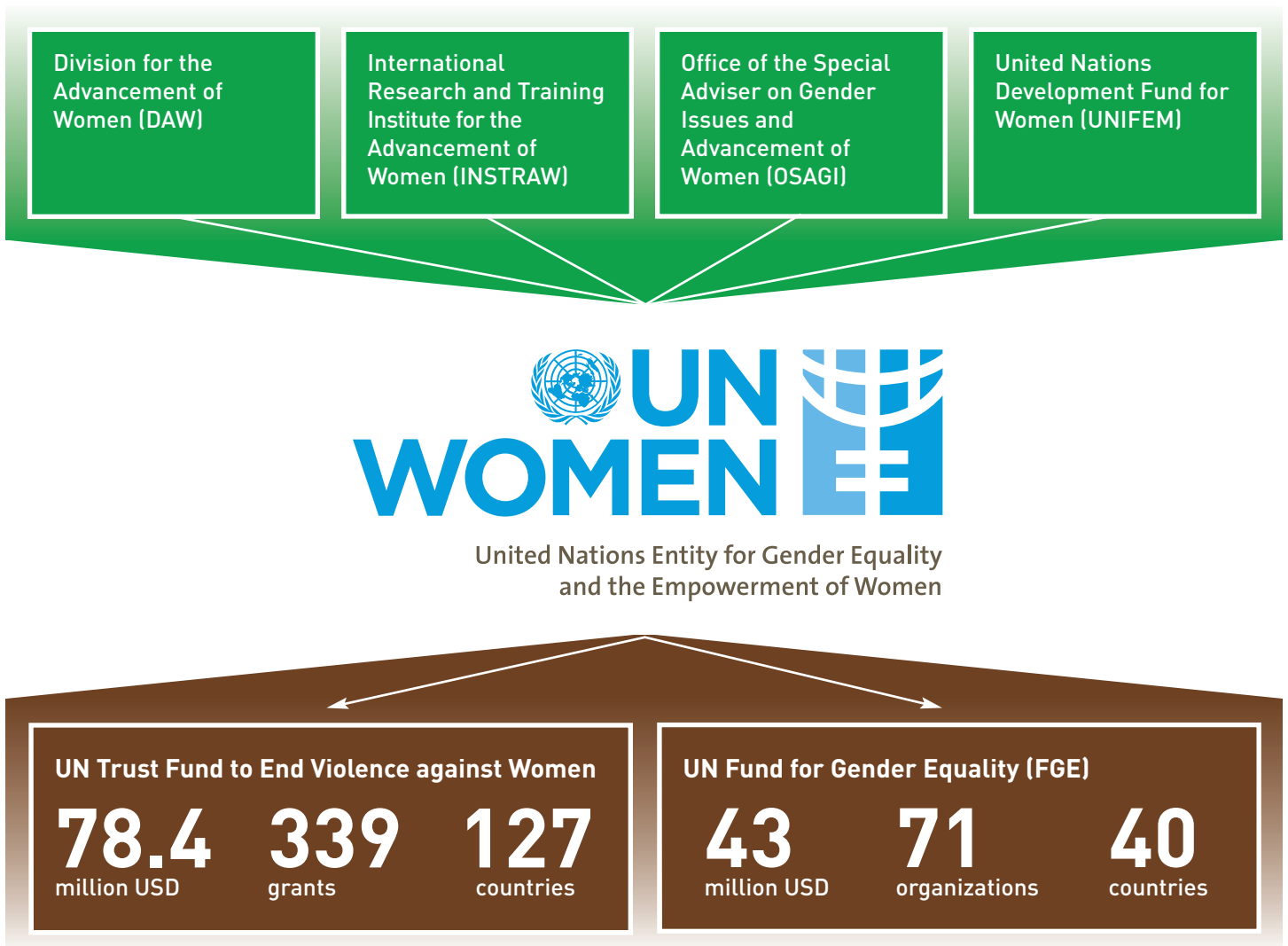
In March 2011 the UK DFID committed to "putting girls and women at the heart of our development assistance," with a strategy including four components: delaying first pregnancy and supporting first childbirth; promoting economic empowerment of girls and women; getting girls through primary and secondary school; and preventing violence against girls and women.<sup>92</sup> While an explicit focus on women and girls is important, DFID support to civil society women's organizations was just USD 7.6 million in 2012, according to the OECD-DAC data. This represents an important increase, considering that it was under USD 1 million in 2008, but is still less than one-fourth the level of support from women's rights champions such as Norway or Sweden. The fact that the UK seems to be clearly working to position itself as a major global leader in international development debates (particularly on the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda), including a commitment to increase spending on development to 0.7% of its GNI by 2013, means it will be an important actor for women's rights advocates to monitor and engage.<sup>93</sup> As mentioned earlier, DFID is also playing a strong role in supporting public-private partnerships, such as the Family Planning 2020 initiative. In the context of this initiative, the UK committed USD 800 million over eight years to enable an additional USD 120 million women and girls in the world's poorest countries to use modern methods of family planning by 2020.<sup>94</sup> Recently, DFID also announced GBP 25 million for a new Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund over five years.<sup>95</sup>


### 3.1.3 Multilateral funds supporting women's organizations

The 2010 creation of UN Women marked an important advance and achievement for women's rights advocates in the UN system. UN Women brings together four related agencies under a single banner and elevates the status of gender equality and women's rights within the UN architecture. UN Women, however, has also suffered a resource crunch. While its initial annual operating budget was estimated at USD 500 million, 2011 contributions to UN Women totalled just USD 235 million, an increase over 2010, but still leaving a significant gap.<sup>96</sup> Clearly governments have not fulfilled their commitments to the new entity, which set a target of mobilizing USD 700 million for its 2012-2013 budget. But what is most telling is that UN Women, with a mandate of advancing equality and rights for half the world's population, has an income budget that is not even a quarter of its counterparts – such as, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).<sup>97</sup>

UN Women manages two important multilateral funds: the Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Fund for Gender Equality. Both funds have implemented impact assessments showing important results. The Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) commenced operations in 2009 under UNIFEM, with the Spanish government's start-up contribution of USD 65 million to support women in achieving political and economic empowerment. Other governments have made smaller contributions to this fund, such as Mexico, Norway, the Netherlands, and more recently Switzerland and Germany.<sup>98</sup> The FGE awards multi-year grants to NGOs and for partnerships between governmental and nongovernmental organizations, with two broad areas of focus: women's economic and political empowerment. The FGE has supported programs linked to rural women, decent work and social protection, promoting entrepreneurship, expanding and strengthening women's leadership, and catalyzing legislative and policy change.

Figure 2 – Story of UN WOMEN





Since its launch, the FGE has awarded over USD 43 million in 40 countries across all regions, to 71 different grantee organizations. Of those 71, 56 are women's organizations, which received over USD 32 million or 75% of the total resources allocated by FGE. This is a tremendously important investment in and affirmation of the work of women's organizations. Officials at the FGE say they were primarily focused on supporting national women's organizations, in an effort to complement the strategy of the Dutch MDG3 Fund, which covered more international women's organizations and women's funds.<sup>99</sup> Given the high demand that the FGE received (they could only fund 1.25% of the proposals received), the fund made a further decision to limit its applicant base in line with its focus on national and local support to "government and women's local, national or regional NGOs, excluding international NGOs".<sup>100</sup>

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women continues to be an important source of funding for innovative projects combating violence against women around the world. Since it began operations in 1997, the UN Trust Fund has delivered over USD 78.4 million through 339 grants in over 127 countries and territories. While the majority of grantees are NGOs, grants are also awarded to governments and UN Country Teams. Funding in recent years has decreased since peaking in 2008 when USD 21 million was granted. In 2011, the Trust Fund awarded USD 17.1 million to 26 initiatives in 33 countries and territories.<sup>101</sup>

### 3.1.4 Shifting geopolitics and new actors in development cooperation

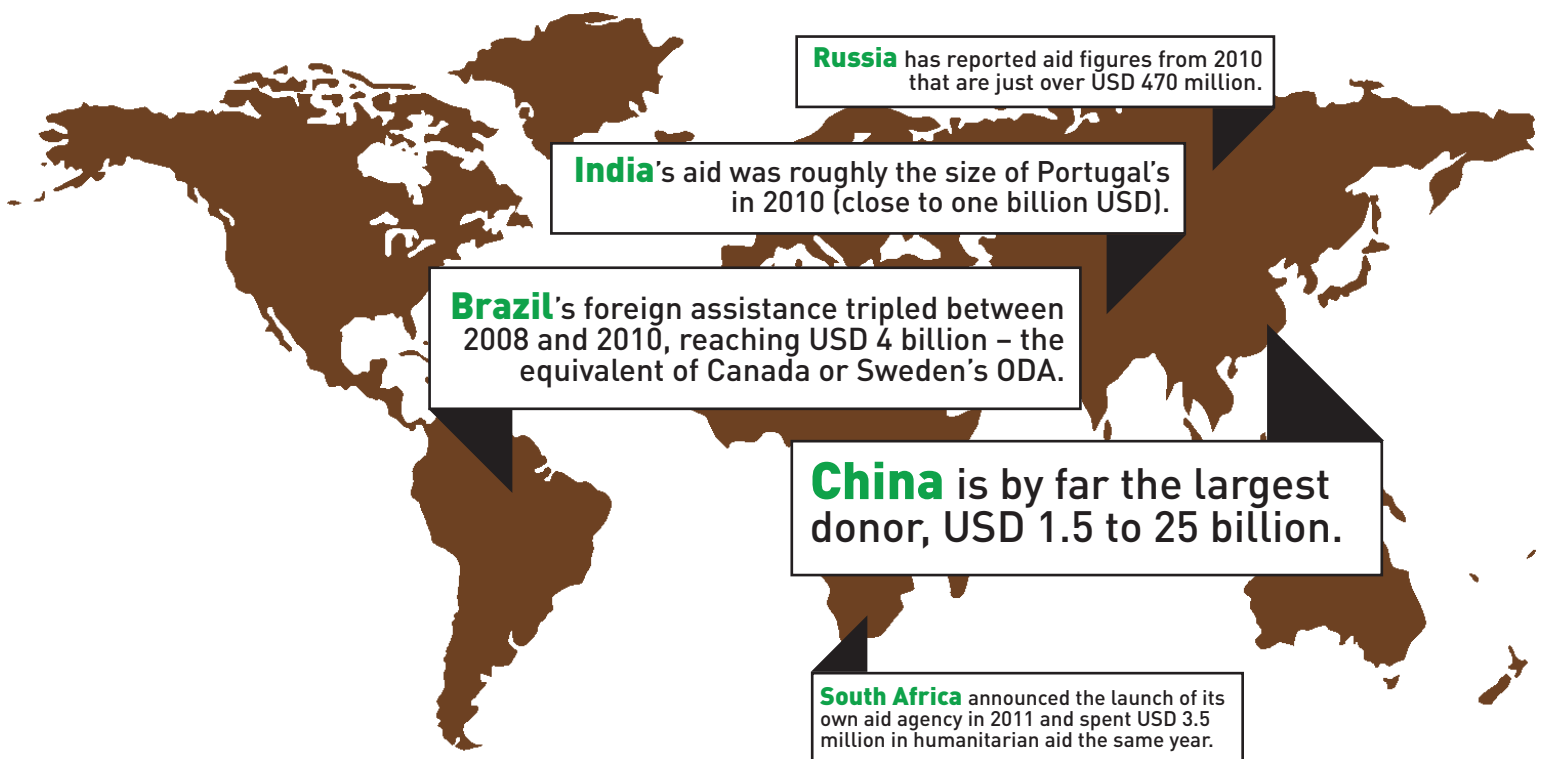
The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4), hosted in Busan, South Korea, at the end of 2011, marked a sort of ‘end of an era’ in development cooperation with the establishment of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The Global Partnership is the new framework through which relevant development actors can coordinate. Intending to shift “the focus from a technical aid effectiveness approach towards a development effectiveness one, which is more inclusive, more political and focused on results as rights-based development outcomes rather than aid delivery... a new global governance framework will move the development agenda towards a broader and inclusive framework, involving not only OECD-DAC members, but also the United Nations, South-South Cooperation actors, parliamentarians and local authorities, civil society and the private sector.”<sup>102</sup> This broadened recognition of the scope of actors involved in development cooperation was considered an important advance at HLF-4, however, CSOs are concerned that out of the Global Partnership’s 18-member Steering Committee, only one position is allocated for civil society. It remains to be seen what the real possibilities are and whether the Global Partnership will lead to improved approaches to development cooperation.

There is a growing diversity of states and actors, particularly from emerging economies, asserting their influence in economic and development debates. HLF-4 was just one example of many recent international gatherings where shifting geopolitics have been evident. Strong roles are being played by a variety of countries, many of which are also now acting as donors themselves: Brazil, India, China, Russia, South Africa, Venezuela, South Korea, and Turkey, to name some of the most prominent. Indeed, ‘emerging’ economies could soon exceed the total wealth production of today’s richest countries, although they have experienced a significant slowdown in their growth linked to deepening recession in Europe and the slow recovery of the US economy.<sup>103</sup> These countries often provide aid through regional development funds that mix aid with “trade, loans, technology sharing and direct investments that promote economic growth... Countries of the South provide grant aid on a smaller scale than traditional donors do but also give other forms of assistance, often without explicit conditions on economic policy or approaches to governance.”<sup>104</sup>

While there is much interest in understanding the possibilities of greater South – South cooperation, it is important to nuance that ‘emerging economies’ are not a unified political group. They come with diverse and often conflicting sets of values and governing systems, and in some cases, they have ended up replicating similar cooperation policies implemented by traditional donor countries, where aid is closely tied to investment, trade and other economic interests of the donor.

### Figure 3 – Development Aid From Emerging Donors

According to the OECD, “non-DAC donors disbursed USD 7.2 billion in development assistance to developing economies in 2010”








Available statistics on development aid from emerging donors are limited. According to the OECD, “non-DAC donors disbursed USD 7.2 billion in development assistance to developing economies in 2010.”<sup>105</sup> **China** is by far the largest donor, with aid estimates running from USD 1.5 to 25 billion.<sup>106</sup> “China has complemented its investment flows and trade arrangements with finance and technical assistance for building hard infrastructure.”<sup>107</sup> **India’s** aid was roughly the size of Portugal’s in 2010 (close to one billion USD), and mainly concentrated in South Asia, with a strong focus on humanitarian aid and disaster response.<sup>108</sup> India has also provided significant lines of credit to Sub-Saharan African countries.”<sup>109</sup> **Russia** has reported aid figures from 2010 that are just over USD 470 million. **Brazil’s** foreign assistance is primarily focused on social issues in Lusophone Africa and Latin American countries.<sup>110</sup> Their aid tripled between 2008 and 2010, reaching USD 4 billion – the equivalent of Canada or Sweden’s ODA.<sup>111</sup> Brazil has emphasized sharing its own experiences with school grants and fighting illiteracy.<sup>112</sup> **South Africa** announced the launch of its own aid agency in 2011 and spent USD 3.5 million in humanitarian aid the same year.<sup>113</sup> Generally speaking, “development partners in the South have ... indirectly introduced competitive pressures for traditional donors and encouraged them to pay greater attention to the needs and concerns of developing countries.”<sup>114</sup>

Where do these emerging donors stand in relation to support for women’s rights and women’s organizing? As some of the traditional donor countries, these donor countries also have a very mixed record on human rights, particularly on women’s human rights, reflected in their legislation, regulation of CSOs and a different way to engage in development cooperation. Sometimes the aid architecture in these countries is complex and channelled not only through development agencies but through many other government bodies. The Republic of Korea sought to champion gender equality in the HLF-4 (which it hosted in Busan). Nationally, Brazil and South Africa, like many of the others, reflect an incredibly mixed picture, with some legislative gains for women’s rights but still widespread struggles to make those gains a reality on the ground - and in some cases, with major setbacks from past achievements and roadblocks for new gains.



The trends among bilateral and multilateral donors analyzed in the preceding pages present a mixed picture for women’s rights organizations. While aid to non-governmental women’s organizations is on the rise, the overall economic panorama and shifting geopolitical dynamics present challenges – not just for funding for women’s rights organizing – but also for ensuring strong advances toward a rights based approach to development. Here again, women’s rights organizations and movements will need to assess the changing context. We will need to define strategies for engagement and potential influence points to continue pressing for accountability to internationally-agreed gender equality goals and the funding required to make them a reality. Also, women’s organizations and movements from new donor countries need to be thinking about how to influence their own country’s development cooperation policies and procedures, building on experiences of women’s organizations and CSOs from traditional donor countries. Questions of who can access bilateral and multilateral donors should stay central in reflections on accessibility of funding and distribution mechanisms. This way, we can ensure that development cooperation fulfills a purpose of true solidarity and joint action to eradicate poverty, protect and promote human rights and environmental sustainability, and is not simply an instrument of economic and geopolitical interest. Given the evolving nature of these development cooperation institutions, policies and procedures, there is space to influence them.

## 3.2 TRENDS AMONG INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (INGOS)

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International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) are large non-profit development organizations. Some have a clear focus on development issues with a human rights based approach, while others work more from a charitable, religious or humanitarian perspective. As a result, there is considerable variation in INGOs' approaches to women's rights, and to working with women's organizations. In some cases they operate as intermediaries and provide support to civil society organizations in the global South and East, and in others they implement their own programs; generally, most INGOs do a combination of both. Depending on the context, INGO revenues come from a variety of sources: bilateral and multilateral donors; private foundations; and corporate giving. Individual donations, particularly from the global North, are often a significant share of income for large INGOs (although individual donations in some countries in the South are on the rise for these actors). For example, INGOs such as World Vision, Save the Children, PLAN International and ActionAid International use models of child sponsorship to raise part of their budgetary needs. Women for Women International, has a "sponsor a sister" component in their work, encouraging individual donations.

Given the diversity of INGOs, it can be difficult to generalize trends across the entire sector. What we present here is not an exhaustive analysis but select data and important trends relating to some of the INGOs that have either historically been very active in supporting women's organizations or that have recently embraced a stronger focus of working with women and girls. Interestingly, AWID surveys show a significant drop in the share of income that women's organizations report from INGOs, down from 14% in 2005 to 7% in 2010. It seems likely that many of the trends discussed below may be playing a role in that shift: budget cuts faced by some, as well as the tendency among INGOs to prioritize their own operations over grant-making.

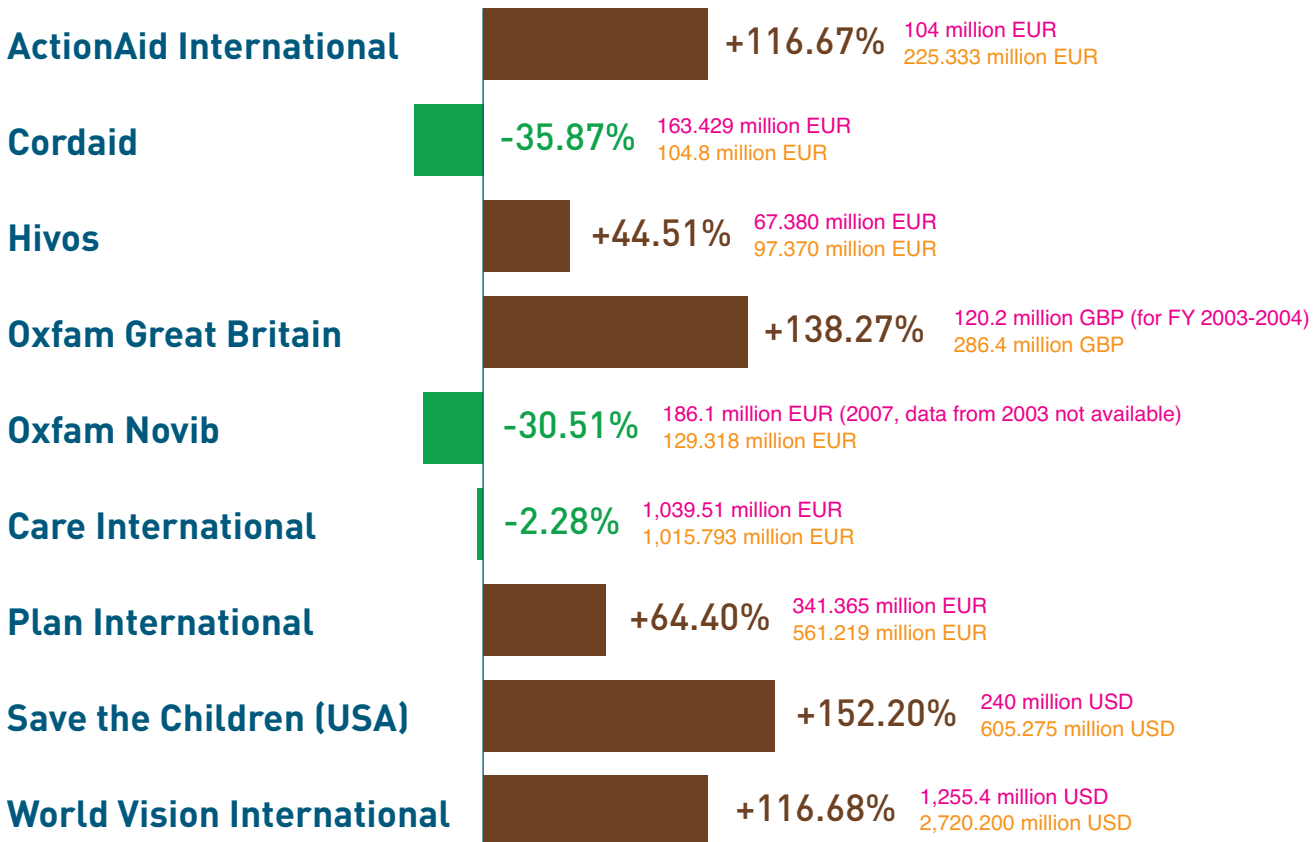
### 3.2.1 Financial realities for INGOs

Preliminary research by AWID in 2009 suggested that INGO revenues were holding fairly stable, due largely to pre-committed, multi-year funding from bilateral or multilateral agencies. But as impacts of the 2008 financial crisis deepened, and with the spread of the Eurozone crisis, many INGOs that were highly dependent on ODA have found themselves scrambling to make up for shrinking ODA budgets as well as the negative impacts of currency devaluations on their operating budgets.

Women’s organizations responding to AWID’s 2011 global survey most frequently named Oxfam Novib, Hivos, Cordaid, Oxfam Great Britain and ActionAid International among the INGOs that provided financial support for their work. In the figure below, we look at what has happened to the total expense levels in these organizations between 2003 and 2011 and compare them with other large INGOs.

**PINK** : Total expense in 2003  
**ORANGE** : Total expense in 2011

Figure 4 – % Change :  
 2003 Total Expenses / 2011 Total Expenses



Source: All data in this table is drawn from the respective annual report for each organization available on their websites.

Of this small sample of nine INGOs, World Vision International and CARE International stand out as the largest, with over a billion dollars in expenditures in 2011 (and World Vision close to reaching 3 billion). Save the Children (USA) and Oxfam Great Britain experienced the largest rates of growth, followed by World Vision International and ActionAid International. Cordaid and Oxfam Novib have experienced important decreases in their expenditure levels, primarily due to changes in the Dutch co-financing system (see box). At the end of 2011, Cordaid reported experiencing unprecedented budget cuts that required it to “take steps with a major impact on the work of hundreds of Cordaid partners...in some cases, financing for their work had to be drastically reduced or cut entirely, and many long-term relationships came to an abrupt and unavoidable end.”<sup>115</sup> While the Hivos expenditure budget has grown over time, they too have been significantly impacted by changes in Dutch co-financing in the last four years and predicted budget cuts in 2012 and beyond.

## Co-Financing System for Dutch INGOs: Changes and challenges

In April 2009, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) launched new guidelines<sup>116</sup> that reduced the resources (via the MFA co-financing budget) available to Dutch NGOs. This change impacted, among others, Oxfam Novib, Cordaid and Hivos—three of the top five most important INGOs mentioned in AWID’s recent survey in terms of resources to support women’s organizations. The change was a result of structural changes related to aid harmonization, promoted by the aid and development effectiveness agenda. Between 2011 and 2015, the co-financing system program (MSF II in Dutch) budget line for Dutch NGOs will be reduced to EUR 425 million, a decrease of EUR100 million. Under the banner of ‘increasing effectiveness’, the number of organizations receiving co-funding was shrunk from 74 in 2008 to 30 in 2009 and beyond.<sup>117</sup> Also, at least 60% of the funds requested must be allocated to Dutch Development Cooperation partner countries, a group of 33 countries, mostly fragile states. In this co-financing approach, recipients must cover at least 25% of their projected budget with alternative sources of income. This new system also favours collaborative proposals—whether between civil society organizations, between civil society and governments (local governments or Dutch embassies), or between civil society and the private sector. These financing shifts are particularly significant since the Dutch government is the fourth largest donor to women’s rights and gender equality in terms of percentage of GNI and the sixth largest in terms of absolute amount.

Women's organizations have complained of being used to implement projects without compensation for their work or without having significant input in design and decision-making along the way. These challenges are likely to intensify as funding constraints have pushed INGOs to diversify their income sources in ways that may aggravate competition with women's organizations

### 3.2.2 Responses to difficult financial times

International NGOs have generally 'seen the writing on the wall' in terms of the impact of the financial crisis and economic recession on their work. As a result, along with some belt-tightening, they have been using an array of strategies to mobilize resources for their work. In AWID's 2007 *FundHer* report, we spoke of the "multiple identities" of many INGOs—donors and implementers, campaigners and humanitarian aid providers—that often complicate partnership experiences with women's organizations.<sup>118</sup> Women's organizations have complained of being used to implement projects without compensation for their work or without having significant input in design and decision-making along the way. These challenges are likely to intensify as funding constraints have pushed INGOs to diversify their income sources in ways that may aggravate competition with women's organizations.

**Expanding their positioning as program implementers, not intermediaries:** As mentioned above, many INGOs combine functions as resource "intermediaries", channelling funding to groups carrying out development work in particular communities or countries, and as program implementers themselves. In a climate of resource constraints, with a growing push from donors to show quantifiable impacts at large scale, many large INGOs make the case that program implementation is precisely their value-added.

"That's become the main selling point of international NGOs: their experience in scaling up community projects and achieving real results for thousands more than a local grassroots organization could."<sup>119</sup>

Part of expanding to a program implementation role means establishing or increasing the number of country offices and in some cases shifting headquarters to the global South and hiring more local staff in the countries where their programs are active. These INGOs have both an argument of scale (large numbers of people served) as well as reach into local communities, that many other donors do not. Their institutional systems are perceived as solid and capable of effectively managing multi-million dollar resources. The country office approach also allows more flexibility to tailor programs and shape priorities in keeping with the particularities of the local context. However, this dynamic can also create tensions with local organizations who complain that INGOs are able to hire away their most qualified and experienced staff at salaries well beyond what local groups can afford, thus depleting their human resource pool.

**Fundraising in the South:** Increasingly, large INGOs are also fundraising in the countries where they operate. For example, ActionAid International, in its 2011 annual report, spoke to concerns regarding the financial situation in Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain, which have traditionally been important fundraising sites for them. They reported that some of the instability has been countered by “fundraising programmes in the South, whose economies have fared much better in the global economic recession.”<sup>120</sup>


“More and more international NGOs are registering as a legal entity in the countries they operate in. With local incorporation, INGOs, through their subsidiaries, stand a better chance of accessing funding from local institutions and money funnelled by international donors through partner governments. They may also become eligible for corporate social responsibility funds.”<sup>121</sup>

**Pressure for mergers and joint initiatives (including with the private sector):**

“Partnership models” are gaining popularity with INGOs as they seek to tap allies with complementary skills and objectives. For some, this also means internal streamlining, as is the case with the various Oxfam International affiliates, who since 2008 have been undergoing a process to create a “single management structure” in each country where Oxfam works. The aspiration for such a structure relates to increased program and cost efficiency and effectiveness.<sup>122</sup> Interviews with members of Dutch INGOs revealed a strong push for partnerships, partly motivated by co-financing requirements, but also for the purposes of better program implementation. Some of these partnerships implied not just an exchange of expertise and learning, but also funding directed to local partners.<sup>123</sup>

INGOs have also been exploring the potential of leveraging resources through partnerships with the private sector. As one example from July 2010 demonstrates, Oxfam GB and Unilever agreed to work together over a five-year period “to explore, develop and implement innovative smallholder-based sourcing models for food ingredients.” As part of the agreement, known as “Sunrise”, Unilever committed to source between five and 20% of certain materials through supply chains developed under this collaboration.<sup>124</sup> The long-term aim is to strengthen smallholder-based supply chains that are both commercially viable and effective at reducing poverty. The project also aims to influence other companies to undertake similar initiatives.

“More and more international NGOs are registering as a legal entity in the countries they operate in. With local incorporation, INGOs, through their subsidiaries, stand a better chance of accessing funding from local institutions and money funnelled by international donors through partner governments. They may also become eligible for corporate social responsibility funds...”



Some describe such partnerships as a “win-win-win-win-win scenario”: The participating communities reap direct economic benefits. INGOs gain access to new resources and influence some dimensions of corporate practice. Businesses gain access to new markets and recognition for their contributions to development.<sup>125</sup> Much more remains to be learned, however, from these experiences, their impacts in local communities and how the various arms of a single corporation may or may not operate in ways that are consistent with development projects undertaken, fulfilling human rights, labour and environmental regulations.

Plan International’s “Because I am a Girl” campaign includes a broad array of “supporting partners” ranging from other non-profits and multilateral partnerships (including The Global Partnership for Education, Global Campaign for Education), several UN agencies and initiatives, as well as private sector actors such as the Omnicom Group Inc. (a global advertising and marketing communications services company that provides “strategic and executional support of the Because I am a Girl (BIAAG) campaign and launch”), KPMG (an audit, tax and advisory firm that was a financial sponsor of the global BIAAG launch) and the PepsiCo Foundation (also a financial sponsor of the global launch).<sup>126</sup>

ExxonMobil, through its Women’s Economic Opportunity Initiative launched back in 2005, has partnered with a range of international and women’s NGOs, among others. For example, ExxonMobil has supported: a program of Africare to improve economic opportunities in agriculture-based businesses for women in rural Chad; the Centre for Development and Population Activities to support their Global Women in Management program, providing capacity-building for women in NGOs “to enhance and bring to scale programs that advance women’s economic opportunities”; and the International Center for Research on Women to develop a white paper on *Bridging the Gender Divide* and “how technology can advance women economically”.<sup>127</sup>




### 3.2.3 Women and girls are front and center in many INGO agendas

Women's rights have long been one of the major thematic priorities for ActionAid International, and are clearly a central goal of their 2012-2017 strategic plan. Longstanding allies such as Cordaid, Novib and Hivos have also long supported work for women's rights. The Oxfams are wrapping up a strategic planning process, working to keep women's rights central. Increasingly, other INGOs are also expanding their attention to women and girls. For example, currently four of CARE International's six major campaigns focus on women and girls: Help her Live, Help her Learn, Help her Earn, and Voices against Violence. CARE's potent "I am powerful" campaign sought to position the empowering of women as the key to fighting poverty. Since 2007, Plan International has published an annual report on the "state of the world's girls" and their "Because I am a Girl Campaign" aims to support girls' right to education.

**Women for Women International (WfWI)** is one of the few women's organizations that might qualify as a "women's INGO." Founded in 1993, WfWI's mission is to support "women in war-torn regions with financial and emotional aid, job-skills training, rights education and small business assistance so they can rebuild their lives." They focus on work with women in eight countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Nigeria, Rwanda, and South Sudan.<sup>128</sup>

WfWI has achieved an impressive level of growth. Having started offering "direct aid" (such as direct financial assistance toward securing medical treatment, paying school fees, investing in a small business, building personal savings, purchasing land or other uses) of just over USD 11,000 in 2003, by 2009 they were providing almost USD 4.4 million in direct aid, in addition to USD 12.2 million in microcredit loans. WfWI's total expenses in 2011 exceeded USD 32.7 million. Their resource mobilization efforts include a sponsorship model called "Sponsor a Sister", with sponsors signing up to contribute to an individual woman, as well as funding from corporate donors, bilateral and multilateral donors. In 2010, 69% of WfWI's income was from individual donors.<sup>129</sup>



While some women's organizations might wish for different or stronger positioning on women's rights issues by some of these actors, the fact that many INGOs are embracing work with women and girls as central to their agendas is an important advance and a potential opportunity. In many ways it is an indicator of the success of women's organizing that these issues are on INGO agendas today. Similarly, we can also consider the achievement of feminist leadership in these INGOs over the last three years: Joanna Kerr, Executive Director at ActionAid International<sup>130</sup> (and former Executive Director of AWID), and most recently, Winnie Byanyima, who was appointed to lead Oxfam International among others.<sup>131</sup>

Also, we want to honour and recognize the leadership of feminist Manuela Monteiro, the long-time head of Hivos who stepped down from her position in mid-2013. Her strong commitment to increase Hivos' support for feminist and women's rights organizations as well as other key groups that have limited access to resources – such as Southern-based LGBTI groups – has had a tremendous impact.

Given their political weight and programmatic scope, including their expanding interest in women and girls, INGOs are an important actor in both the funding landscape and in supporting community level work to advance the position of women and girls. But past concerns from women's organizations regarding unhelpful overlaps or power imbalances with INGO agendas in terms of resource mobilization may deepen as INGOs expand their work and presence and look for new sources or mechanisms of funding. Longstanding questions about the extent to which most INGOs actually implement women's rights based approaches and offer funding to women's rights organizations remain. All of this suggests that frank, constructive dialogue is critical to further explore possibilities for agenda shaping and meaningful collaboration where there is common ground.

## 3.3 PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

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In 2007, AWID's research indicated that although a handful of private foundations had remained steady supporters of women's rights organizations, there were relatively limited opportunities to access funding from this sector. Yet in recent years, private foundations have, broadly speaking, become increasingly active in funding and shaping discourses around resources for women and girls. In AWID's 2011 survey, private foundations represented 15% of the income of 740 organizations from the sample, second only to bilateral and multilateral agencies. This represents a small increase from 2005 when they represented 13% and in 2008, 14.9% of total income of survey respondents.

### 3.3.1 Women and girls getting on the radar of private foundations

Private foundation interest in women and girls is growing. Research from 2009 suggests that "women and girls" funding by US-based foundations has increased at a greater rate than foundation funding as a whole. However, this represents a small and somewhat static percentage of foundation funding overall – the increase has been from 5% in 1990 to 5.8% in 2006. The same Foundation Center study notes that most of that increase is to be attributed to a few "mega funders" such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.<sup>132</sup> It is important to note that this number represents the total and that funding outside the USA tends to be a smaller proportion to that given within the USA. A further nuance is that a large proportion of the funding earmarked to women and girls by the Gates Foundation is actually distributed to large INGOs, seldom to women's organizations. Recent findings on "human rights related funding" by global private foundations totalled USD 1.2 billion in 2010. Of that, 23% or USD 276 million, were said to go to women and girls' rights.<sup>133</sup> These statistics are partial and likely subject to similar limitations as those in the Foundation Center's study.

Among the top human rights funders named in the International Human Rights Funders Group (IHRFG)/Foundation Center study<sup>134</sup>, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundation, Sigrid Rausing Trust, Oak Foundation, Gates Foundation and MacArthur Foundation were also among the most-frequently named supporters of the women's organizations who responded to AWID's 2011 global survey. Yet again, of these, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is by far the largest, with total assets of close to USD 37.5 billion, while the Ford foundation (the next largest) has assets of almost USD 10.5 billion.<sup>135</sup>

## The Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation has historically supported women's rights globally. Today, while it remains an important funder for many women's organizations, some have perceived the changes in its programmatic focus on women's rights as a decrease in support. Internal strategic refocusing in 2008-2009 resulted in fewer total initiatives across the foundation. Field offices had to choose priority programmatic lines of work and women's rights was among the 33 options for offices around the world to choose from. As a result, Ford ended up primarily funding women's rights initiatives at the global level, in the US and Eastern Africa through its Protecting Women's Rights program (under the Human Rights thematic area). The goal of the program is "improving the lives and livelihoods of low-income women by strategically addressing inequality and discrimination".<sup>136</sup> In 2011, total Human Rights spending by Ford amounted to USD 84,992,156.<sup>137</sup> Grants under the Protecting Women's Rights program totalled USD 11,424,150: USD 7,094,150 for work in the U.S.; 2,580,000 for work globally; and 1,750,000 for work in East Africa.<sup>138</sup> In 2011, Ford also made grants of USD 29,724,695 under the Sexuality and Reproductive Health Rights program, which has Program Officers in its offices in Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, India, Egypt, Indonesia, and China. These changes in Ford's focus on women's rights have occurred in the past five years under the leadership of Luis A. Ubiñas as Ford's President. With Ubiñas' announcement that he is stepping down from the position by September 2013, it is essential for women's rights organizations and movements to monitor and stay engaged with the Ford Foundation in the months ahead as they bring in new leadership, with potential for further shifts in Foundation priorities. Already there are signs that an internal assessment is underway through which women's rights allies within Ford hope to further strengthen the foundation's commitment and support in this area.

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As another top funder, Open Society Foundations (OSF) has also gone through numerous transformations over the past five years, including a 2012 change in the presidency of the foundation for the first time in 19 years. With the new president, Christopher Stone, on board, the first noticeable change was consolidation of all Open Society Institutes (OSI) and Foundations under one umbrella of Open Society Foundations and the creation of a new program – Global Human Rights. OSF has continued strong support to women’s rights movements through its International Women’s Program. This program worked with a double approach of advocacy<sup>139</sup> and grant-making, supporting initiatives that work on discrimination and violence against women, strengthening access to justice, and promoting women’s empowerment. In 2010, the program spent USD 9,394,000 of the Foundation’s total thematic program spending of USD 222,780,000, which amounts to just .04%.<sup>140</sup> Very recently (July 2013) the new leadership decided to revamp the whole program and there is little clarity as to its new focus and priorities. It will be key to continue engaging with OSF’s new president and other leaders to ensure that the new iteration of the program builds on work they have supported on the past, with clarity about how crucial it is to continue their support to women’s rights organizations on the ground.

## Open Society Foundations

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Oak Foundation is an example of a smaller private foundation that has championed funding for women’s rights movements. The Issues Affecting Women Programme (IAWP) has been growing over the last few years, from spending USD 4,410,000 in 2009 to USD 9,230,000 in 2012. It launched a new strategic plan in 2012, which emphasizes building women’s rights movements and combating violence against women. As part of the priority to fund movement building, IAWP funds initiatives that “promote movement building through women’s funds, ‘anchor’ women’s organisations and networks.” Within its violence against women priority, the program focuses more specifically on human trafficking and exploitation, violence within families, and violence against women in crisis contexts. In addition to women-specific programming, Oak Foundation has also adopted gender sensitive grant-making, mainstreaming a women’s rights approach in all of its program areas. As a senior member of the Foundation reflected at a recent European Foundation Centre Conference, working with internal gender experts can be very helpful, but eventually incorporating gender is a task for all program staff.<sup>141</sup>

## Oak Foundation

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## Sigrid Rausing Trust

The Sigrid Rausing Trust (SRT) has long been a strong supporter of women's rights organizations, offering core support and flexible, accessible, and long-term grants. Organizations typically first receive a one-year grant, followed by three year funding, which demonstrates the Trust's commitment to long term funding and understanding of movement building support. The Trust made GBP 23.3 million in single and multi-year grants in 2011, to be paid throughout 2011, 2012 and 2013.<sup>142</sup> SRT also supports re-granting organizations such as women's funds to provide small grants to grassroots groups, giving GBP 3,495,000 to nine re-granting organizations in 2011. The Women's Rights program funds organizations working on violence, sexual and reproductive rights, women's access to justice and leadership training. Of the GBP 19 million committed to major grants, 18% went to the Women's Rights program, totalling GBP 3.4 million – the second largest program in SRT. The grants under this program ranged from GBP 25,000 to 750,000.<sup>143</sup>

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## NoVo Foundation

Some private foundations established in the last few years are also taking a major interest in women and girls. The NoVo Foundation was founded in 2006 after Warren Buffet pledged to donate stock shares valued at close to one billion dollars at the time.<sup>144</sup> NoVo makes grants primarily to US-based non-profit organizations and works directly with "strategic partners" on four main initiatives: "Empower Adolescent Girls," "Ending Violence Against Girls and Women," "Advancing Social and Emotional Learning," and "Promoting Local Living Economies".<sup>145</sup> (According to the most recent financial report available for 2010, NoVo disbursed a total of USD 42 million in grants and contributions, with grant amounts ranging from USD 10,000 to 15 million. Women's organizations made up less than a quarter of NoVo's 2010 grantees with almost all of them being US-based groups.<sup>146</sup> NoVo is playing an influential role in the broader funding landscape related to support for women and girls, committing a total of USD 116 million to the Nike Foundation over nine years (2007-2015), for the Girl Effect program. NoVo is also one of the partners of The Elders<sup>147</sup> led campaign 'Girls not Brides' launched at the 2011 meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI). NoVo has played an active agenda-setting role within the CGI, with a very strong focus on ending sex trafficking from an abolitionist perspective. Some people feel that NoVo has raised controversy and resistance to some of the interventions they support and in many cases undermined the work done by organized sex workers groups in different regions. Their financial resources and influence gives them great power in spaces such as CGI, not just in terms of deciding what should be funded, but also which approaches to certain issues should be considered worthy of support.

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Other newcomer funders for women and girls include the Foundation for a Just Society (FJS). Launched in 2011, FJS is a private foundation with USD 100 million in assets that supports organizations working to advance the rights of women and girls who are discriminated against and marginalized due to their race, gender, ethnicity or sexual identity. FJS funds international, national, regional, and local NGOs and re-granters in the United States (with a focus on New York City and the South-eastern region), Central America, Francophone West Africa, Myanmar and minority populations in border areas in Thailand, and Nepal.<sup>148</sup>

## Foundation for a Just Society

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For a closer look specifically at European Foundation trends, Mama Cash and the Foundation Center collaborated on a ground-breaking research effort: *“Untapped Potential: European Foundation Funding for Women and Girls”*. *Untapped Potential* maps the extensive European philanthropic sector, made up of approximately 110,000 foundations (the majority of which are private) with budgets totalling EUR 100 billion. In all, 145 foundations from 19 countries participated in the study, which found that 90% of them expressed some interest in supporting programs benefiting women and girls but that just 37% intentionally focused at least some of their work on women and girls. Only 4.8% of total foundation spending of those surveyed went explicitly to women and girls’ programs. Strikingly, 58% of foundations surveyed dedicated less than 10% of their spending to programs on women and girls in 2009, while one quarter did not allocate any funds at all to the sector. These findings suggest that there is large potential for European foundations to increase their support for women and girls, and potentially, women’s rights. The research also suggests that while many foundations do not specify women and girls as their priority, they use a gender lens in their grant-making programs. Examples of such foundations included Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Netherlands and King Baudouin Foundation in Belgium. Thus women’s rights organizations may not be totally beyond the funding scope of such foundations. More advocacy efforts will be important to encourage European foundations’ expansion of their grant-making to target women’s rights and women’s groups more directly.<sup>149</sup>

## Untapped Potential: European Foundation Funding for Women and Girls

Just as private foundations are expanding their collaboration with others, women's rights organizations should expand relationship-building with private foundations. While they show an increasing interest in women and girls, they often lack connection with women's rights movements

### 3.3.2 Foundations are going beyond their silos and partnering across sectors, including with the private sector

Like INGOs, private foundations are expanding collaboration and engaging with others more than ever. Within that trend, there are signs of increasing partnership between some private foundations through funding consortia, federations and pre-existing affinity groups. Collaborations are considered useful by expanding the volume of resources available for an initiative, as well as mitigating risk for funders entering a new field<sup>150</sup> One example is *"Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage,"* launched at the 2011 CGI annual meeting. Founded by The Elders,<sup>151</sup> Girls Not Brides, initially funded with USD 3 million from the Ford Foundation has established a network of more than 200 donors and NGOs that have committed funding or initiatives to end child marriage. Foundations partnering in the initiative include Ford, which recently committed USD 25 million to ending child marriage<sup>152</sup>, Nike and NoVo Foundations, joined by the Hewlett, MacArthur and OSFs, and Sabanci Foundation.<sup>153</sup> This initiative has had an important impact beyond the work it does itself, in putting the issue of child marriage on the agenda in a very strong way, making it a key issue that has recently been included as a key issue in the UN High Level Panel Report for the UN post-2015 agenda.

Just as private foundations are expanding their collaboration with others, women's rights organizations should expand relationship-building with private foundations. While they show an increasing interest in women and girls, they often lack connection with women's rights movements. It can be challenging for foundations to learn the landscape and nuances of women's rights approaches and the diverse organizations involved. Although it is not easy to reach some of these foundations that do not accept unsolicited proposals, more direct advocacy efforts must continue – especially in the networking spaces that foundations use as hubs for like-minded funders – to engage with the private foundations sector from a women's rights perspective and learn more about their funding priorities and processes.

Another trend in philanthropy that has been shaping foundations' directions is Strategic Philanthropy. Strategic philanthropy derives from an assumption that philanthropic institutions are scattered in their practices and unfocused in their strategies. It is a reflection of the desire for efficient, entrepreneurial solutions, pushing foundations to narrow their funding scopes and priorities. With this lens, nuanced, complex approaches to change are considered un-strategic. One of the implications of the strategic philanthropy trend is that foundations are much more



selective in the organizations that they support. Such a focus often results in a few select organizations increasing their capacity and impact while disengaging from the broader movements they are part of.<sup>154</sup> At the same time, some positive aspects of strategic philanthropy that have not yet been as widely adopted are multi-year, core funding. Key beneficiaries of the strategic philanthropy trend seem to be the ever-growing industry of strategic philanthropic advisors, few of whom focus on funding women and girls and/or using a human rights-based approach. Speaking of the strategic philanthropy trend, one grantee explains, “Foundations have become more focused on developing pre-set portfolios of projects, managing risks, and producing outcomes rather than listening to communities... with their new strategies and staff, foundations are increasingly treating NGOs .... not as innovators but as contractors who are hired to deliver donors’ visions of what needs to be done.”<sup>155</sup>

## Example of a new Community of Progressive Funders where women’s rights organizations are present: **EDGE Funders Alliance**

This alliance was established in 2012 as a merger of Grant-makers without Borders with the Funders Network for Transforming the Global Economy (FNTG).

Members describe EDGE as “funders and donors committed to global social change philanthropy, who believe that equity and justice – around gender, race, class, sexual orientation, nationality, migration status, and ability – are critical to furthering sustainable international well-being.” Through its work, the alliance seeks to address the systemic nature of the social, economic and ecological crises threatening the planet.

EDGE supports reflection and collaboration among members and forges strategic partnerships in and outside philanthropy. The latter in order to increase

resources for community well-being and transnational organizing in ways that promote justice and build lasting, meaningful change.

This newly developed alliance is a way for like-minded donors to think about innovative ways of funding initiatives that are aimed at challenging the current economic, social, political and cultural models.

Women’s rights organizations and movements are welcomed in the space and should continue involvement with allies in such spaces to expand the number of funders who are funding transformative agendas.

Source: Edge Alliance Funders webpage: <http://www.edgefunders.org/>

### 3.3.3 Growth of private foundations in emerging economies

For several years, questions have been begging about the role and impact of private foundations outside of North America and Europe, but data is significantly limited. Although this remains something of an unknown frontier, it is a phenomenon to watch and consider.

The philanthropic sector and private foundations are also expanding in the global South, with varying degrees of support to social issues and women and girls. There are not necessarily direct equivalents to the definitions of private foundations used in the global North as “few foundations [in the global South] are founded by wealthy families or individuals . . . Most rely on diverse funding from public and private sources, both domestic and international. They frequently work in less-than-enabling legal and tax environments.”<sup>156</sup> Information about giving from private foundations in emerging economies is often not readily available, although centers such as the China Foundation Center, Brazilian Institute for the Development of Social Investment (IDIS), and the Brazilian Group of Institutes, Foundations and Businesses (GIFE) do publish such data. With these challenges in mind, some data is emerging about private foundation funding in emerging economies, especially in China, Brazil and India.

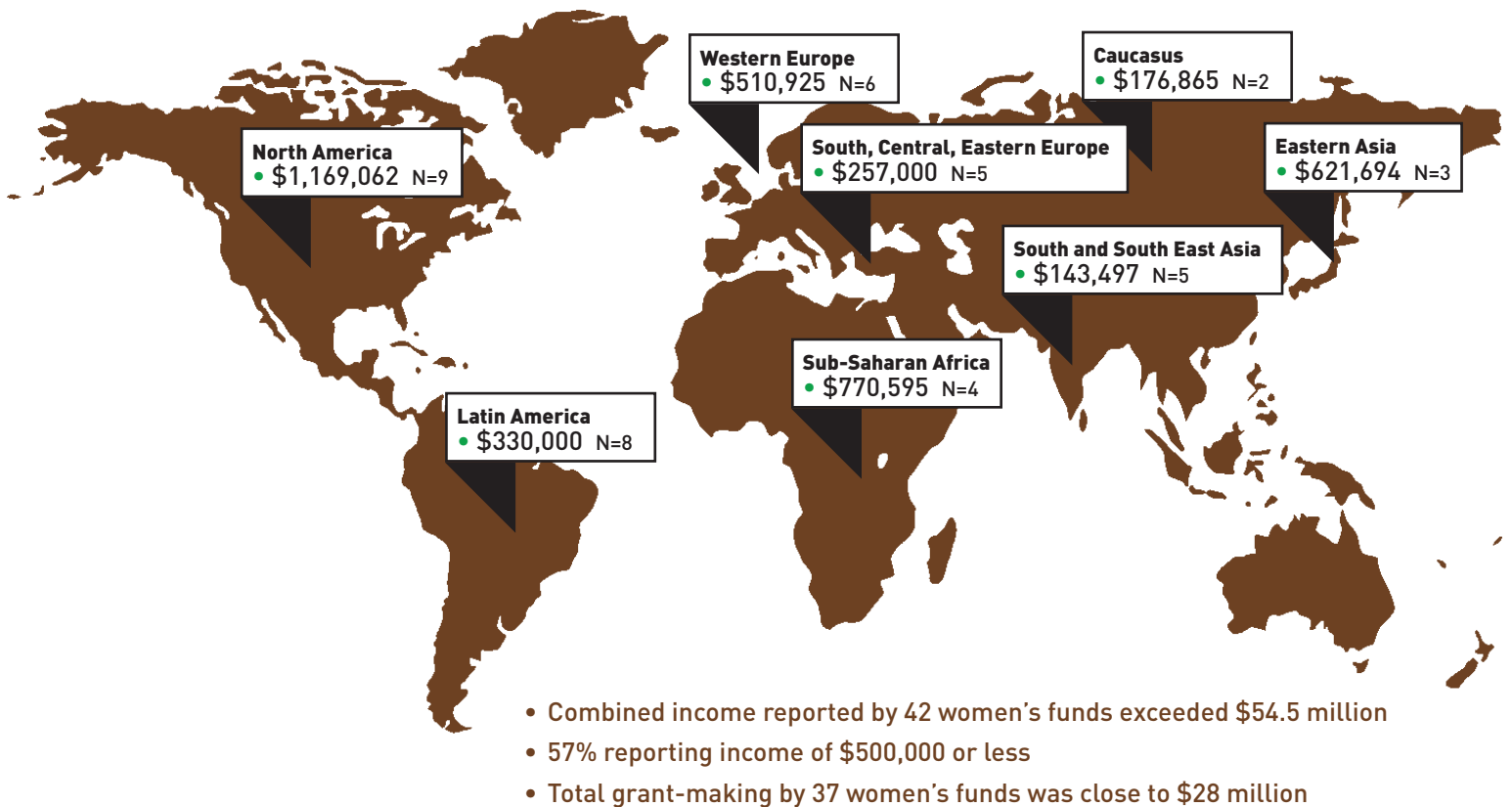
In a study commissioned by the Council on Foundations, the number of private foundations in Brazil was shown to have increased by 300% over twenty years. By 2008, Brazilian foundations were found to have granted more than USD 5.5 billion,<sup>157</sup> although data analyzing the nature of these contributions is still limited. The same research found that in China, more than 800 private foundations have been established in the last five years, an increase of 88%.<sup>158</sup> Another recent study on philanthropy in India found that private foundations there received an increase in donations in 2010. The study is optimistic on the sector’s development, as more wealthy individuals establish foundations in India. The report’s survey sample of 398 wealthy individuals in India found that 22% gave to “private foundations/support networks” – the top avenue of giving - followed by faith-based organizations (15%), and NGOs/the grassroots (13%).<sup>159</sup>

### 3.4 WOMEN'S FUNDS


Over the past two decades, women's funds have emerged as solid supporters of women's rights organizing at all levels. Women's funds are independent foundations that provide financial and other support for groups doing work related to empowering women and advancing women's rights.

Figure 5 – Financial Situation of Women's Funds Globally in 2010

Base: 42 women's funds N = number of respondents \$ = Median Income in USD



background map: Vector Open Stock [www.vectoropenstock.com](http://www.vectoropenstock.com)



While some women's funds have struggled to grow and consolidate, others have achieved important growth and it is undeniable that this sector remains a key source of support for women's organizations. Women's funds represent a relatively small amount of total income for women's organizations responding to AWID surveys - 4.8% or USD 2,786,441 of total 2010 income of 546 organizations in the sample; consistent with the level reflected in past surveys. However, they consistently reach a large number of women's organizations that many other funders do not reach, such as grassroots<sup>160</sup> or unregistered groups, as well as organizations working on issues or with strategies or populations that are considered controversial or not a priority for mainstream funders.

The women's funds community has grown exponentially over the past two decades, converging in two important networks playing different roles. The Women's Funding Network (WFN) has 160 members, the majority of which are U.S.-based women's funds that grant within the U.S. WFN plays a significant role in philanthropy in the United States, working to champion investment in women and provide support for member funds. In the past decade, WFN has also begun to expand its network globally. The International Network of Women's Funds (INWF) is a network of 45 national, regional, and global women's fund members that give grants in around 170 countries in the global South and Eastern Europe. INWF's mission is to strengthen the political and financial capacity of women's funds around the globe in contexts where historically there has been little local philanthropy. INWF plays an important role for building a community among emerging women's funds in different parts of the world.

Their financial situation and trends affecting the women's funds community merit particular attention, given their important role in mobilizing resources to advance women's rights. As part of our 2011 global survey, for the first time, AWID conducted a survey in collaboration with INWF to obtain specific data on women's funds' finances and characteristics of their grant-making and programs.<sup>161</sup> The WITM survey was completed by 43<sup>162</sup> funds from across the globe working on local (14%), national (35%), regional (30%), and international (19%) levels. The data collected, combined with previous research findings, offer some insight into the role of women's funds, as well as to their potential future role in mobilizing resources for and with women's rights organizations.<sup>163</sup>

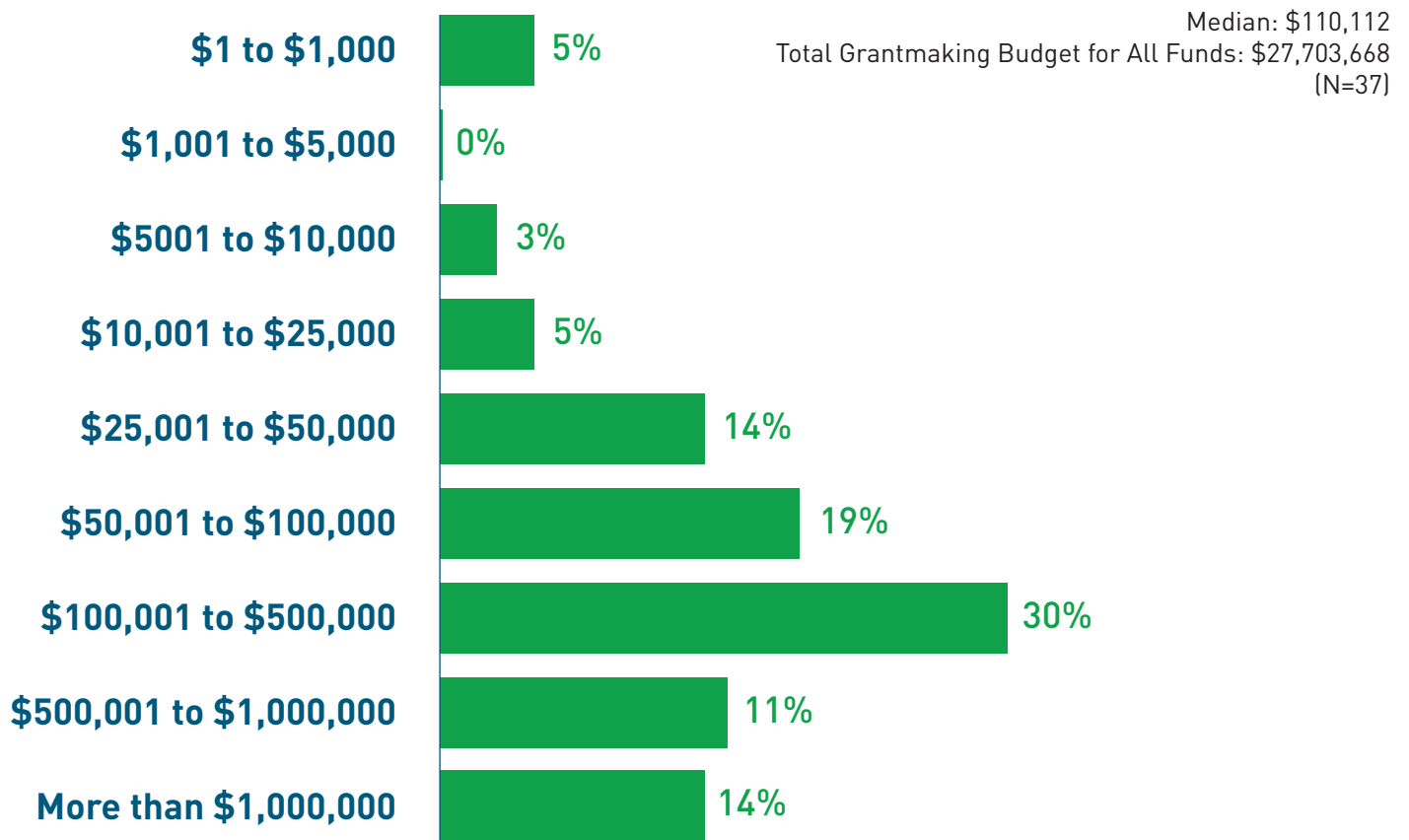
### 3.4.1 Income, assets and spending priorities of women's funds

The combined 2010 income reported by 42<sup>164</sup> women's funds in our sample totalled USD 54,582,209. The majority of women's funds, however, operate with relatively limited resources, with 57% of funds reporting income of USD 500,000 or less in 2010. The largest women's funds in terms of income are based in the USA and Western Europe. Figure 5 shows median incomes of funds per region.

There was promising and steady growth in income levels of women's funds between 2005 and 2010: the median income of 42 women's funds from the sample grew by close to 60%, from USD 166,718 in 2005 to 265,744 in 2010. Thirty percent of survey respondents were established after 2005, thus the growth in median income may reflect the increasing number of funds, not necessarily an increase in the individual budgets of each fund. While the growth is encouraging, USD 265,744 is still quite a small budget for funds that intend to do grant-making and facilitate access to resources for grassroots and other women's organizations.

The total amount granted in 2010 by 37 women's funds reached close to USD 28 million. The two largest women's funds – Global Fund for Women (GFW) and Mama Cash—account for close to half of that. Total funding provided by the other 35 women's funds surveyed, was USD 14.8 million in 2010. Although these amounts are still a fraction of some of the larger sources of funding, they represent a clear focus on women's organizations and a *quality* of funding that is often unparalleled. Many women's organizations consistently note that the support received from women's funds tends to be more flexible, for example, core support instead of project-specific, and with straightforward application and reporting procedures that impose minimal burdens. Given that AWID surveys persistently show a large share of women's organizations with quite small budgets, there is clearly an important niche for women's funds in reaching this sector. In addition to an uncompromising belief in women's organizing to address women's rights and gender equality, women's funds are appreciated for willingness to support new and innovative ideas. Thus the *how* and *what* women's funds support make them a critical funding sector for women's organizations and movement building.

Figure 6 – Women’s Funds, 2010 Grantmaking Budgets



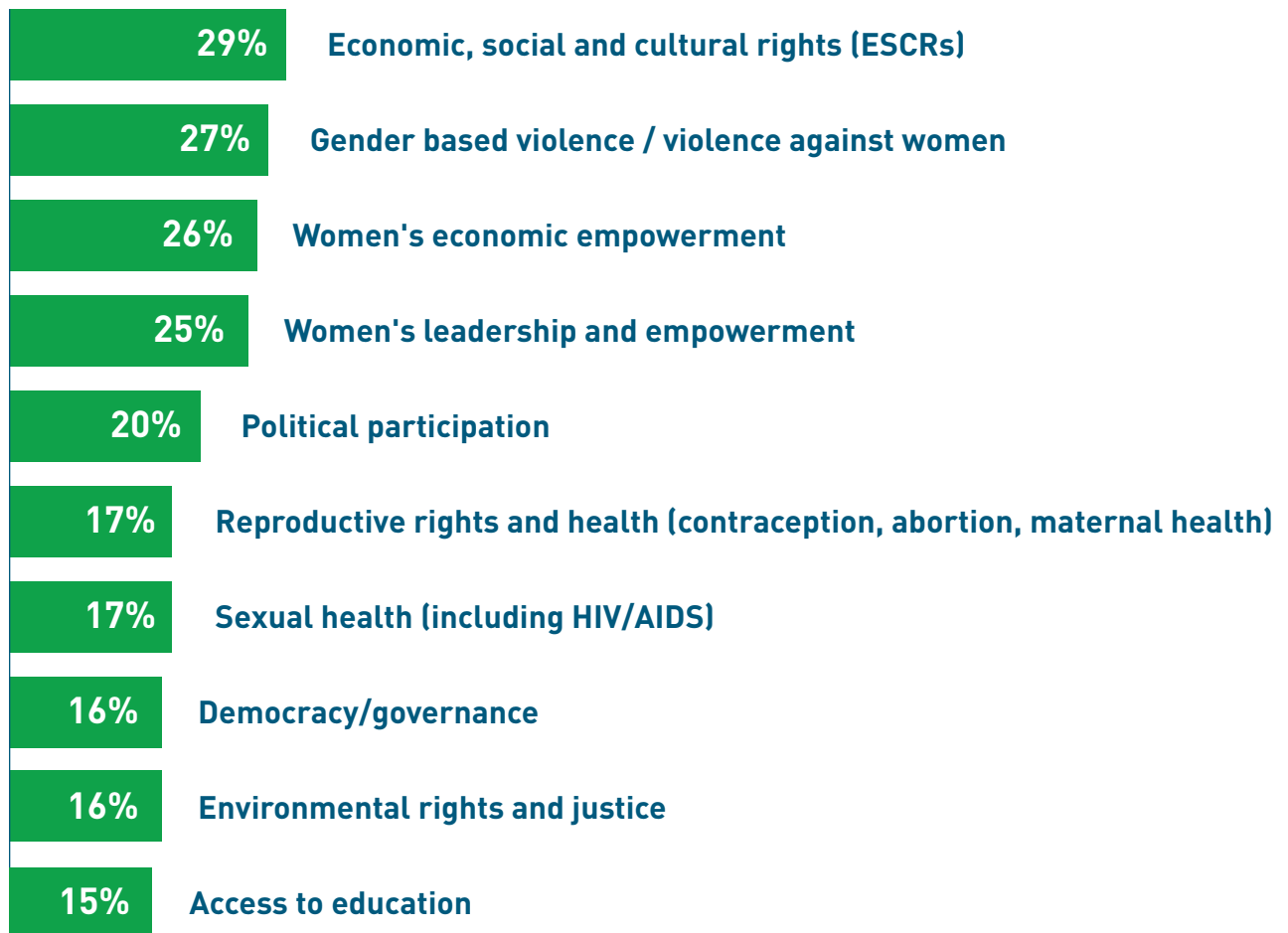
**How have women’s funds been faring given the financial crisis and economic recession, and how prepared are they to withstand potential cuts in funding?** Survey results illustrate that many funds are not much more prepared to withstand funding shortfalls than women’s organizations themselves. For example, 18% of women’s funds surveyed reported having no assets or reserves, while only 13% reported over USD 100,000 in assets and reserves.

As AWID’s survey was initiated in November 2011, a mere two months before the year’s end, we were interested in understanding - as an indicator of their financial situation - how much of their 2011 budgets women’s funds had managed to secure. Out of 41 funds that responded to this question, alarmingly only 15 had secured 100% of their funding. Ten had secured between 76% and 99% of their annual budgets. Additionally, when asked about their 2010 budget situation, 33% of women’s funds reported shortfalls from their planned budgets, with an average reporting they raised 28% less than what they had planned for the year. Forty percent of women’s funds in the sample reported losing some funding since 2008, resulting in decisions to reduce staffing, cut activities and programs, and/or reduce the number and amounts of grants.

Priority issues funded by women's funds in the sample demonstrate their commitment to women's economic, social and cultural rights (as a top priority), as well as violence against women, women's leadership and political participation with other important women's rights issues on the top ten priority list.

## Figure 7 – Women's Funds Top 10 Issues Funded

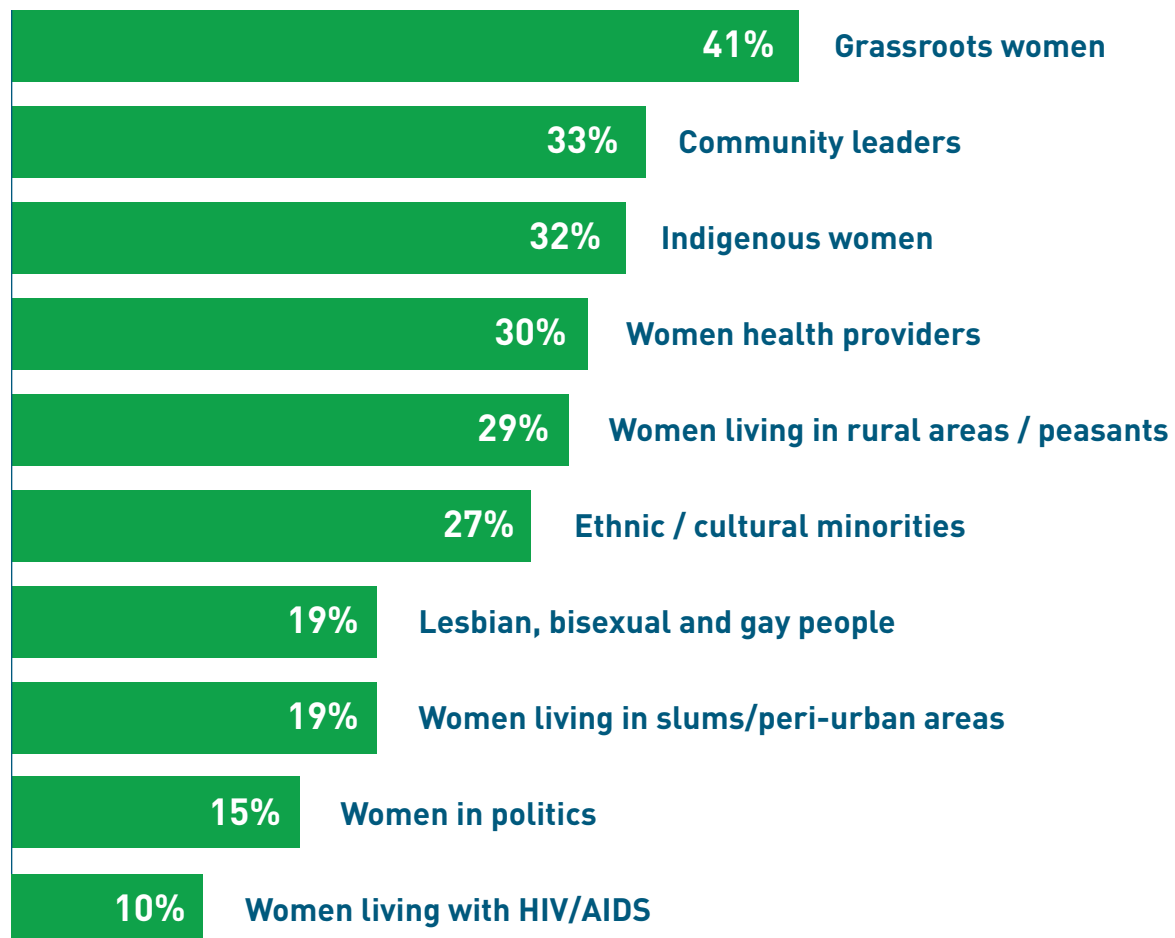
Base: 37 Women's Funds



Women's funds' commitment to supporting often marginalized and under-resourced populations is evident in the data on priority populations reached, as reflected in the figure below.

Figure 8 – Women's Funds Priority Populations - Top Ten

Base: 43 Women's Funds





When it comes to strategies supported by women's funds, it is important to keep in mind that the larger international women's funds, such as GFW and Mama Cash, include among their strategies strengthening others in the women's fund community, thus "re-granting" appears in our survey findings as a priority strategy. Beyond this consideration, responses from survey participants indicate that women's funds prioritize support for training and capacity building, advocacy/campaigning/ lobbying, and programs advancing "women's empowerment." Overall, the strategies chosen by women's funds demonstrate their vision of strengthening women's rights organizing beyond project support. With strong interest in supporting monitoring, evaluation and learning, capacity building, movement building and women's organizing and resource mobilization, there seems to be a clear interest in strengthening what might be termed the 'infrastructure' of women's organizations and movements.

## The Importance of Core and Multi-year Funding

Women's funds have been leading the way in offering flexible and long-term support to women's rights organizing through core and multi-year funding.

Core funding (also called general operating or unrestricted funding) is flexible funding that can be used for a variety of expenses, including operating costs, which are often the hardest to secure. By funding an organization as a whole, core funding offers flexibility and agility, allowing organizations to define their own priorities and political agendas. Core funding is particularly suited to supporting social change processes as it gives organizations the opportunity to focus on accomplishing their mission and vision rather than on, often disconnected projects. Organizations that receive core funding regularly report they see it as a sign of funders' trust in their organization. According to the Institute of Philanthropy, "providing core support encourages both funder and grantee to think deeply about their mission and how best to achieve it."\*

Multi-year funding - funding that lasts for more than one year - is key for ensuring predictability and sustainability for organizations. One of the women's funds responding to the 2011 survey said that they provide this type of funding because "supporting grassroots organizations means backing up their organizational strengthening which doesn't happen in a one year term, it is a process that requires time and security in obtaining resources." Multi-year funding also "takes away the fear and burden of garnering resources which make them (the organizations) focus on implementing their programs." Multi-year funding is particularly important for organizations focusing on long-term social change as in the case of women's rights organizing, which requires sustained investment.

\* "Supportive to the Core" (2009) <http://www.instituteofphilanthropy.org/pages/showMedia.php?id=65.g>. 6

Women's funds prioritize strategies that connect and foster knowledge sharing between women's organizations and movements at different levels

Beyond strategies supported, it is important to highlight that 67% of funds that responded to our survey provide core funding and 40% give multi-year grants, which again demonstrates the high 'quality' of funding from this sector.

Women's funds have been sharpening an explicit focus on ***movement building***\* and how that can inform their grant-making. The reach of many national-level women's funds is critical in getting a 'pulse' of local movements and facilitating responsive, flexible funding is a signature of many women's funds. In countries with limited or no international donor presence, women's funds are often the only source of funding available for women's organizations – playing a vital role in sustaining feminist and women's rights organizations and movements. More than just providing financial support to individual organizations or projects, their approach to movement building involves support to a variety of strategies that vary by context. Women's funds prioritize strategies that connect and foster knowledge sharing between women's organizations and movements at different levels. This also extends across sectors and geographies, as well as supporting the development of long-term infrastructure through strengthening and renewing individual organizations and leadership. This might translate as support for monitoring, evaluation and learning, training and capacity building, collective resource mobilization, and collective advocacy, campaigning and lobbying, among other activities. Such funding also reflects women's funds' understanding of their role as part of the movement rather than donors outside of the movement. Often, women's funds seek inputs from movement actors on how to build their funding portfolios and priorities in ways that benefit the movement by having formal advisory committees consisting of activists.

One example of women's funds' strategic movement building approach: the Mediterranean Women's Fund is supporting the creation of women's organizations in the MENA region – specifically in Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt. It also provides capacity building to newly established women's groups to create their own agendas and networks.

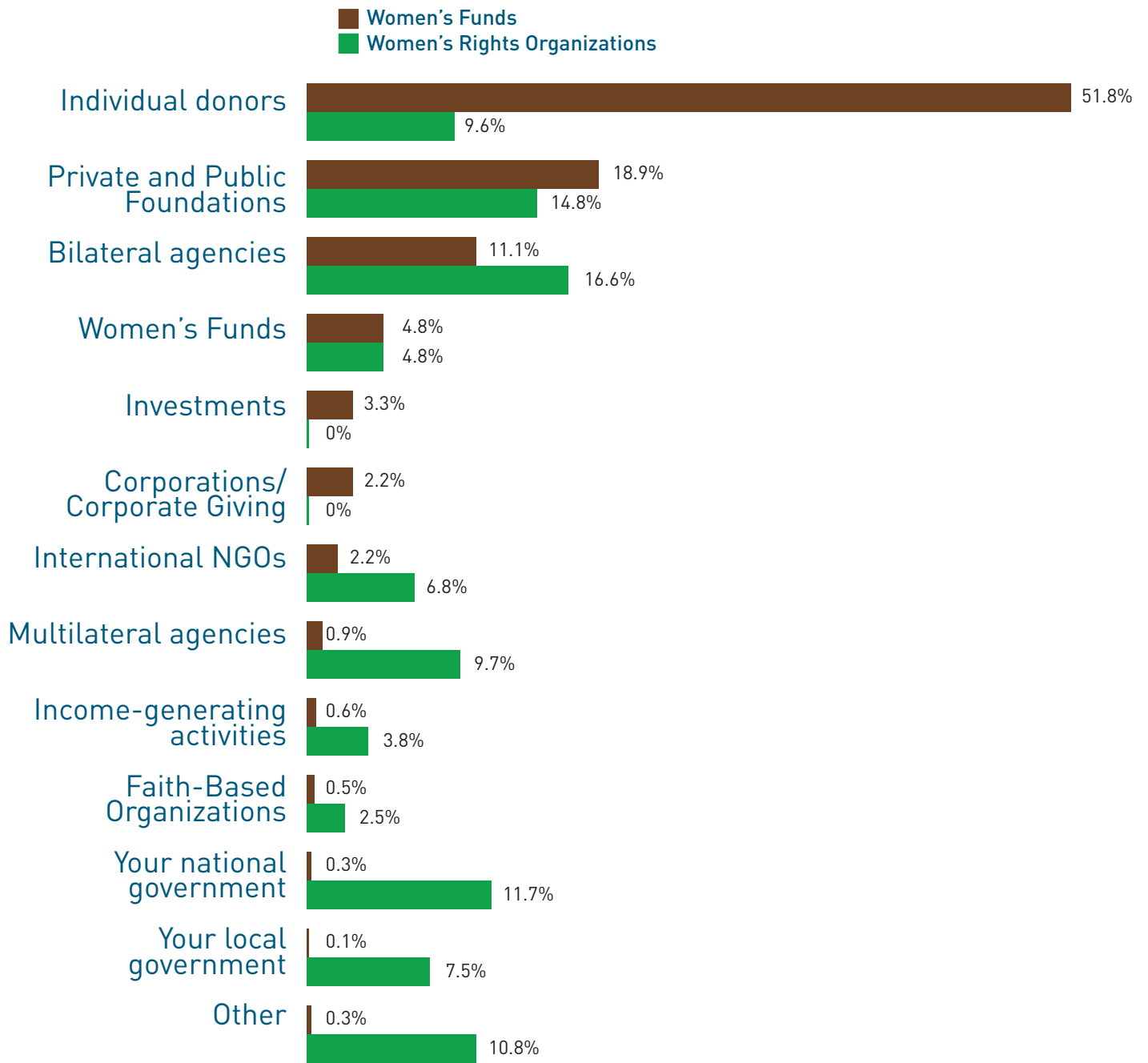
\* Definitions of bold, italicized phrases can be found in the glossary of this report.


### 3.4.2 Where does their money come from? Competition for funding or creative resource mobilization?

Previous AWID research identified a particular concern around potential competition for the same resources between women's funds and women's organizations. Part of what many women's organizations value about the women's fund community is their role in pioneering and accessing sources of funding that for different reasons are not so readily accessible to women's organizations. These include: developing individual donors and local philanthropy; tapping large pots of funding for which small women's organizations are not eligible; forging alliances for collaborative fundraising; and potentially, accessing corporate or corporate foundation support. While there is still some concern related to women's funds' drawing on the same sources that commonly support women's organizations (particularly medium to large-sized women's organizations), it is also something that women's funds are mindful of and paying close attention to.

Many women's funds are indeed mobilizing resources beyond the "usual suspects" of women's rights funding. They are also leveraging their own role as funders to advocate in various donor spaces for greater resources for women's rights organizing. AWID survey results confirm that women's funds in the sample relied on individual donations for 51.8% of their budgets, totalling USD 21 million. However - again removing from the sample the two largest funds (Mama Cash and GFW) as well as two respondents based in the U.S. - the remaining women's funds in the survey sample had individual donations that totalled about USD 2 million dollars. Among those, the largest shares of individual giving were reporting by women's funds in Germany, Korea and Central America. Despite income from individuals being a relatively small share of budgets for the remaining women's funds, they are still mobilizing individual donations at much greater levels than the 10% that individual donations constituted for women's organizations in our sample for the same year. Individual fundraising has been at the core of women's funds' model and many funds report individual funding as part of their resource mobilization strategy. Those that have been most successful in terms of the volume of resources mobilized through individuals have tended to be funds in the global North, as our data shows. At the same time, several women's funds in the South and East have been developing individual philanthropy efforts and outreach that may not yet show a high volume of resources, but are laying important groundwork to develop stronger local philanthropy cultures.

Figure 9 – Income Sectors in 2010  
– Women’s Rights Organizations and Women’s Funds






Funding received from bi- and multi-lateral sources - historically the largest source of funds for women's organizations<sup>165</sup> - now makes up a smaller share of income for women's funds. Yet anecdotal evidence points to the potential strategic role that some women's funds play in accessing large, multi-million dollar funds from bilateral donors that smaller women's organizations cannot. Such was the case with the MDG3 Fund that, among its total 45 grantees, awarded grants to 11 re-granting organizations, six of which were women's funds.<sup>166</sup> Similarly, women's funds do tap into the resources that would otherwise not be available to women's organizations. For example, Mama Cash received EUR 1.3 million from the Dutch Postcode Lottery to support the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders by re-granting these funds to "prevent, rapidly respond to, document and publicize violence against women human rights defenders in Mesoamerica."<sup>167</sup>

The art of collaboratively leveraging resources for women's rights is becoming a hallmark of how women's funds organize and collaborate amongst themselves and with their allies in women's movements. Fifty one percent of women's funds in the sample reported being engaged in some form of collaborative grant-making with other funders. Below are some examples of women's funds' collaborative resource mobilization strategies with others in the women's rights or social justice funding communities:

- The Consortium of Latin American and Caribbean Women's Funds (ConMujeres),<sup>168</sup> in alliance with the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and the U.S. Central American Women's Fund (CAWF), got together in a joint initiative that led to the creation of a basket fund for lesbian organizing. The project, "Beyond Visibility," began in 2008, had a total budget of USD 1,777,633 and funded 64 lesbian, bisexual and trans women's organizations in 16 countries. The Central American Women's Fund (FCAM) based in Managua led the coordination of the project. Ford Foundation, Mama Cash, Hivos, and the GFW<sup>169</sup> funded the collaboration.

- Mama Cash joined a coalition of several key funders for sex worker rights and activists to establish the Red Umbrella Fund (RUF). RUF is “designed to strengthen and ensure the sustainability of the sex worker rights’ movement by catalyzing new funding specifically for sex worker-led organizations and national, regional, and global networks.” RUF is governed by an international steering committee comprised of seven sex workers and four donors and planned to make at least USD 700,000 in grants in its first year - 2012. A diverse group of donors, including the GFW, the Levi Strauss Foundation, the Oak Foundation, and Comic Relief were among the ten participating donors in the design of RUF, while AIDS Fonds, American Jewish World Service, and Hivos sat on the interim International Steering Committee - the core of which consisted of sex workers to ensure that RUF responds to the needs and reflects the strategies of sex workers themselves.<sup>170</sup>
- AWID, in alliance with FCAM and with participation from young feminists from all regions have collaborated since 2010 to create “FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund.” FRIDA has been operational since 2011 and mobilized nearly USD 270,000. It provided USD 60,000 through 15 grants in its first participatory round of grant-making to young feminist-led initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Pacific and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Many of these groups received funding for the first time. FRIDA’s approach to resource mobilization has centered around cultivating new resources from traditional and non-traditional donors - especially independent foundations and corporate funders supporting youth issues, but not necessarily reaching young feminist activist initiatives. FRIDA has also been cultivating individual donations from youth donors, young philanthropists and entrepreneurs and is launching “giving circles” made up of young feminist philanthropists.<sup>171</sup>

Beyond the specific monetary values of these collaborations, they represent political contributions with far-reaching potential. The issues women’s funds prioritize (in the highlighted examples, LGBTI, labour, and sex worker rights) are often underfunded by mainstream funding sectors, or simply seen as too radical or controversial. Moreover, the reach of these collaborations is deep, and given that some larger funders interested in these issues and approaches (i.e. MDG3 Fund and FLOW) may not have capacity to fund the grassroots, channelling funding through women’s funds is an effective strategy. Another essential difference in such collaborations is close alliances with women’s organizations and constituencies for which the funding is being created and channelled, to ensure they are grounded in the movements’ needs and strategies.



The above-mentioned collaborations are within the political framework and comfort zone of women's funds. However, many women's funds are also keeping an eye on the private sector and possibilities for leveraging resources. Within the survey sample of 43 funds, only three report receiving funding from corporate sources: Mama Cash, the GFW, and the Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis, in the U.S. Other women's funds have been testing the waters and experimenting with strategic partnerships with the corporate sector for the past several years. Some interesting examples include:

- Fundo Elas in Brazil: Elas participates in a national initiative called “Movimento 360. Movimento Empresarial pelo Desenvolvimento Econômico da Mulher” (In English - Movement 360. Corporate Movement for Women's Economic Development). Partners leading the initiative include CSOs, government, academics, UN Women, Coca-Cola Company, Walmart Brazil, PepsiCo, and Procter and Gamble, among other corporations. The objective of the initiative is to “articulate and mobilize the productive sector with its enormous power of influence and action to carry out coordinated and high impact actions that help promote a real transformation in women's lives, inside and outside companies.”<sup>172</sup>
- Slovak-Czech Women's Fund (SCWF) has strived since its inception to reach out to corporate donors, with mixed success. SCWF worked, for example, with Vodafone Czech Republic on a mentoring and coaching program between business managers at Vodafone and women managers of prominent Czech NGOs. Vodafone Foundation financed the program. In 2008, SCWF sought cooperation with Google Czech Republic, by entering the Google Awards program, where SCWF is granted online space for campaigns and PR on the Google platform. In 2011, SCWF was awarded a two-year grant from Google Community Grants for the support of the Ludmila Cuchranova Memorial Stipends for young women scientists from both countries – Slovakia and Czech Republic. On several occasions, SCWF entered into partnerships with local businesses, where instead of financial contributions, they received helpful in kind donations, such as venues for events, catering, advertising space and PR spots. “At the beginning of our work we were hoping for greater involvement of the corporate sector in our work but over the years we found the work with corporations and businesses very strenuous and unpredictable, we suppose it is due partially to the high and open feminist and women's rights profile of SCWF. Nevertheless we consider the corporate sector as very important for the diversification of sources and for the societal awareness on women's rights, so we keep striving to reach out to this specific sector.”<sup>173</sup>

- Semillas, in Mexico, has been receiving funding from corporate sources since 2006. These donors include several Mexican corporate foundations, such as AVON, which supported work against gender-based violence through a multi-year grant. The national pharmaceutical company, “IFA Celtics,” supported an education campaign on sexual and reproductive rights for youth as well as contributed funding for direct grants to organizations working in the field.

Many women’s funds are quick to recognize the potential challenges in collaborations with private sector actors and emphasize the importance of critical engagement and clear criteria. At the same time, a key role for women’s funds is exploring untapped opportunities and many women’s rights organizations look to women’s funds to play an intermediary role, accessing these resources to channel to women’s movements.

Women’s funds have long been proponents of and actively advance philanthropic advocacy and donor education, including work with individual donors. Thus, the majority of the funds treat these activities, not just as an add-on to their fundraising strategies, but also as core programs in their work. For example:

- The Central American Women’s Fund’s “donathon’ for a life without violence” (*El Donatón por una vida sin violencia*), is an annual fundraising campaign that aims to promote a culture of philanthropy around women’s human rights in Central America. The donathon takes place during the 100 days between November 25<sup>th</sup> (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and March 8<sup>th</sup> (International Women’s Day) and raised more than USD 18,000 in cash and in kind donations in 2011.<sup>174</sup>
- The Chilean Women’s Fund “Alquimia” developed a “Women Trusting Women Network” to locally mobilize resources. The network “is comprised of progressive people that believe in the importance of financially supporting work carried out by several women’s rights activists and organizations in Chile.”<sup>175</sup> In 2010 the network raised USD 30,164, increasing USD 9,000 in 2011 taking it to USD 39,000, then increasing again in 2012 and totalling USD 46,100.<sup>176</sup>
- In Mexico, Semillas counts on their “Red de Mujeres y Hombres Invirtiendo en Mujeres (Red MIM)” (Women and Men’s Network Investing in Women)—a 400-person network of individual donors that are key in sustaining their work.<sup>177</sup>



- The African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF) has played a crucial role in the development of the African agenda for philanthropy as co-founders of the African Grant Makers Network. In 2002, and as result of a “coalition of African women and U.S. allies” it created the AWDF USA “to raise visibility and support in the United States for African women’s development”. It acts as a channel of American philanthropy to Africa. It has launched a new donor campaign called “Mother Africa”<sup>178</sup> and additionally, AWDF launched the “Women Changing Africa” campaign to increase their endowment and guarantee sustainability for the work they fund.<sup>179</sup>

As part of their wider donor education strategy, many women’s funds take their donors on trips to visit grantees. For example, in November 2010, AWDF organized an educational tour for donors and friends of AWDF, to Kenya, Uganda and Ghana. The objective of the trip was to give first-hand information about the work of AWDF grantees, and the interventions and contributions of African women to the development of their societies. The tour went a long way in helping participants directly experience the impact of their support.

- Fundo Elas has been playing an important role in the development of other philanthropic institutions in Brazil, creating a network of human rights funds in the country, “Rede de Fundos Independentes para a Justica Social” (Network of Independent Funds for Social Justice). It is actively supporting the creation of Baobá Fund for Racial Justice, and is a leading feminist philanthropic actor in a Brazilian social investment community that comes together as part of the GIFE.
- In the Caucasus, The Women’s Fund in Georgia is working to develop a culture of philanthropy at the local level and to “direct efforts towards changing public attitudes and values to institutionalize philanthropic practices in Georgia”. For example, the Fund organizes events aimed at “cultivating awareness and support of social change philanthropy among individuals” through “organizing fundraising dinners/parties, picnics, concerts and exhibitions that are widely publicized in local media.” They have also supported “social advertisement broadcasted on national TV called ‘Yes, I am a Feminist’, which links feminism, the fund’s work and philanthropy”. Over the past two years they have received support from over 100 individual donors that donate small amounts regularly. The fund recognizes that “While small, these donations show how individuals are expressing their solidarity with women and how they are making a contribution to advancing women’s rights in their own country.”<sup>180</sup>

Women's funds play an important political role as 'ambassador' and advocate for women's movements in funder spaces, where women's organizations do not have direct access

This is a moment that perhaps calls for women's funds to be even more precise and explicit in terms of their feminist discourse and agendas, making clear their "value-added"

### 3.4.3 Future role of women's funds in leveraging funding for women's organizations

Given the continuing reality of the very limited resources reaching women's rights organizations, it is essential for the women's funds community to grow stronger and continue to enhance their ability to fund diverse women's rights groups and fuel women's movements. As two of the largest international women's funds, the GFW and Mama Cash play critically important roles in the broader community. Shifts in their practice—changes in funding focus or grant-making cycles—often have significant impacts both on other women's funds and on the women's organizations that look to them for support. That two funds have such a large impact speaks to the need both for other funding sectors to step up and support grassroots organizing, as well as for other national and regional funds to play stronger roles for their respective constituencies.

Women's funds play an important political role as 'ambassador' and advocate for women's movements in funder spaces, where women's organizations do not have direct access. It is essential for women's funds to continue expanding and tapping new and evolving funding sources and to connect the dots with women's rights organizations. While in the past women's funds used to be the only ones pushing for support for women's organizations and women's rights, now with so many new powerful actors interested in women and girls, women's funds are no longer so clearly the 'go to' experts on the issues. In some cases, women's funds are struggling to mobilize resources from their traditional funding sources.

There are more and more groups mobilizing resources to "support women and girls." Some donors have become much more selective and directive in their donations, wanting to give more restricted funding instead of core support, and dictating themes or regions where women's funds can use their support. This is a moment that perhaps calls for women's funds to be even more precise and explicit in terms of their feminist discourse and agendas, making clear their "value-added" with sophisticated, movement-oriented support strategies for women's organizations and a non-instrumental commitment to women's rights. At the same time, the growth of private sector and other 'emerging' donors for women and girls opens up new possibilities (and challenges). Women's funds can explore new alliances and revisit some of their historical assumptions about who they can partner with - defining clear criteria for future collaborations.

### 3.5 CHANGING FACES, GEOGRAPHY AND MECHANISMS OF PHILANTHROPY


“Today [the architecture of development resources] is much more complex...To traditional government assistance and private charity are added program-related investing, mission-related investing, impact investing, venture philanthropy, social investment, e-philanthropy sites such as Kiva and Global Giving, and various corporate social engagement mechanisms...to name just a few of the new vehicles that are proliferating...”<sup>181</sup>

The private sector is not the only ‘new’ actor in development financing and philanthropy. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of new faces, actors, and mechanisms for funding that requires further exploration to fully understand the potential they might hold for women’s organizations.

Individual donors have long been perceived as beyond the reach of many women’s organizations considering the personal connections required to cultivate such relationships and the significant institutional capacity necessary to do it successfully. Many wealthy individuals also launch family foundations, which seem to operate with a somewhat different logic than more traditional large private foundations.

As reflected in other funding sectors, the philanthropic field is experiencing rapid growth in many emerging economies, with the rise of individual wealth. The past five years have seen a surge in regional and cross regional philanthropic exchanges, outside of traditional philanthropic groups in the global North. However, the landscape of philanthropy in emerging economies is still very new and evolving, with limited information available on giving practices and funding trends.

In 2012, **Brazilian philanthropy** grew by 8% compared with 2010. The total social investment of BRL 2.35 billion in 2012 is part of a continuous increase since 2009 - the peak of the global economic crisis.<sup>182</sup> In terms of issues of interest and types of contributions, it is still hard to tell, although environment seems to be one of the interest areas for philanthropic commitments in Brazil. Brazil’s philanthropic sector is united under the network, GIFE. In 2012, GIFE’s seventh Social Investment Congress was its biggest ever, with 1,500 people attending.<sup>183</sup>




A 2011 study of 203 family philanthropic initiatives in Asia shows that **Asian family philanthropy** is on the rise. Families were giving most to their home country (70% of family giving is directed to national-level causes), to the country they emigrated from or to their own ethnic or socio-linguistic communities. This study showed most giving going to educational causes (36% of giving in 2010), followed by poverty alleviation and development (10%), health (9%) and disaster relief (5%). Only 1% of contributions were earmarked for “civil rights” with no mention of human or women’s rights. As a point of comparison, data cited in this study indicates that philanthropic contributions in India and China constituted 0.6% and 0.1% of their gross domestic product (GDP), compared with 2.2% in the United States.<sup>184</sup>

The **Indian philanthropy** sector is growing with overall 2011 private charitable giving estimated between USD 5 billion to USD 6 billion, almost tripling from USD 2 billion in 2006. The most popular causes are education, housing and shelter, and food.<sup>185</sup> As one indicator of the growth of the sector, the Indian Philanthropy Forum, started in 2008, now has over 300 philanthropists and foundations as members.

Since the first was established in 1998, there are now over 40 **Russian community foundations**. The Russian Donors Forum has been around for over ten years with an established network of foundations and individuals, although giving is cautious in the current repressive political climate and primarily focused on charity causes.

To learn about **philanthropy in Mexico**, there is now a searchable database of more than 22,000 Mexican philanthropic institutions and individuals launched by the Foundation Center in New York in partnership with the Mexico-based Alternativas y Capacidades and the Philanthropy and Civil Society Project at Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM). Mexico is also home to the wealthiest man in the world in 2013, Carlos Slim Helú<sup>186</sup> who was recognized at the CGI in 2012 with the Clinton Global Citizen Award for his leadership in philanthropy<sup>187</sup> Slim has established various foundations: Telmex Foundation as the philanthropic arm of Telmex – Mexico’s largest telecommunications provider, which Slim leads; Fundación Carlos Slim A.C.; and Carso Foundation. Across these foundations and other philanthropic efforts, Slim has tended to support health (including maternal and infant mortality), education, justice, responses to natural disasters, cultural and human development, sports, and quality of life in Mexico City.<sup>188</sup> Fundación Carlos Slim has partnered with the Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative, launching two USD 20 million investment funds in Colombia and Haiti, as well as other philanthropic projects in Latin America.<sup>189</sup>




In addition to the geographic diversity, women are increasingly significant actors in the philanthropic sector worldwide, particularly in emerging economies. In 2010, the four top philanthropists in India were women (based on their contributions to causes like disaster relief, education, health, culture and sciences).<sup>190</sup> Some studies have explored the ‘untapped potential’ of women in philanthropy, primarily in the United States. From these, it has emerged that:<sup>191</sup>

- Women are more likely to give than men, and they give at higher levels — almost twice as much in some income brackets;
- Women play a key role in influencing their children to engage in philanthropy;
- Favourite causes include: community, religion, health care, youth and family;
- Women are 50 times more likely than men to give toward international and community initiatives.

Young people are also gaining traction in the philanthropy community, bringing new voices and approaches. Many young philanthropists increasingly seek to play more proactive roles. As one analysis describes, “young philanthropists...are not interested in writing checks for social problems, they are interested in investing their resources to create sustained solutions...They are loyal to solutions not to institutions...They do not see a difference between the way they look at their investment portfolios and the way they look at their philanthropy.”<sup>192</sup>

Indeed, in the broader field, notions of “philanthro-capitalism” are taking hold, marking what might be considered further infiltration of private sector logic into yet another sector of development financing. One description of philanthro-capitalism explores “the three M’s: Money, Markets, and Measurement”. “Money” represents the notion that wealthy individuals should take some responsibility for using their money for the common good. “Markets” reflect a belief that market forces should be used to distinguish effective and ineffective social programs. “Measurement” captures the reliance on data, or a firm evidence-base to inform giving choices and to “scale successful social programs”.<sup>193</sup> Related to this is a growing trend of high impact investing – with investors aiming to achieve financial returns as well as positive social and environmental impacts. Certain investment strategies explicitly target “bottom of the pyramid” (that is, the poorest of the poor) as the site of untapped profit potential, and supposedly an opportunity to also ‘do good’.<sup>194</sup>



The growth of crowdsourcing is a new shift in philanthropy that seems to facilitate greater participation in philanthropy. Some see this shift as being linked to the growing engagement by young philanthropists who are seeking to challenge traditional notions of giving - as done by a few very wealthy individuals to more broad-based giving of smaller amounts. “Crowdsourced philanthropy” exists in some companies that invite customers and employees to nominate groups to receive corporate donations.<sup>195</sup> But the method is also being adapted to support social justice work, including women’s rights.

The Catapult platform, launched by Women Deliver is “the first funding platform dedicated to gender equality.” The platform includes an array of diverse projects around the world that individuals can learn about and choose to donate to. In its early stages, this is an exciting initiative to explore the possibilities of this technology for mobilization of greater resources for women’s organizations. Already, Catapult has attracted an array of partners from outside traditional supporters of women’s organizations. Its latest collaboration with Gucci on *Chime for Change*, a “global campaign to raise funds and awareness for girls’ and women’s empowerment” has proved to be very successful. The leadership of *Chime for Change* includes celebrities Beyoncé and Salma Hayek and Gucci Creative Director, Frida Giannini.<sup>196</sup> With Gucci underwriting a 50,000 audience concert, the campaign raised USD 3.9 million and distributed it across 210 projects to 81 organizations. By far, this has been one of the fastest fundraising and awareness building campaigns around issues affecting women and girls.

Women’s movements are beginning to tap into the potential of the shifts and emerging opportunities, but there is still considerable need for information-sharing and education to ensure that women’s rights hold a stronger place both in individual giving agendas as well as among new platforms and technologies facilitating global philanthropy.

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- <sup>60</sup> As a result of the Bilateral Aid Review commissioned in May 2010, the DFID aid programme is focused in fewer countries, so that support can be targeted where it will make the biggest difference...." DFID has moved out of an aid relationship with a number of countries during 2011 and 2012: Angola, Bosnia, Burundi, Cambodia, China, Iraq, Kosovo, Lesotho, Moldova, Niger, Russia and Serbia. (Source: DFID.2012. Annual Report and Accounts 2011–12, p. 8.)
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<sup>139</sup> The program has done advocacy in the following issues: "...worked closely with a coalition of advocacy groups to obtain United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1820 and 1888, which obligate governments to prevent and prosecute acts of sexual violence during conflict". Also, supported the creation of a new UN position, the Special Representative to the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and was also part of an advocacy group working on the creation of UN Women". Based on info from: <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/internationalwomen-s-program>

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<sup>161</sup> Conducting a separate survey was also intended to address potential "double counting" of resources that women's funds tap into and distribute to other women's organizations, which may have been counted twice in past research given that women's funds filled in same survey as women's organizations.

<sup>162</sup> Some funds did not respond to some questions, thus throughout the chapter numbers of funds, references may differ based on how many responded to a given question.

<sup>163</sup> This chapter offers a brief overview of key data and analysis. More detailed findings will be made available in a forthcoming Women's Funds Funding Trends paper.

<sup>164</sup> Only 42 funds, of the total 43 survey respondents, provided detailed 2010 income data.

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<sup>167</sup> Mama Cash. "Mama Cash and Mesoamerican Initiative Awarded 1.3 million Euros." *Mama Cash*. 13 February 2012. Web. 10 April 2012. [www.mamacash.org/page.php?id=2961](http://www.mamacash.org/page.php?id=2961)

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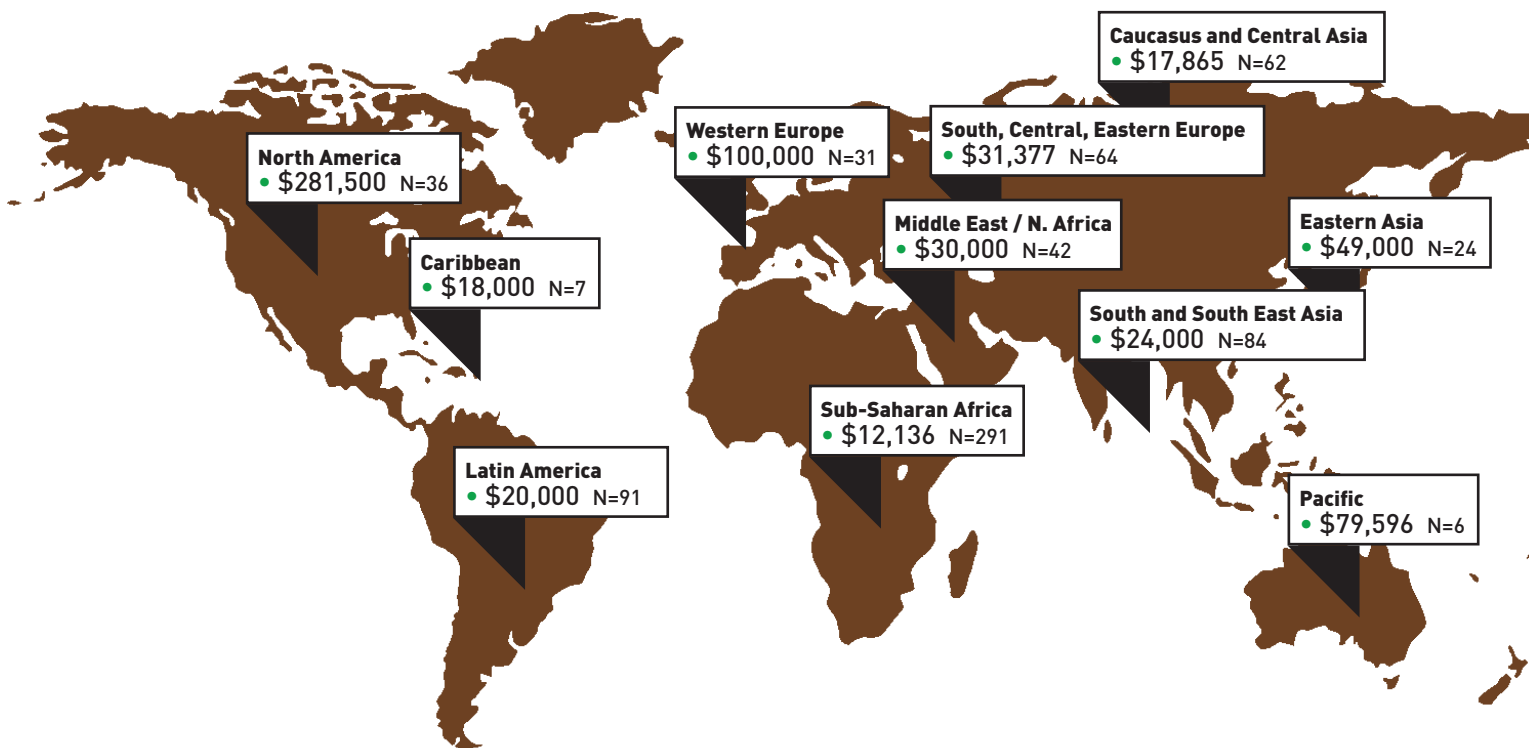
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- <sup>174</sup> See: FCAM, n. d. Web. 11 October 2013. <http://www.fcwujeres.org/boletin-fcam/01-boletin-fcam-abril-mayo-2011.htm>
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- <sup>188</sup> For more information see: Telmex Foundation: <http://www.fundaciontelmex.org> and Carso Foundation: [http://www.carlosslim.com/responsabilidad\\_ing.html#carso](http://www.carlosslim.com/responsabilidad_ing.html#carso)
- <sup>189</sup> Clinton Global Initiative. "Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative." n.d. Web. <http://www.clintonfoundation.org/main/news-and-media/press-releases-and-statements/press-release-clinton-giustra-sustainable-growth-initiative-and-fundaci%C3%A3%C2%B3n-carlo.html>
- <sup>190</sup> Anonymous. "Forbes' Top Philanthropists From India Are All Women." *The Economic Times* 6 March 2012. Web. 11 September 2012. [http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2010-03-06/news/27573802\\_1\\_listfeatures-forbes-biggest-givers](http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2010-03-06/news/27573802_1_listfeatures-forbes-biggest-givers)
- <sup>191</sup> See Mesch. Debra. "Women Give 2012: New Research about Women and Giving." *Women's Philanthropy Institute*. Indianapolis, IN: The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2012. Web. 11 September 2012 <http://philanthropy.iupui.edu/files/research/womengive2012forrelease.pdf>; Mesch. Debra. "Women Give 2010: New Research about Women and Giving." *Women's Philanthropy Institute*. Indianapolis, IN: The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2012. Web. 11 September 2012; [http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/files/file/women\\_give\\_2010\\_report.pdf](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/files/file/women_give_2010_report.pdf); Krotz, Joanna. "Making Philanthropy Count: How Women are Changing the World." *Women's Philanthropy Institute at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University*. Indiana: Indiana University, 2009. Web. 11 September 2012. [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/files/file/making\\_philanthropy\\_count.pdf](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/files/file/making_philanthropy_count.pdf).
- <sup>192</sup> Center for Global Prosperity. *The Index of Global Philanthropy and Remittances 2012*. Hudson Institute: Washington, DC, pp 9-10. 2012. Web. April 9 2013. [www.hudson.org/files/publications/2012IndexofGlobalPhilanthropyandRemittances.pdf](http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/2012IndexofGlobalPhilanthropyandRemittances.pdf)
- <sup>193</sup> Rogers, Robin. "Why Philanthro-Policymaking Matters." *Springer Science+Business Media*, LLC 48 (2011): 376–381. Web. 9 April 2013. <http://robinrogers.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/RogersPhilanthro-1.pdf>
- <sup>194</sup> Koh, Harvey, Ashish Karamchandani, and Robert Katz. *From Blueprint to Scale: The Case for Philanthropy in Impact Investing*. Mumbai, India: Monitor Group, 2012. Web. 9 April 2013. <http://www.mim.monitor.com/blueprinttoscale.html>
- <sup>195</sup> Olsen, Kate, and Allison McGuire. "Voting for Good: Crowdsourced Philanthropy." *Companies for Good Blog*, 2012. Web. 9 April 2013. [www.thenetworkforgood.org/t5/Companies-For-Good/Voting-for-Good-Crowdsourced-Philanthropy/ba-p/8909](http://www.thenetworkforgood.org/t5/Companies-For-Good/Voting-for-Good-Crowdsourced-Philanthropy/ba-p/8909).
- <sup>196</sup> Catapult. *Chime for Change*. 2013. Web. 9 April 2013. [www.catapult.org/content/chime](http://www.catapult.org/content/chime).

# 4: What Do We Know about the Financial State of Women's Organizations?

Figure 10 – Financial Situation of Women's Rights Organizations Globally in 2010

Base: 740 women's organizations N = Number of Respondents \$ = Median Income in USD

- 140 countries
- 85% registered organizations



Now visualize these numbers in relation to some large international NGOs for the same year 2010  
\$ = USD

The median income of women's organisations in the sample

\$20,000

740 women's organisations – combined income

\$106 million

Greenpeace Worldwide

\$309 million

Save the Children International

\$1.442 billion

World Vision International

\$2.611 billion

background map: Vector Open Stock [www.vectoropenstock.com](http://www.vectoropenstock.com)

Since 2005, AWID's *Where is the Money for Women's Rights?* global surveys have pioneered a methodology for monitoring resource flows to women's organizations, collecting an array of data on women's organizations' budgets, funding sources, and fundraising realities. Our 2011 survey continued this trajectory, going deeper and exploring many new issues – such as the role of the women's funds. In this section, we present the results from the 2011 survey, highlighting some of the principal trends in the data as well as continuities and differences from past findings.

#### 4.1 PROFILE OF THE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS MAKING UP THE SURVEY SAMPLE<sup>197</sup>

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The universe of women's organizations around the world is vast and diverse – and most importantly – uncharted, so there is no way to establish whether the sample of organizations responding to our survey are 'representative' of the broader landscape or not. AWID has made every effort to circulate the survey questionnaire as widely as possible, made it available in five languages to encourage groups from different linguistic regions to participate, and ensured that the data finally included was carefully cleaned. Consequently, we are as confident as it is possible to be within these constraints about the rigour of our study and the quality of our results.

The 2011 global survey was completed by 1,119 women's organizations from over 140 countries – the largest number of respondents to date.<sup>198</sup> The significant size and diversity of the sample offers important information and insight that is useful for understanding the funding situation of women's organizations globally. For the purposes of this survey, responses were accepted from: nongovernmental, non-profit organizations or non-registered groups of women, and collectives or initiatives with a mission or work that primarily or significantly focused on promoting women's rights, gender equality and/or women's empowerment.

The profile of organizations responding to the survey remains largely similar to that of past AWID surveys. The majority of respondents (85%) are legally registered organizations; over half work at national (55%) and local (52%) levels, about a fifth work regionally (19%) or internationally (12%). This is similar to the sample from our 2006 survey with the exception that organizations working internationally were more represented (18%) in 2006.<sup>199</sup> The regional distribution<sup>200</sup> of survey respondents is similar to that of past surveys also, though with less participation from groups in Latin America and the Caribbean (16%) and slightly more participation from groups based in Sub-Saharan Africa (37%).

Also consistent with past surveys is that organizations in the sample were relatively young. Thirty-one percent of respondents are quite new, having been founded between 2006-2009. These newer organizations are distributed across regions, largely in keeping with the regional representation in the survey. However this round of the survey saw a lower percentage (37%) of respondents that were founded before 1999, compared to almost 61% in 2006. This could indicate that established organizations were less inclined to respond to the survey, or it may also be pointing to some of the anecdotal evidence received from survey participants who mentioned that they know of older organizations that have closed down due to lack of funding.

When asked about specific populations they work with (with the option to choose up to five different groups) survey respondents said they prioritize working with women living in rural areas/women peasants (49%), grassroots women (46%), community leaders (36%), women living with HIV and AIDS (26%), Women living in slums/peri-urban areas (26%), women human rights defenders at risk (24%) and indigenous women (21%).

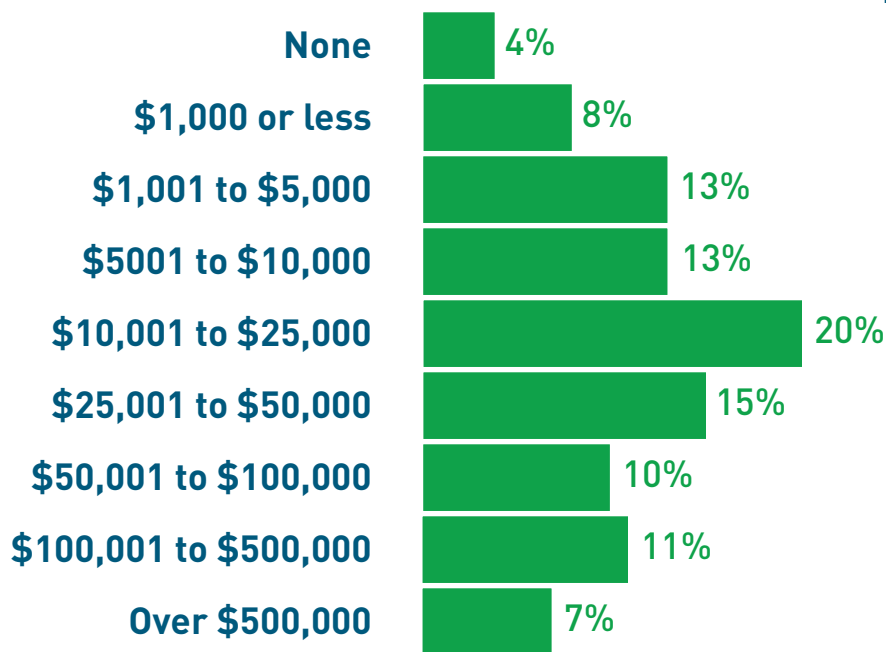
## 4.2 INCOME LEVELS OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS SURVEYED

Although women's organizations in the sample tended to have quite small incomes, similar to what was found in previous surveys, we do see a slight but positive change compared to 2005. The median<sup>201</sup> annual income of women's organizations participating in the survey more than doubled from USD 9,250 in 2005<sup>202</sup> to USD 22,750 in 2010<sup>203</sup>. The share of organizations reporting budgets of over USD 500,000 grew from 5% in 2005 to 8% in 2010. [Figures 1 and 2] Yet the highest growth rates were concentrated in the smaller to middle income categories (organizations with incomes between USD 10,000 and USD 100,000), confirming results from the 2<sup>nd</sup> FundHer Report that showed most growth is being driven by smaller organizations. What remains striking is that, when combined, the 2010 incomes of 740 women's organizations totalled just USD 106 million – a fraction of the budget for many individual, large international NGOs. While we know that this USD 106 million does not represent the complete 'pie' of resources for women's organizations. But the large size of this sample means that these findings are broadly relevant for the diversity of women's organizations, the majority of whom are *not* being reached by the larger pots of money available, for example, from bilateral and multilateral agencies.

Across regions, there is wide variation in the size of the median income of women’s organizations that is consistent with the economic profile of the regions in which they are located. The highest median incomes in our sample are found in organizations located in North America, Europe, and the Pacific (which, for this survey, includes organizations from Australia and New Zealand, and is thus not necessarily well-reflective of all Pacific Island groups), in some cases reaching a level that is 14 times larger than the median income of the entire sample. The organizations with the smallest median incomes are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Figure 13 shows a comparison of income ranges across regions.

Figure 11 – Income in 2010 with Median

- Base: 740 Women's Rights Organizations
- Median: \$ 20,000



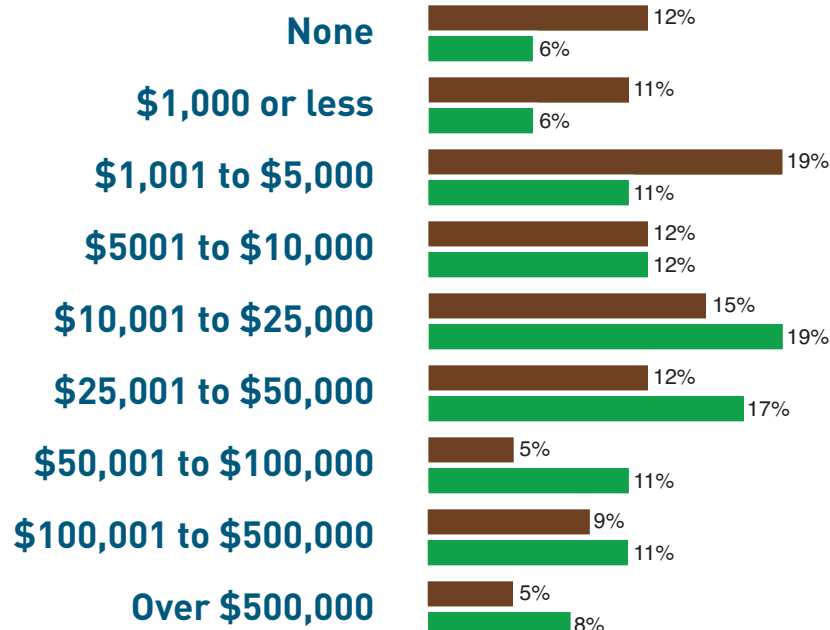
## 4.2.1 Sources of funding

In the 2011 survey, we witnessed for the first time the prominence of individual giving, membership fees and income-generation activities as primary sources of support for many organizations (more than one third of sampled organizations mentioned each of these sources).<sup>204</sup> Further, 17% indicated they had never received external funding from donors but had relied on combinations of income generating activities, membership fees and other “self-generated” resources. These sources of income were most often mentioned by groups in Sub-Saharan Africa (40% reporting these sources), followed by Latin America (18%) and South and Southeast Asia (12%). North American women’s organizations obtained the most income from individual donors (68%, even though only 18 organizations drew from this source), while organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa drew only 17% of their total income from individual donations. Respondents commented on the role of these more ‘self-generated’ resources, noting that they help provide a basic level of financial security or can be used as a stop-gap measure in times of funding constraints, providing freedom and flexibility in resource allocation. However, these self-generated resources generally do not account for a very substantial amount of overall income.

■ 2005  
■ 2010

Figure 12 – Income Changes 2005 – 2010

- Base: Women’s Rights Organizations providing income data for both 2005 and 2010 N=388
- Median in 2005: \$9,750
- Median in 2010: \$22,750
- Increase: 133%





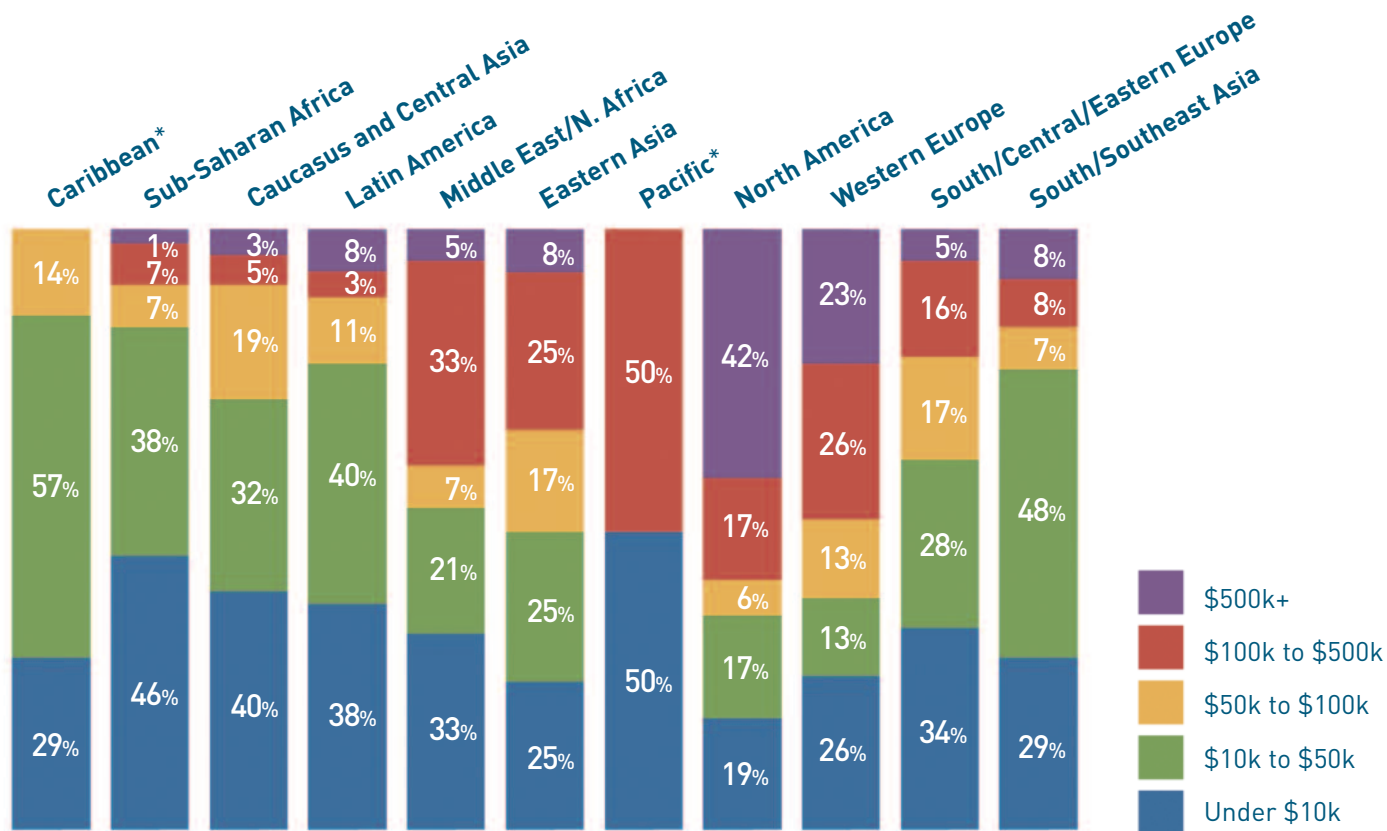
Following various forms of self-generated resources, women’s funds were the next most frequent source of income, reported by over one quarter of survey respondents.<sup>205</sup> This was followed by multilateral agencies and private and public foundations, each mentioned by almost one sixth of women’s organizations. In contrast, bilaterals, national governments, and INGOs were mentioned by only about one-tenth of women’s organizations in the sample.

When analyzing how much funding women’s organizations in our sample received from various donor sectors, Figure 14 shows which donors make up the largest shares of income among respondents in 2010 compared to 2005.<sup>206</sup> The figure shows slight increases from bilateral and multilateral agencies (23% to 27%) and private foundations (13% to 15%), with significant increases in funding from local and national governments, jumping from 11% in 2005 to 20% in 2010. In contrast, the share of income reported from INGOs appeared to decrease from 14% in 2005 to 7% in 2010. The share of income coming from women’s funds remained constant at 5%.

Figure 13 – Revenue Ranges by Region: 2010

\* Regional Sample Under 50

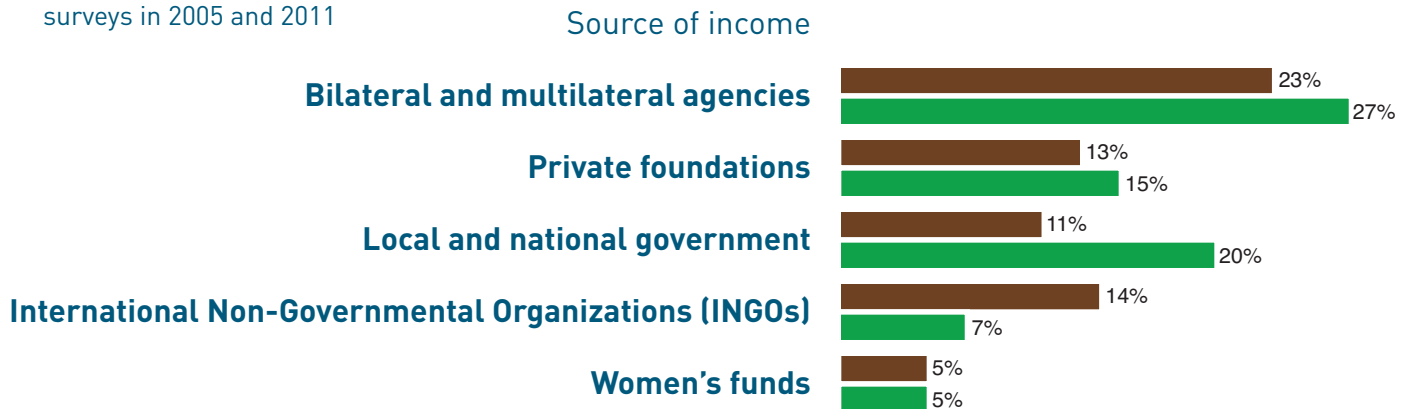
• Base: 740 Women’s Rights Organizations



■ 2005  
■ 2010

• Source: Data from AWID surveys in 2005 and 2011

Figure 14 – Largest Shares of Income for Women's Organizations 2005 2010




Unsurprisingly, organization size and sources of funding seem to be closely related. Bilaterals and multilaterals were each mentioned as funding sources by 49% of organizations with budgets over USD 50,000. Foundations and women's funds are the donors reaching smaller organizations (with budgets under USD 25,000). Organizations with budgets under USD 25,000 also seem to be relying solidly on individual donations (53%) and income-generating activities (56%). Individual donations account for 25% for organizations with budgets between USD 25,000- 100,000 and 18% for organizations with budgets over USD 100,000. Income-generating activities equalled 23% for organizations between USD 25,000-100,000 and 19% for those with budgets over USD 500,000.

Comparing the data on sources of income across regions also presents some interesting results and points of comparison to 2005.

While women's organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa still report relying on traditional sectors of funding, particularly bi- and multilaterals and INGOs, there is now much more income being reported in this region from local and national governments (over 14%, double the amount reported in our last survey for 2005).

Asia and the Pacific still tend to rely on traditional donor sources, such as those mentioned above, and the share of donor engagement in the region has remained relatively constant since our 2005 survey. What has changed in this region is a major increase in women's organizations accessing funding from national governments—primarily in South and Southeast Asia.



Past AWID surveys clustered the Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) region, but it is interesting to look at some of the differences between South/Central/Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and Central Asia. Currently, in the CEE region, national governments were the second most significant source of funding for survey respondents, while in the Caucasus and Central Asia, women's funds were the second most important (in both regions, bi- and multilateral sources are still in the number one position). Particularly in the Caucasus and Central Asia (8%), and somewhat less in South/Central/Eastern Europe (3%), faith-based organizations emerge as a source of funding. The only other region where ***faith-based organizations\**** appear as a significant source of income is in the Middle East and North Africa (5%).

The situation in the Middle East and North Africa has shifted somewhat, with women's organizations in this region reporting more income from bi- and multilateral donors, but also a drop in the share of income coming from private foundations and INGOs. Income-generating activities also constitute a larger share of income for women's organizations in this region than what was reflected in past AWID surveys.

For women's organizations responding to our survey from Latin America and the Caribbean, their number one source of income is now local and national governments (accounting for 27% of reported income – most of that from local governments; a significant increase from 8% in 2005). Compared to reports in 2005, there is a slight decrease in the share of income coming from bi- and multilateral agencies as well as from private foundations in the region.

North America is the only region where individual donors make up the largest share of income reported by women's organizations in our survey (24%). National and local governments came in second as 22% of the income reported in this region.

This is a striking contrast to Western Europe, where individual donors made up just 1% of reported income for women's organizations. Instead, bi- and multilaterals were at the top of the list, accounting for 44% of the income for women's organizations in this region (the largest share from this sector to any region). Private foundations as well as national and local governments were the next most significant income sources.

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*\* Definitions of bold, italicized phrases can be found in the glossary of this report.*

## 4.2.2 Issues and strategies

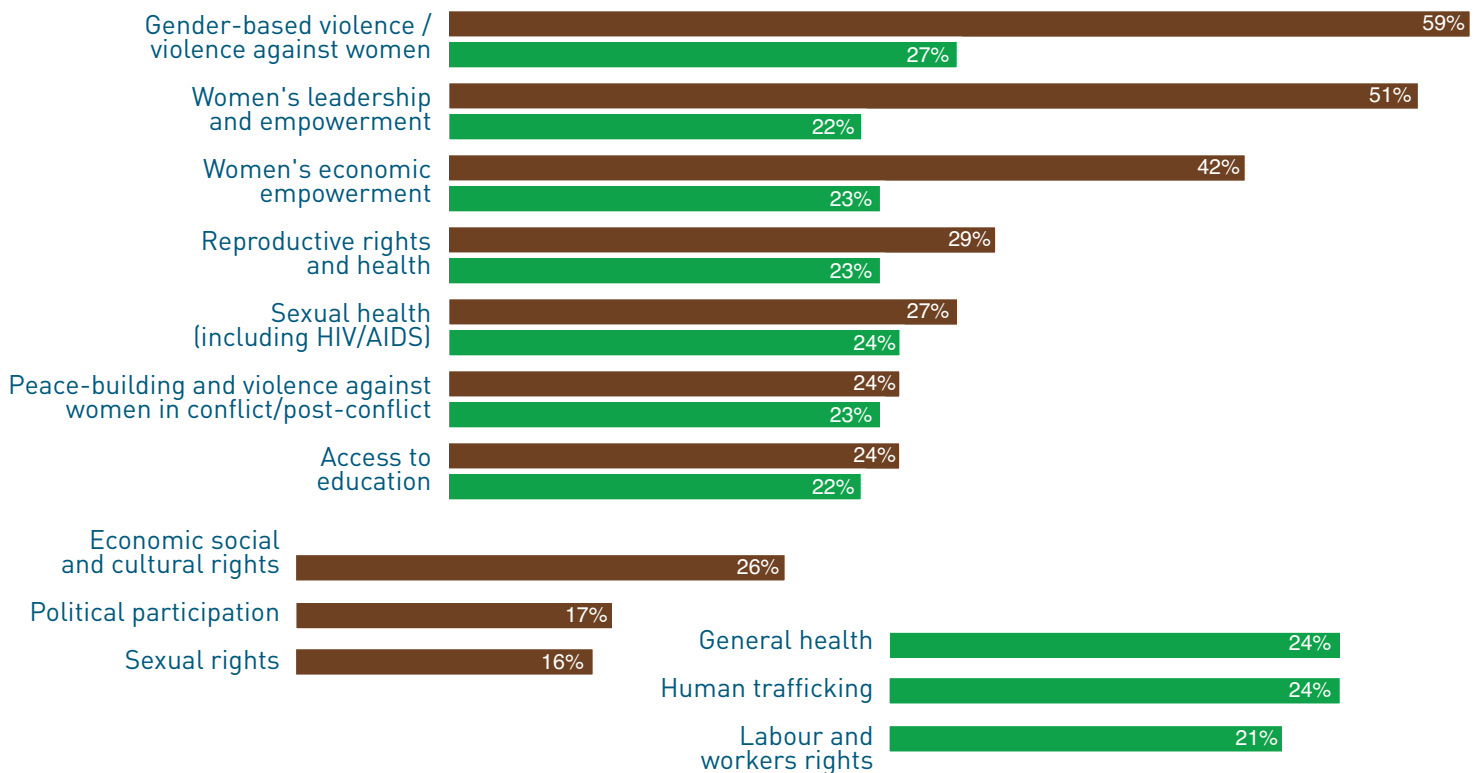
We often hear of concerns around “donor-driven” agendas. This is where donor priorities do not necessarily align with the priorities of women’s organizations, who find themselves shifting the focus of their work in order to attract or qualify for funding. For the first time, we attempted to unpack some of these dynamics by asking survey respondents to identify their priority issues, populations and strategies compared to those for which they receive dedicated funding.<sup>207</sup>

In terms of priority issues, there was considerable alignment between the top ten priorities identified by women’s organizations and the top ten issues to which their donor funding was directed. These included: gender-based violence/violence against women; women’s leadership and empowerment and women’s economic empowerment; reproductive health and rights; sexual health (including HIV and AIDS); peace-building and violence against women in contexts of conflict/post-conflict; and access to education. The three issues for which women’s organizations reported *not* receiving external support were: economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCRs), political participation, and sexual rights.

• Base: 1,119 women’s rights organizations

Figure 15 – Priority Issues

■ Women’s Organizations Priority Issues  
 ■ Average Donor Funding as Reported by Women’s Organizations\*  
 \*Among those funded for that issue




When it comes to strategies, however, there appears to be slightly less convergence between women’s organizations and their funders. The majority of women’s organizations in the sample employed strategies of capacity-building and women’s empowerment programs to achieve their goals. Over two thirds prioritized awareness-raising, advocacy and campaigning, and leadership development as key strategies. Around one quarter prioritized networking and alliance-building, organizing meetings, convenings and dialogues, movement-building and women’s organizing, microfinance and income-generation and communications. In contrast, the preferred strategy of donors appears to be direct service provision – this was the most frequently reported strategy for which survey respondents received funding. But service provision does not appear in the top ten priority strategies of our respondents.

• Base: 1,119 women’s rights organizations

Figure 16 – Priority Strategies





Other strategies that appear on women’s organizations’ top ten priorities list, but not within the top ten strategies for which they receive donor support are: leadership development, networking/alliance-building, organizing meetings/dialogues to analyze and strategize, movement-building and women’s organizing, and communications and information. This aligns with what many women’s rights activists have said over the years: that it is becoming increasingly difficult to convince donors to support crucial mobilization and movement-building work such as networking, meetings, and communications, which are strategies that are difficult to quantify and/or link to direct impacts “on the ground.”

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### 4.3 FINANCIAL RESILIENCE OF WOMEN’S ORGANIZATIONS

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As discussed previously, there have been many important shifts in the context impacting resources for women’s rights organizing. The financial crisis and economic recession, an emphasis on austerity, political shifts in donor countries favouring parties disinclined to support development cooperation—these are examples of the unpredictable environment that shapes access to funding for most women’s organizations. Given the likelihood of these challenges continuing in the years ahead, what do we know about the financial resilience of women’s organizations—the strategies, assets or ‘cushion’ available to them to continue their work through difficult financial times? For the first time, the 2011 survey asked a series of questions related to financial resilience.

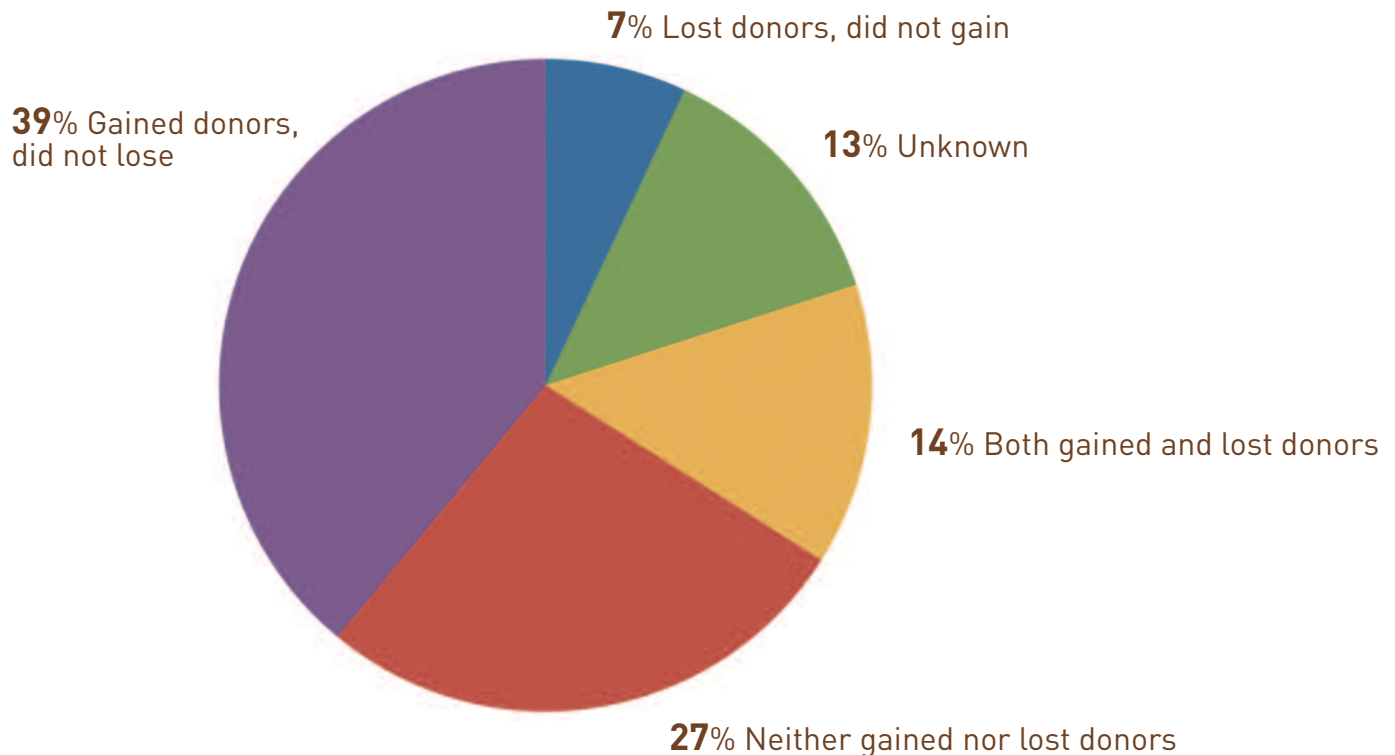
Funders often ask about organizational sustainability, which can sound as though there is an expectation of women’s organizations becoming “self-sustaining”. If we consider that “sustainability represents resiliency over time”<sup>208</sup> what makes an organization financially resilient, or able to successfully navigate new funding contexts and unforeseen circumstances? Diversification of income sources is certainly key and as we have seen, many women’s organizations are working to generate income streams through membership or services. Assets and savings are also an important ingredient for resilience. And, we would argue, the *quality* of funding is also key: organizations with multi-year, flexible (core) funding are also more resilient.

### 4.3.1 Weathering crisis and fundraising

Women’s organizations have felt mixed impacts since the onset of the 2008 financial crisis. As seen below, a larger percentage of survey respondents have actually gained or kept the same donors - rather than lost donors - since 2008. But 223 organizations in the sample did lose donors, and across the entire sample of 1,119 organizations, these were some of the impacts of donor loss: 14% of all organizations were forced to cut activities; 11% cut programs and projects; 10% reduced staff size and 8% had staff that went without salaries. Moreover, one fifth (or well over 200) of all women’s organizations in the sample reported experiencing the threat of closing down due to financial shortfalls. The data suggests that the threat of closure may have affected organizations from Latin America and Western Europe to a greater degree than organizations in other regions.

Figure 17 – Lost and gained donors

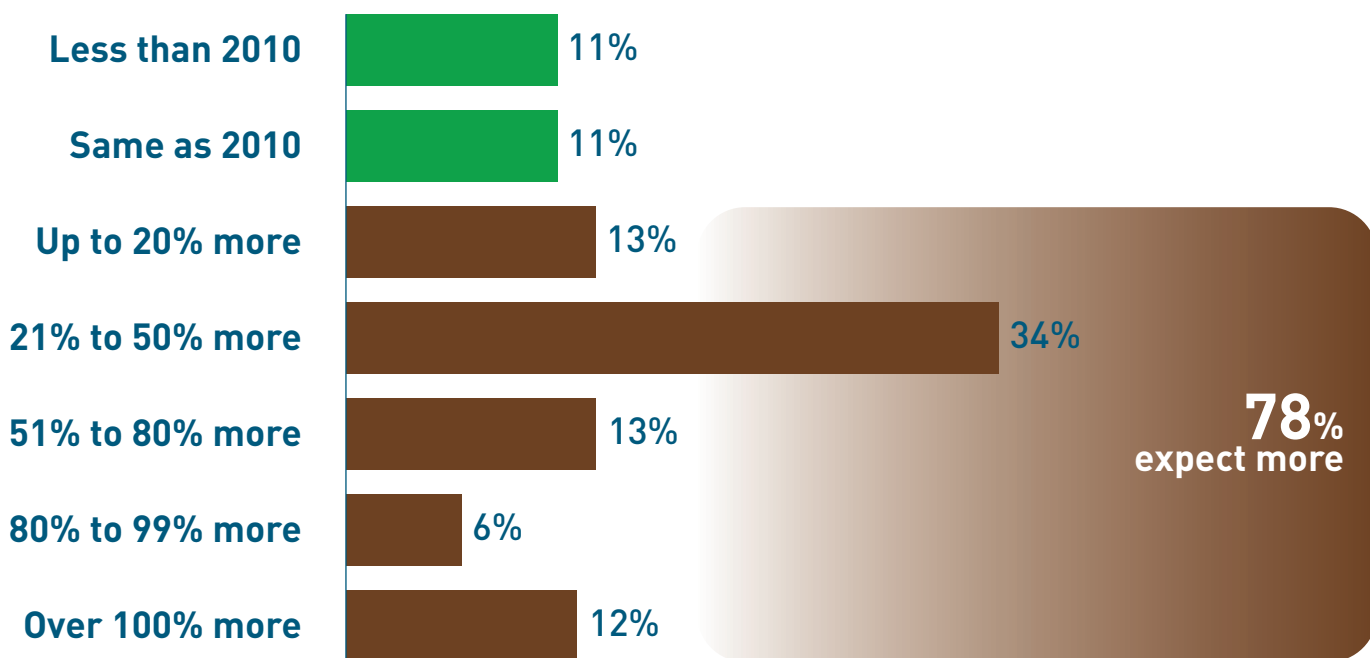
• Base: 1,070 Women's Rights Organizations



In spite of these challenges, the vast majority of women’s organizations remained optimistic about their future growth, with 78% of respondents expecting to grow their organization’s overall income by 2015. Nearly half (44%) of the survey respondents met their ideal budgets for 2010 or reported budget surpluses (3%). However, of the 35% of respondents that experienced a major budget shortfall in 2010, the majority (54%) experienced shortfalls of 20 to 50% of their budgets while 14% experienced larger shortfalls of 55-75%.

• Base: 903 women’s rights organizations

Figure 18 – Expected Budget Growth from 2010 to 2015

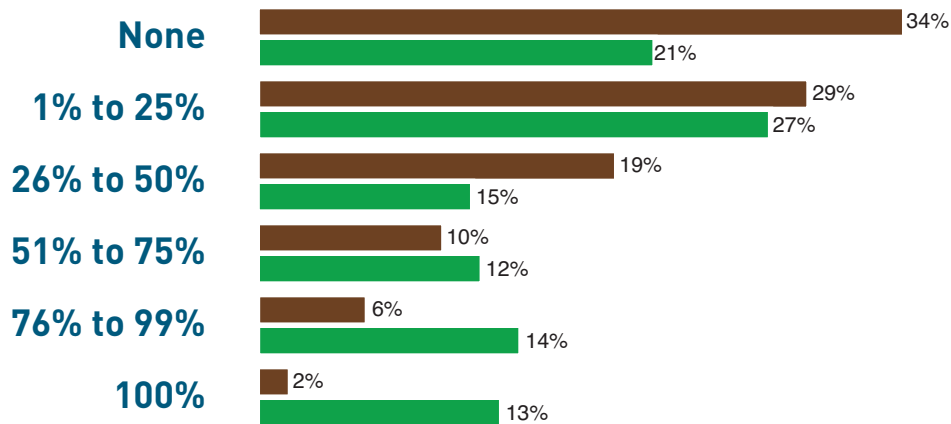




The picture we see is far from complaisance: the organizations in our sample seem to be in a constant scramble to raise funds, even if some of them have been more successful than others in reaching their budget goals. As of the last quarter of 2011, only 13% of our survey respondents had fully secured the funding they needed for that year and only 2% had secured all of their funding for the following year (2012). Small organizations (with annual income under USD 25,000) tended to have raised less of their 2011 budgets than larger organizations.

Figure 19 – Budget Secured 2011 – 2012

■ 2012  
■ 2011



- Base: 989 women's rights organizations
- Averages:  
2011: 41%  
2012: 25%
- Survey conducted Oct-Dec, 2011

For 2011, 138 (64%) of women's organizations that had not secured any income toward their projected budgets had previously received external funding while 71 (34%) of them had never received external funding.

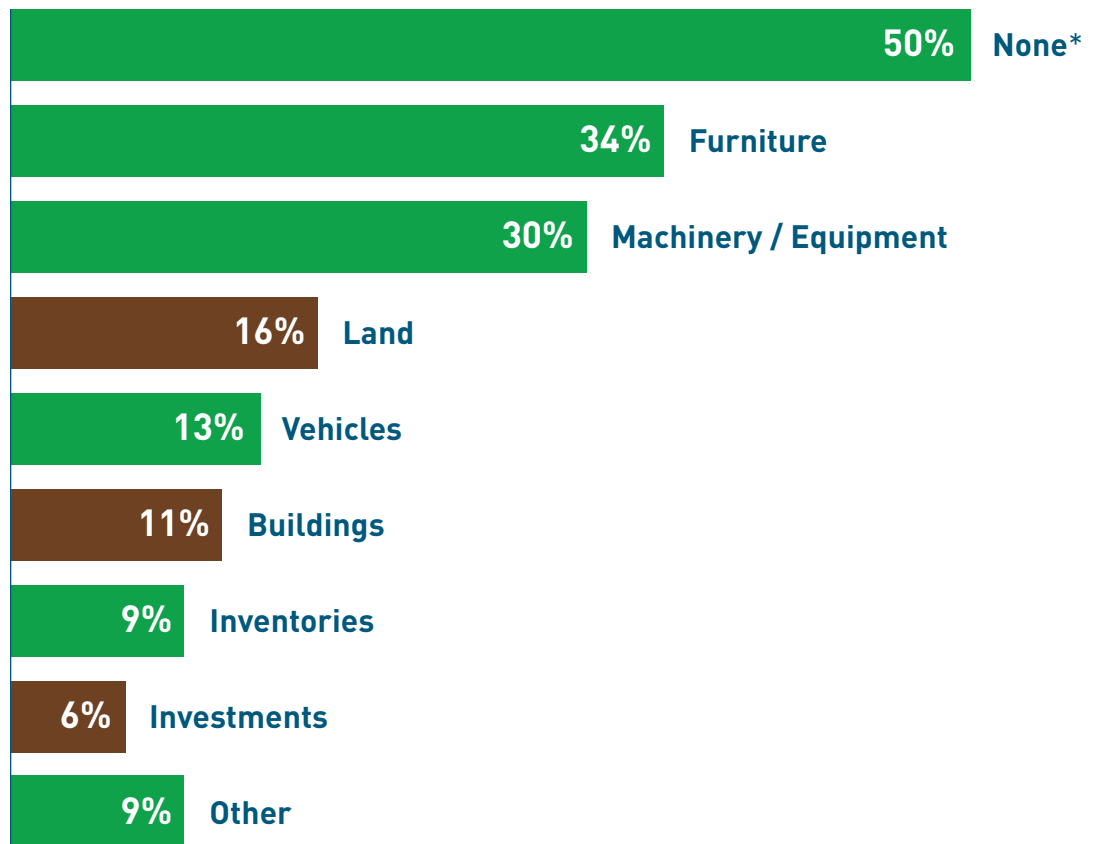
### 4.3.2 Assets, savings and safety nets

In addition to challenges of reliably securing external income, low assets, savings, and safety nets also compromise the financial resilience of women’s organizations in the sample. Half of women’s organizations in the sample reported having no assets and of the 45% that did hold assets, most of these were depreciating (e.g. vehicles, machinery/equipment, furniture) (see Figure 20 Assets). Over 30% of women’s organizations in the sample reported having no savings or reserves. Median savings equalled a paltry USD 500 and 75% of women’s organizations in the survey described having USD 6,000 or less in savings. This means that in a crisis situation, most women’s organizations would not be able to access the cash needed to sustain their work even for a short period.

- Base: 1,119 women's rights organizations
- Multiple assets specified
- Among those with assets:  
Median assets value: \$10,000  
78% has assets under \$50,000

\*5% said "don't know"

Figure 20 – Assets in 2010

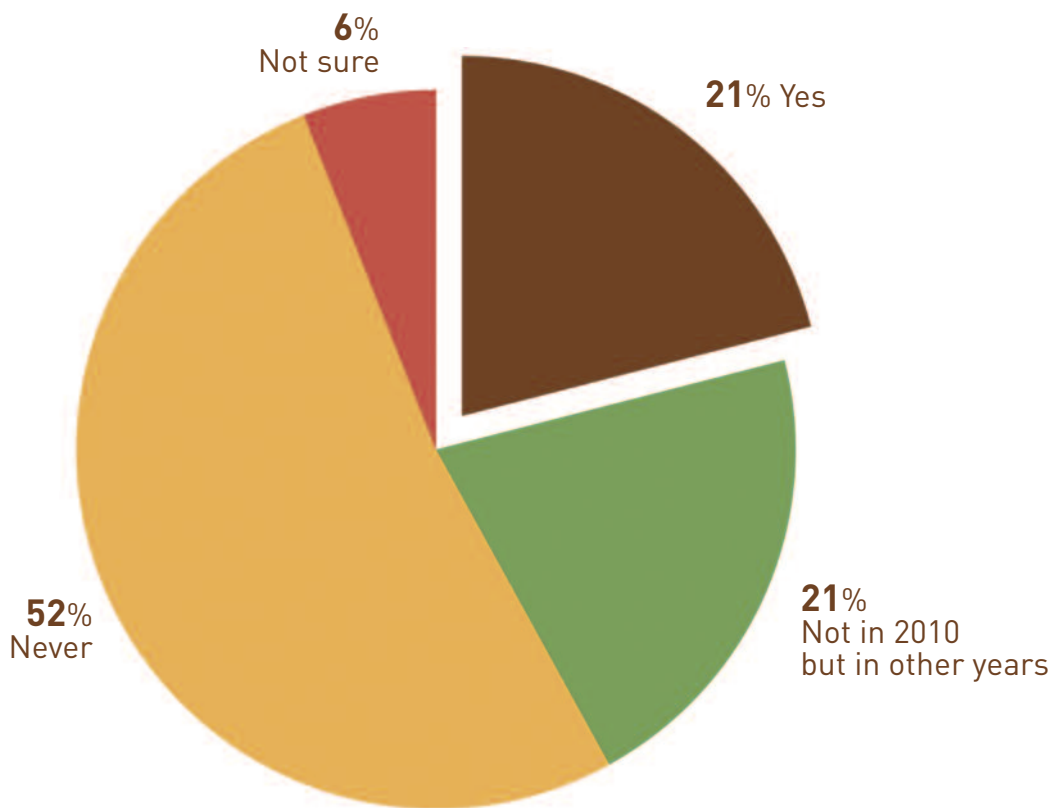


### 4.3.3 Funding quality

In terms of the quality and flexibility of funding for women's organizations in the sample, multi-year and core funding<sup>209</sup> remain the exception rather than the norm. Fifty-two percent had never received multi-year funding and nearly half (48%) have never received core, flexible funding for their work. Some organizations reported receiving core and multi-year support in the past (13% and 42% respectively) but few had received these types of funding in 2010 (28% and 21% respectively).

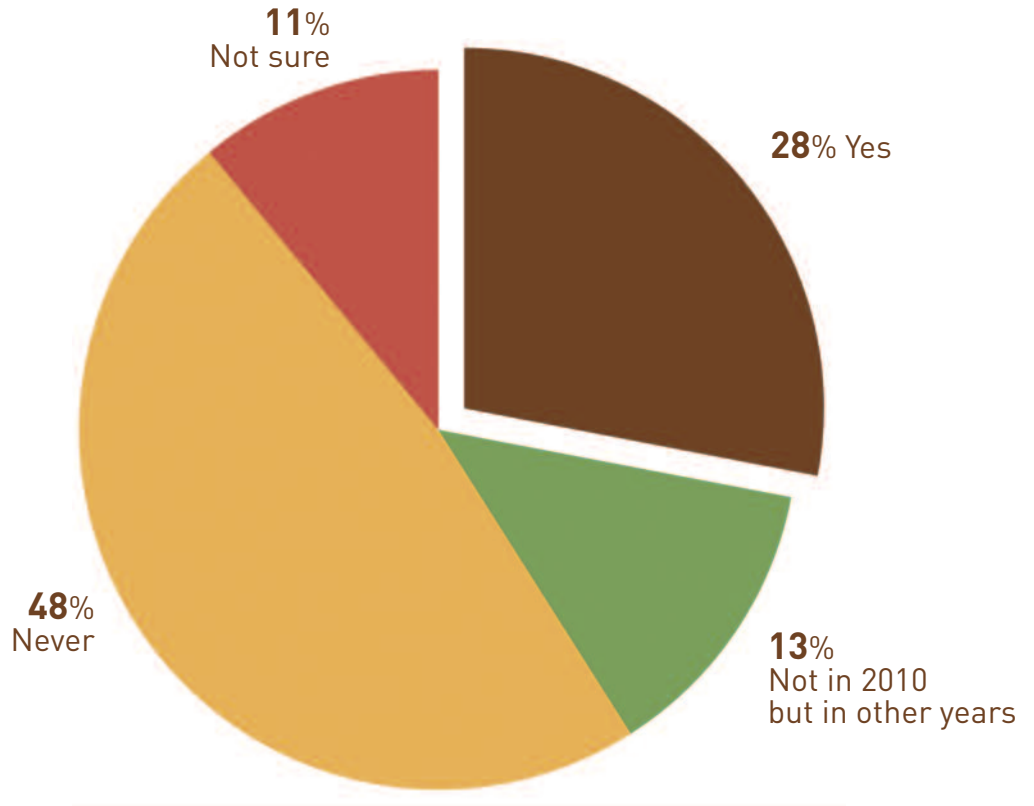
Figure 21 – Multi-year Funding

• Base: 1,119 women's rights organizations



• Base: 1,119 women's rights organizations

Figure 22 – Core Funding



The greatest concentration of multi-year funding was reported in Western Europe and North America and the lowest in the Pacific and the Caucasus/Central Asia. For core funding, the greatest concentration appears in women's organizations in North America and the lowest concentration in Sub-Saharan Africa. The top sources of multi-year support were diverse, with most coming from the EU, national governments, Oxfam-Novib, Ford Foundation, Global Fund for Women and UN Women. In contrast, the top sources of core support reported by women's organizations include the Global Fund for Women and Mediterranean Women's Fund, along with sources such as individuals and income-generating activities, local and national governments.

Both multi-year and core funding – and flexible funding in general - are important both to foster financial resilience and to support initiatives that work to transform gender inequalities in more sustained ways. Paradoxically, it seems that the more donors become concerned with results, the more inclined they are to support narrowly focused and time-bound activities to see a “return on investment”. It is precisely this approach to funding that makes it difficult to secure meaningful results in terms of women’s empowerment and gender equality. An aggregate analysis of the impact of work by grantees of the MDG3 Fund, also conducted by AWID, indicates that grantees attribute some of the success of the Fund to the fact that it was so large-scale (and multi-year), as well as the flexibility that it provided to engage in an array of strategies and to adjust course during the program period to account for contextual changes.<sup>210</sup> That so few organizations in our survey sample reported receiving similarly flexible funding is troubling, given the complex and long-term challenges they are working to address.

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<sup>197</sup> The 2011 Global Survey was circulated in five languages (Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish). To maximize the quality of the sample, not only were ‘filtering’ questions asked to ensure that respondents fit our definition of women’s organizations, but the research team reviewed the mission statements and in some cases websites of the responding organizations. Thus, from more than 1,500 responses received, there were a valid total of 1,119 survey responses from women’s organizations in over 140 countries.

<sup>198</sup> For more detailed information on survey results and methodology, see: Pittman, A. et al. "2011 AWID Global Survey 'Where Is The Money For Women's Rights?' Preliminary Research Results" Toronto: AWID. 2012. Web. 15 October 2013. [www.awid.org/Library/2011-AWID-Global-Survey-Where-is-the-Money-for-Women-s-Rights-Preliminary-Research-Results](http://www.awid.org/Library/2011-AWID-Global-Survey-Where-is-the-Money-for-Women-s-Rights-Preliminary-Research-Results). Of note regarding the survey sample is that some of the women’s organizations that have benefited from recent large funds such as the Dutch MDG3 Fund and the UN Fund for Gender Equality did not complete the survey. Nevertheless, our sizeable sample leaves us confident that the results present an accurate picture of the situation for women’s organizations broadly speaking.

<sup>199</sup> Organizations could select more than one level of work.

<sup>200</sup> We have adjusted the regional categorizations since 2005, so the chart clusters sub-regions that were counted as a single region in the previous research.

<sup>201</sup> The median represents the true middle value across the entire sample. It is used in place of the mean (average) when there is a high degree of variation in the sample, or when distribution is skewed, either on the high or low ends.

<sup>202</sup> Based on the 388 organizations that provided data for both 2005 and 2010 in AWID’s 2011 survey. These numbers were translated from local currencies and were not controlled for inflation.

<sup>203</sup> This is close to the median income of \$20,000 for all 740 organizations that responded to the survey with 2010 income data. All other data is with the full sample of 1,119 unless otherwise noted.

<sup>204</sup> This analysis only includes data from the 645 organizations that reported income for each donor. Thirty-eight percent of women’s organizations mentioned individual donors, 37% mentioned membership fees, and 29% mentioned income-generating activities as an income source.

<sup>205</sup> Twenty-eight percent of women’s organizations mentioned women’s funds as an income source; 13% mentioned multilateral organizations and public and private foundations as an income source, and 11% mentioned bilaterals, national governments, and INGOs each as income sources.

<sup>206</sup> The amounts haven’t been adjusted by inflation.

<sup>207</sup> We use the mean percentage of donor funding that women’s organizations received for particular issues, strategies, and populations as a proxy for donor project-specific giving in this sample.

<sup>208</sup> Financial Times Lexicon. "Business Sustainability." n.d. Web. 9 April 2013 <http://lexicon.ft.com/Term?term=business-sustainability>

<sup>209</sup> Core support is flexible funding that can be used for a variety of expenses and is not only dedicated to project/program funding.

<sup>210</sup> Batliwala, Srilatha. *Women Moving Mountains: How Women with Resources Can Change the World*. November 2012. Microsoft Powerpoint file. <http://www.awid.org/Library/Women-Moving-Mountains>

# 5. Where Do We Go from Here?

## New Pathways for Action

This report has painted a picture of the changing funding landscape, with an upsurge of private sector engagement (particularly corporations), corporatization of development frameworks, significant visibility of women and girls in the mainstream, both positive and negative signals from diverse funding sectors in terms of support for women's rights, and a significant number of women's organizations who are growing, but who are still quite small. These organizations are the roots of women's rights and gender equality struggles and they are largely being 'starved.' If this is the picture, then what can be done to mobilize needed resources to advance women's rights and gender equality?

What follows are some ideas and pathways—both for women's rights organizations as well as interested funders—for further exploration, debate and strategizing. These ideas are grounded in a feminist approach to resource mobilization, as first discussed in AWID's 2007 FundHer Report<sup>211</sup>. At the heart of that approach is the belief that financial resources—who controls them and what they are used for—must be part of feminist and women's movements' political agendas. At the same time, *collective action* is critical for influencing the priorities of diverse funding sectors (not just individual funders) and mobilizing resources for the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of women's organizing. This means collaborating to raise more resources for us all, not competing with each other for a bigger slice of the pie. It also means working with funder allies, individual allies within donor organizations, and others to inform analysis and strategies. As the funding landscape grows increasingly diverse and complex, this is no simple task. It will require time and patience to understand each other's entry points, motivations, goals and non-negotiables. Building relationships with and within the different funding sectors of mutual respect and a culture of debating approaches and priorities that is not tied to individual grants, is also time consuming. But if the outcome is more resources and support for women's rights work, along with greater long-term collective financial resilience for women's movements, it will be more than worthwhile.

## 5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

### 5.1.1 Move beyond comfort zone: Get educated on funder diversity

Expanding the resource base for women's organizing and increasing our political agency and voice in light of the new context requires moving beyond the comfort zone of many women's organizations. We cannot continue to rely solely on the same donor that supported us over the past five, ten, or twenty years. Whether it is bringing on board bilateral agencies that have not previously been strong supporters of women's organizations, mobilizing support from new foundations, or exploring possibilities with interested private sector actors, we need to expand the pool of funders that understand the power and impact of women's rights organizations. Take stock of who is informing funding agendas in the contexts where we work, or who is partnering with the development organizations we know. What are possible converging areas of interest, and what are the clear areas of conflict?

Ignoring the reality of the diverse actors shaping funding discourse and practice is not a viable option. But the corporate sector, for instance, has historically been more of a target for advocacy, critique and protest rather than potential partners, because of labour rights violations, environmental degradation or their support of undemocratic regimes. This experience, combined with their relative newness in the field, means that most women's organizations have been reluctant to engage with them, or are uncertain of where to begin to make sense of this trend. However, private sector engagement in development is a larger reality that cannot be ignored – indeed, a reality that many women's organizations fought for, when they advocated for other stakeholders to more actively support women's empowerment and rights. When AWID researchers spoke with some of the individuals driving private sector initiatives for women and girls, it became clear that a wide range of motivations and priorities have brought them into this field of work. While they are newcomers, some are genuinely interested in learning how to contribute and add value to development efforts. At the same time, many are also unfamiliar with women's movements or have little opportunity or access to interact with women's rights activists. Lack of exposure to women's rights activism, history and theories of change has also meant that they are unfamiliar with the human rights framework and its significance for women, or of the important distinctions between “women in development”, “gender and development” and “women's human rights”.


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Oversimplifying the funding landscape into “good” and “bad” donors is not only unhelpful, but also inaccurate. There is considerable further work to be done to understand the latest funding trends and actors, and develop a nuanced analysis of the dynamics at play. It is important for women’s rights organizations to assess the role different donors and funding sectors are playing in their context and educate themselves on the tremendous diversity of relevant actors and initiatives in order to inform strong collective responses and manoeuvre effectively in this new reality. Be open to learn from emerging actors or groups that you don’t know well – even from those whose motives you suspect. Ask yourself, who else in your community or field is doing work with women and girls, perhaps from a different perspective? What are the opportunities to engage them in a dialogue to find points of difference as well as commonalities? How can the information and intelligence you gather be widely shared and used by other women’s organizations? How can you mobilize others to help shape or change the perspectives and approaches of the donors in your field?

### 5.1.2 Determine criteria and opportunities for critical engagement

Given concerns about the disparate agendas, motivations and ways of working of private sector actors and newer donors interested in supporting women and girls, clear criteria are essential for determining opportunities to critically engage them. AWID understands critical engagement as a means for women’s organizations and movements to build political agency and capacity to ‘be at the table’, without necessarily allowing ourselves to be co-opted in the process. It means moving beyond reacting against or adapting to funding trends and agendas, and instead contributing more effectively to shaping them. This does not mean embracing agendas at odds with our own, but a willingness to step into spaces that are unfamiliar, making a genuine effort to understand the perspectives of groups at the table, and challenging our own assumptions before determining the potential that a particular actor or space holds for advancing women’s rights agendas.





There is experience among CSOs, including some women's organizations, that can be usefully built on: rating and screening mechanisms to monitor corporate practice and make informed choices about if and when to engage (and when to withdraw if engagement is not showing results).<sup>212</sup> Women's organizations can look for opportunities to learn from colleagues in labour rights and other movements that have experience in critically engaging with the private sector, both to inform our strategies as well as ensure that we are aligned and not at cross-purposes in our demands and agendas. Drawing on that experience and talking with other women's organizations can be useful to define clear criteria for engagement or 'checklists' to help activists rate possibilities for engagement.

With clear guides to inform choices, more women's organizations can proactively link with relevant actors and spaces. Such interactions may require a different style of working or different language (without compromising on core principles), and is likely to be a long-term undertaking. One example is the Clinton Global Initiative, where currently only a handful of women's organizations participate.<sup>213</sup> The large membership fee can be waived for invited non-profit organizations. It is encouraging to note that several women's rights organizations and funder allies have been invited to join CGI in the past two years, bringing more of a women's rights discourse into the space. Yet engagement in such a space is not clear-cut or straightforward and a collective strategy and movement-building perspective is therefore key.<sup>214</sup> Otherwise, being a lonely voice in such a space is both discouraging and ineffective to influence the debate in ways that can benefit women's organizations and women's rights agendas. Another example is the donor groups that are often organized at country levels, bringing together bilateral and multilateral agencies as well as, in some cases, government and civil society representatives. These groups make both policy and funding decisions, but women's organizations have seldom accessed in these spaces, despite their potential for influencing national funding strategies.

Whatever the challenges of critical engagement, it is crucial that decades of experience and insight from women's rights organizing not remain invisible and therefore overlooked in the agenda-setting that will influence funding approaches and priorities for years to come. Unless women's organizations are a voice and presence in these spaces, making our proposals, priorities and critiques known, their agendas will continue to be shaped "for" women and girls without us at the table.

### 5.1.3 Communicate what counts when it comes to impact

Often, the obstacle to greater understanding between funders — particularly newer funders and private sector actors — and women’s rights movements, is the different concepts guiding our work and the different language we use to talk about our goals and processes. The prevailing focus on short-term results and “return on investment” in the private sector can mean a focus on easily quantified, ‘visible’ results at the expense of deeper, more meaningful change. Returning to classic distinctions in gender analysis such as “practical needs” and “strategic interests” can be useful for women’s rights activists to orient actors new to the field as to why technical fixes to the practical challenges that women face are rarely enough to significantly improve their quality of life and change cycles of discrimination and violence.


It has never been more evident that statistical or quantitative data alone cannot capture the complexity of global development or conditions for women’s rights. More compelling monitoring and evaluation systems that effectively speak to women’s rights achievements and contributions are essential.<sup>215</sup> Indeed, many women’s rights organizations are re-thinking their systems for monitoring and evaluation, frustrated by the limited measurements and indicators imposed on their work. How can women’s organizations and funders both change the equation so that we are counting what really counts and offering the real story of our impacts? At the same time, there is work to be done to define, especially for newcomers, what constitutes lasting and meaningful impact in the situation of women and girls. For women’s organizations, it is essential to communicate our impact on our terms, but we must do so in terms that are not only easy to grasp, but in frameworks that are compelling and capture the imagination of those we want to reach. We have to communicate in creative ways that make what we do and why we do it in specific ways almost self-evident! This is not often the case - and thus, the incredible history and achievements of vibrant and diverse women’s organizations and movements across the world are scarcely visible outside our own world.

This kind of strategy may require strengthening IT and communications capacities, as well as improving online presence and accessibility—especially for individual funders that are seeking to move away from ‘intermediaries’ to more direct support. It is also important to communicate impact, not just as individual organizations, but as part of a broad movement that has achieved some of the greatest women’s rights gains of the past several decades. Aggregate analyses, in collaboration with other women’s rights organizations and allies can be particularly powerful in building further evidence about the relevance of supporting women’s rights organizing and movements as a key driver for change.

#### **5.1.4 Embrace bold, collaborative feminist resource mobilization**

Recognizing the tensions and competition that resource mobilization has often generated, a collective approach among women’s organizations is particularly important, whether in negotiating terms with donors, informing funding agendas and frameworks, or simply sharing with other groups insights on donor practices and priorities. Fundraising can be an isolating and disempowering experience that often adds to divisions within women’s movements. An open recognition of that tension and work to overcome it are essential to move beyond rhetoric to practice on collective resource mobilization.

There are promising examples that we can draw from and build on. For example, women’s organizations that are grantees of the Dutch MDG3 Fund successfully and collectively negotiated adjustments to what they perceived as excessively burdensome administrative and reporting requirements. The result was a collaborative reflection, not just on the technicalities of reporting, but on tools and processes that could most effectively project the aggregate impact of the organizations supported by the Fund. Fund administrators embraced the learning and reflection and have sought to incorporate the insights into the work of other Dutch funds. Diverse women’s organizations have also strategized and mobilized around the aid and development effectiveness agenda, which has had significant impacts, since 2005, on the funding processes and priorities of bilateral and multi-lateral donors, as well as on aid distribution at country levels. This agenda has had repercussions for women’s rights organizations as it has influenced more aid going directly to national governments, and also created an awareness that the ways in which national priorities are determined and implemented are key to shaping whether women’s organizations can access those resources.



At a time when collaboration across donors in different funding sectors is on the rise, working with donor allies can have a ripple effect across other funders and sectors. It is vital to claim the space for informing and influencing funder agendas, indeed pushing back, where needed, on approaches that instrumentalize women and girls or overlook human rights commitments. This can most effectively be done in collaboration with other women's organizations, also contributing to break with dynamics of isolation or competition in mobilizing resources.

Finally, the grantee-grantor dynamics need to be unpacked and changed. If women's organizations believe that core flexible support is important to sustain our work, it is our responsibility to get that message through to funding agencies. On the contrary, some funders who do have open funding schemes still receive a majority of their proposals for specific projects from women's groups rather than for core support. It is as if women's organizations themselves have embraced the idea that it is impossible to get core funding for bold actions. Staying within project funding mentality is one of the biggest stumping blocks to women's movements being perceived as major actors in the development and social change context. This, yet again, requires a collective approach as fundraising for individual projects is easier than mobilizing resources under the umbrella of collective impact of women's movements. When we advocate a bolder approach, we need to think beyond individual projects, connecting them to the larger picture of social change, positioning them and ourselves within the landscape and eco-system of the movements. This is only possible to do when we act collectively. Women's movements' bold collective vision, approach, and articulation of our impact will make it impossible to be ignored. This also requires a very deep look into our internally embraced concepts of marginalization and victimization that may contribute to our being under-resourced and under-represented. Instead, we can and should position ourselves as the organizations with the answers and solutions to transforming the lives of women and girls, the only ones with the required expertise and capacity.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

### 5.2.1 If you are interested in women and girls, or gender equality, women's rights organizations are a natural strategic partner

Women's rights organizations, with their grounding in diverse communities, in-depth analysis of problems of gender inequality and rights violations, history of experience and tested strategies to counter these problems, should be a priority partner for any donor interested in making sustainable change happen for women's rights and gender equality. There is no silver bullet. Just as a company will hire expert engineers when investing in building new technology, funders should tap the experts in the women's rights community to design programs that benefit women and girls.

Consultations and dialogues with women's rights organizations and movements can serve as a critical pool of expertise for shaping funding agendas. Donors and women's organizations often share common aims but have limited opportunities to interact with each other and share our respective readings of the context and needed strategies. Dialogues can serve to inform and strengthen the impact of both groups. Open discussion of motivations and desired impacts can begin to build the trust needed for long-term partnerships.

### 5.2.2 Effective funding strategies look at quantity, quality and shared values

The major bilateral and multilateral funds of recent years that have prioritized women's rights issues have made clear that women's organizations have both the demand and capacity to implement multi-million dollar contributions for women's rights. At the same time, as AWID's 2011 survey has shown, a large majority of women's groups are still operating on small budgets. This calls for funding strategies that take into account the diversity of women's rights organizing, including groups that may be smaller or harder to reach, working at the grassroots. In that regard, the community of women's funds plays a tremendously important role, as have larger women's organizations that have a re-granting function. Consider existing intermediaries within women's movements to reach these smaller organizations you might not otherwise access.

Multi-year and core funding is crucial to facilitate strong results. Core funding is critical because it allows for flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and context, as well as investment in organizational strengthening and learning, which ultimately enhances impact. Ensuring that there are resources to pay for overhead costs of women’s organizations is key for organizations to build their capacity and increase their scope, impact and sustainability. Flexible, multi-year commitments create the financial stability and sustainability that allows women’s organizations to stay focused on planning, program implementation, monitoring and learning rather than fundraising for the next short cycle of operations.<sup>216</sup>

### 5.2.3 Accountability mechanisms are critical for learning and improvement

Current tools for monitoring and accountability of financing for women’s rights and gender equality are limited and need significant further development to take into account not just the quantity of pledged funding, but the actual disbursement of resources and most importantly, the results that funding is contributing to. Such tracking and accountability systems should be applied to all actors involved in development financing—not just public agencies. AWID is working with its allies in an effort to build a ‘scorecard’ instrument that could both promote a clear vision for what effective funding for women’s rights and gender equality looks like, as well as serve as a tool for holding funders accountable to their commitments.

Ensuring that private sector actors are held accountable for the results of their programs for women and girls is similarly important, with a view to reinforcing that economic growth and profit are *not* the end goals of development. In this context, it may be even more important for women’s rights activists to monitor and influence the shape of a post-2015 development agenda, and how that agenda is potentially used as a tool for holding diverse donors accountable to development objectives.


Accountability works in multiple directions: just as grantees are accountable for the results achieved with the resources provided by their funders, funders are accountable to their grantees and to the broader constituencies their grantees serve for making the most strategic use of their resources – which may not be the pet theory of the donor, but something else. Spaces to discuss and unpack achievements and challenges faced by both funders and grantees are critical for enhancing these “multidirectional accountabilities.”

## 5.3 BEYOND THIS REPORT


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For this research to have an impact, it should be a catalyst that stimulates further thinking, debate, cross-sectoral conversation and strategizing. The following are some suggestions towards that end, primarily intended for women's organizations (though also adaptable for funders):

- Convene a reflection within your team or organization. Do any of the trends here resonate with your experiences? What is your sense of the primary challenges and opportunities in the funding landscape that impact your organization? What steps is your organization taking to strengthen your own financial resilience and sustainability?
- What are other funding trends that impact access to funding for women's rights organizations and movements and need to be deeper analyzed?
- Convene a dialogue with other women's groups that you know and work with. Reflect on some of the issues raised here. Do you see growing engagement by the private sector? How, if at all, has the "investing in women and girls" trend manifested in your context?
- What are some of the differences or similarities in terms of the experiences with different funding sectors in your context? Where are there potential entry points to advocate for resourcing women's rights organizing?
- How do you see opportunities and challenges within women's movements to effectively engage in collective resource mobilization? Are there other collective processes created by women's organizations where this approach could be explored and integrated?
- Talk to funders about these trends and whether or how they feel the impacts. Ask them about the challenges they face to make the case for supporting women's organizations and specifically women's rights approaches within their institutions. What would help them make a stronger case? Do they coordinate with other donors also working on women's rights? If so, how? Would they be interested in joint strategizing with women's organizations around some of these concerns?

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- When possible, do not be afraid to engage with donor allies or other women's organizations and push back collectively when you encounter donor strategies or practices that are not contributing to building collective power to effectively advance women's rights and gender equality worldwide. This is most effective when you can identify shared challenges with other women's organizations.
  - Experiment with different messaging about your work. Instead of lengthy reports, full of what can sometimes sound like women's rights "jargon", try using a story – not necessarily about an individual woman or girl, but about a collective struggle for change - to illustrate what your work is about. Test shorter messages and see if you can communicate effectively to someone who hasn't heard about your work before.
  - Consider whether more specific data gathering and research into these dynamics in your country/region or your specific issue or population focus could be useful. You will find related resources on [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org) , and AWID can share our research methodology, toolkit, or contacts from other organizations that have adapted the methodology.
  - Design and try out a collaborative resource mobilization experience with one or more women's organizations.
  - Let AWID know what you have done, how you have used this report, and what you felt was missing. You can write us at [fundher@awid.org](mailto:fundher@awid.org). Your feedback and suggestions will help to inform the next stages of our work in this area.



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- <sup>211</sup> Kerr, Joanna. *The Second FundHer Report: Financial Sustainability for Women's Movements Worldwide*, pp 101-102. Toronto: AWID. 2007. Web. <http://www.awid.org/About-AWID/AWID-News/Financial-Sustainability-for-Women-s-Movement-s-Worldwide-Second-FundHer-Report>
- <sup>212</sup> Rating mechanisms are either developed internally by companies, by independent research organizations (the Global Reporting Initiative, AccountAbility, SustainAbility), by the United Nations (The United Nations Global Compact) or by the corporate sector itself (The Dow Jones Sustainability Index or the FTSE4Good Index). SOMOS, Maquila Solidarity Network, the Clean Clothes Campaign, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace are examples of organizations that provide screening tools and information to support NGOs in assessing the risk that a particular company is conducting its business in ways that are not in line with its mission and values.
- <sup>213</sup> In 2012, women's organizations present at the CGI included AWID, the Central American Women's Fund, Global Fund for Women, FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund, International Center for Research on Women, the Self-employed Women's Association as well as women's rights advocates such as Nobel peace laureate Leymah Gbowee and feminist philanthropist Abigail Disney, among others.
- <sup>214</sup> For more on the engagement of women's organizations in the CGI, see <http://www.awid.org/News-Analysis/Friday-Files/The-Clinton-Global-Initiative-Learning-and-Reflections-from-AWID-and-FRIDA>
- <sup>215</sup> Batliwala, Srilatha. *Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Thirteen Insights for Women's Organizations*. Toronto: AWID. 2011. Web. 9 April 2013. [www.awid.org/Library/Strengthening-Monitoring-and-Evaluation-for-Women-s-Rights-Thirteen-Insights-for-Women-s-Organizations](http://www.awid.org/Library/Strengthening-Monitoring-and-Evaluation-for-Women-s-Rights-Thirteen-Insights-for-Women-s-Organizations)
- <sup>216</sup> Batliwala, Srilatha. *Women Moving Mountains: How Women with Resources Can Change the World*. November 2012. Microsoft Powerpoint file. <http://www.awid.org/Library/Women-Moving-Mountains>

# Glossary

**Women's rights** the rights guaranteed to women under international human rights instruments and law, as well as through internationally ratified agreements such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Women's rights would also include the guarantees provided to women within national constitutional frameworks and laws such as equality under law, equal civil and political rights, economic rights such as inheritance rights and equal wages for equal work, and social rights such as equal rights to education and health care.

**Women's empowerment** the process, and the outcome of the process, by which marginalized women become conscious of the root causes of their subordination, construct their own agendas of change, and build their collective power through movements that seek to create fundamental and lasting transformations in both gender and other social power structures.<sup>1</sup>

**Women's rights organizing** an approach that brings women together to build their awareness of their rights, help them identify and analyze their problems from a different perspective, frame agendas for action, identify strategies for advancing these agendas, and expand their struggle for gender equality to bring in more women affected by the same issues. This is an approach that seeks to build women's collective power and collective actions for change, and that builds their understanding and capacity to address the root causes of gender discrimination and social, economic and political exclusion, rather than focusing on individuals or change in the situation of individual women. This is the approach used by women's rights organizations and movements for several decades throughout the world, and there is growing evidence that it has brought more fundamental, systemic and sustainable change at a societal level, for all women.

**Women's rights organizations** organizations formed and led by women and that work intentionally to advance women's access to their full body of rights, generally using strategies of women's rights organizing.

**Women's rights movements** A movement is an organized set of constituents pursuing a common political agenda of change (in this case, women's rights) through collective action.<sup>2</sup>

**Civil society** distinct from government and business, civil society is the aggregate of individuals, non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens.

**Gender equality** the achievement of parity between men and women in rights, resources, responsibilities, opportunities and privileges.

**Movement building** is a process of mobilizing the constituency that implicitly benefits from a particular social, economic or political change, organizing the constituency, building a clear political agenda (or change agenda), and preparing the constituency to choose its targets, strategies, and actions to bring about the change they seek.<sup>3</sup>

**Women Human Rights Defenders** women activists and advocates active in protecting and promoting human rights of other women or marginalized communities, from local to global levels, who are targeted for who they are and what they do. The nature of their work often makes them the subject of attacks, requiring gender-sensitive mechanisms for their protection and support.<sup>4</sup>

**Femicide/Femicide** the systematic targeting and killing of women, usually by men, because they are women, and especially women who defy gender norms or roles in any way.

**Collective resource mobilization** a collective effort to mobilize resources beyond one organization's fundraising goals. Such efforts can go beyond mobilizing funding as a resource and include strategic partnership among multiple organizations to define collective goals and mobilize resources around those.

**Feminist resource mobilization** a collective approach of women's organizations and movements to influence the agendas and priorities of diverse funding sectors to catalyze greater resources for women's rights organizing.

**Theory of Change** (not AWID's but a general definition) defines all building blocks required to bring about a given long-term goal. This set of connected building blocks—interchangeably referred to as outcomes, results, accomplishments, or preconditions is depicted on a map known as a pathway of change/change framework, which is a graphic representation of the change process. Built around the pathway of change, a Theory of Change describes the types of interventions (a single program or a comprehensive community initiative) that bring about the outcomes depicted in the pathway of a change map. Each outcome in the pathway of change is tied to an intervention, revealing the often complex web of activity that is required to bring about change. A Theory of Change would not be complete without an articulation of the assumptions that stakeholders use to explain the change process represented by the change framework.

**Private sector** organizations or companies that operate on a “for-profit” basis. Their growing role and influence in global development processes demands that we better understand the diversity of actors and the mechanisms of their engagement in development and their potential impacts on women's organizations.

**Faith-Based Organization** while there is no generally accepted definition of faith-based organizations, they are characterized by having one or more of the following: affiliation with a religious body; a mission statement with explicit reference to religious values; financial support from religious sources; and/or a governance structure where selection of board members or staff is based on religious beliefs or affiliation and/or decision-making processes based on religious values.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Batliwala, Srilatha "Taking the Power out of Empowerment" *Development in Practice* 17.4/5 (2008) Print.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Batliwala, Srilatha, ed. *Changing Their World: Concepts and Practices of Women's Movements* Toronto: AWID (2008) Web. 7 October 2013.  
<http://www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/Changing-Their-World>

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from the definition provided by the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition, Web. June 25, 2013.  
<http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/about.php>

<sup>5</sup> Ferris, Elizabeth "Faith-based and Secular Humanitarian Organizations" *International Review of the Red Cross* 87.858 (2005): 311-325. Web. 4 October 2013.  
[http://www.ikrk.org/eng/assets/files/other/irrc\\_858\\_ferris.pdf](http://www.ikrk.org/eng/assets/files/other/irrc_858_ferris.pdf)

