

Global Projected Losses to Women's Rights

Please note: we will be updating the tracker and welcome information to help fill out the picture¹

Snapshot: Expected Losses Breakdown

The following snapshot looks at the initial impact of just three leading donors withdrawing funding from the sector: the Netherlands, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, and the Sigrid Rausing Trust. It also looks ahead at the implications of the US government's foreign aid cuts. (For an overview of the existing data on the feminist funding ecosystem, please consult this [snapshot](#).)

Project Funding Leaving the Sector: \$2.83B per year at least
The Netherlands + Wellspring Philanthropic Fund + Sigrid Rausing Trust + USA

Three of these donors - the Netherlands, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, and the Sigrid Rausing Trust (SRT) - provided some of the most high-quality funding that invests directly in women rights organizations (WROs) and feminist movements in the Global South and East. [Leading from the South](#), funded by the Netherlands, for example, was the first bilateral partnership that directed funding exclusively through Global South partners rather than going through an intermediary based in the Global North.

Since these donors also provided core support to organizations, especially to those in the Global South and East, the thematic and geographic areas that will be impacted are myriad. Moreover, the core support empowered WROs and feminist movements to respond to new and emerging crises and opportunities, which is more difficult when funding is provided via projects with highly constrained budget line items.

Historically, the Netherlands provided the most official development assistance (ODA) support directly to WROs of all OECD member countries.² According to Prospera, from 2016 - 2020, the Netherlands and Wellspring were the first and third largest donors to the women's and feminist funds in the Prospera network while Wellspring was the largest philanthropic donor.³ SRT accounted for 30% of the overall budgets of the members of

¹ This was developed by the Alliance for Feminist Movements, with support from Mama Cash and Gender Funders CoLab. Our goal is for this to serve as a collective, crowd-sourced effort to develop a shared understanding of the scope and impact of current and future funding cuts to the feminist funding ecosystem and women's rights sector.

² OECD (2024), Development Finance for Gender Equality 2024, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e340afb-en>.

³ https://trends.prospera-inwf.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/PROSPERA_Informe_July12.pdf. Accessed February 26, 2025.

Prospera's European network and provided core, multi-year funding and allowed grant money to be set aside for reserve funds.

In 2020, the latest year for which data are publicly available, Wellspring was the eighth largest human rights donor overall. Wellspring's children's rights and sexual orientation and gender identity programs also provided significant support to women's rights organizations and feminist movements.

Cuts from the overall Dutch development budget, as well as the closing of Wellspring will have wider impacts on the feminist funding ecosystem because of their significant support to human rights and civil society in general. The Netherlands' overall civil society budget has been slashed⁴ and commitments for sexual and reproductive health and rights and women, peace, and security are expected to be reduced - in line with the cuts to the ODA budget.

The quality of the funding will also be affected given that the government has announced that funding for international advocacy efforts will no longer be eligible within their new framework.⁵

The Netherlands: \$75.3M per year

- **SDG 5 Fund⁶**
 - **Leading from the South:⁷ \$16.8M per year**
 - To put this in context, \$29M in ODA to WROs went to groups in the Global South in 2022;⁸ meaning that **LFS's funding accounts for 58% of all the ODA that directly reaches WROs in the Global South.**
 - Leading from the South has **disbursed more than \$92.6M since 2021 and provided support to over 1,000 organizations** in the Global South and East.
 - **Power of Women: \$14.7M**
 - Seven different partnerships are supported through this funding envelope supporting **31 different organizations.**

⁴ [Minister Klever Opts for Devastating Cuts to Civil Society Organisations Working on Human Rights and International Rule of Law - WO=MEN](#); Accessed March 5, 2025.

⁵ [Policy letter on International development | Parliamentary document | Government.nl](#). Accessed March 5, 2025.

⁶ €500 million from 2021-2025. The SRHR Fund and Women, Peace and Security envelopes within the SDG 5 Fund have not been terminated yet. The precise amount at which they will be supported and which groups will be supported has not been determined yet.

⁷ African Women's Development Fund, Women's Fund Asia, Fondo de Mujeres del Sur, and FIMI (International Indigenous Women's Forum).

⁸ OECD (2024), Development Finance for Gender Equality 2024, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e340afbf-en>

- **Power of Voices**

- **Nexus of women's rights, environmental and climate justice⁹: \$7M per year**
 - In 2023-24, GAGGA provided funding to 26 global, regional and national women's and environmental justice funds; 42 non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and 460 community based organisations (CBOs) across the Global South.
- **LGBTQI+ Rights:¹⁰ \$6.1M per year**
- **Women's Rights and Gender Equality: \$24.4M per year**
 - Four different partnerships are supported involving 18 different organizations: [Count Me In!](#); [Our Voices Our Futures](#); [Power to You\(th\)](#); and [She Leads](#).
 - In 2023, CMI! alone supported more than 321 WROs and 1,397 women human rights defenders in 26 countries to strengthen the capacities of activists, organisations and movements. Movements increased their coordination capacities and formed over 444 alliances at local, national, regional and global levels.

- **Multilateral institutions**

- UN Women:¹¹ \$6.3M

Wellspring Philanthropic Fund¹²: \$143.2M per year

The foundation is closing all grantmaking programs in 2025 and plans to complete all grantmaking by 2028.¹³

- **Women's Rights Program: \$55.8M per year¹⁴**
- **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Program: \$60.8M per year¹⁵**

⁹ Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA).

¹⁰ [Power of Pride Consortium](#)

¹¹ The government announced their plan to cut budget line 3.2 on gender equality and women's rights from the development aid budget; the annual budget mentions a funding envelope of 6m euro for UN Women within this budget line. [Foreign trade and development minister Reinette Klever: Dutch interests at the heart of development policy | News item | Government.nl: V Buitenlandse Zaken Rijksbegroting 2025 | Begroting | Rijksoverheid.nl](#); Accessed on March 5, 2025

¹² According to the 2022 990 tax form, the total grantmaking budget was \$288M.

¹³ [Wellspring Philanthropic Fund](#)

¹⁴ Based on 990 tax records..

¹⁵ https://globalresourcesreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/GRR_2021-2022_WEB-Spread-Colour_EN.pdf. Accessed March 7, 2025.

- **Children and Youth: \$26.6M (in 2020)¹⁶**

Sigrid Rausing Trust: \$8M per year

Women's rights program closed in 2024. Existing multi-year grants to previous women's rights program grantees are not expected to be renewed though some are ongoing.

- **Women's Rights Program: \$8M per year**

United States: \$2.6B per year

The following are estimates of the impact of the dismantling of USAID based on past data, including USAID's self-reported funding for FY2023, which is no longer available publicly.

Though it has not historically been one of the most significant donors to gender equality, as of March 6, 2025, respondents to the [Global Aid Freeze Tracker](#) cited **gender as the third most affected thematic area** of US funding cuts ahead of human rights, peace and security, and climate, and behind only health and governance.

- **USAID self-reported funding for FY 2023: \$2.6B¹⁷**
 - **Women's Economic Security: up to \$432.5M across multiple years**
 - Gender Equity and Equality Action (GEEA) Fund: \$100M
 - Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF): up to \$50.5M over four years
 - Women in the Digital Economy Initiative: \$59M¹⁸
 - Women in the Sustainable Economy (WISE) Initiative: \$173M
 - Invest in Childcare Initiative (led by World Bank): up to \$50M over five years
 - **Food Security and Agrifood Systems: \$449M**
 - Growing Resilience and Opportunities for Women (GROW): \$449M
 - **Women, Peace and Security: \$453M**
 - Women Leading Effective and Accountable Democracy in the Digital Age (Women LEAD) Initiative: \$150M through 2025
 - Women, Peace and Security-related activities: \$303M

¹⁶ <https://humanrightsfunding.org/populations/children/>. Accessed March 7, 2025.

¹⁷ USAID. USAID and the Department of State Invest \$2.6 billion in Gender Equality. On file with the author. The reported numbers under each issue area are drawn directly from this fact sheet. The totals included in the fact sheet exceed the reported \$2.6B possibly because some of the totals cover multiple years.

¹⁸ According to USAID, some of this funding came from WiDEF, but it is unclear how much this overlaps with the WiDEF funding reported.

- **Humanitarian Responses: \$181M**
 - Safe from the Start ReVisioned Initiative: \$181M
- **Gender-Based Violence: \$403.5M**
 - Investments to Address GBV: \$369M
 - Child, Early and Forced Marriage: \$29M
 - Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation: \$5M
 - Global Programme to End Child Marriage: \$500,000
- **Health and Family Planning: \$1.08B**
 - Gender equality across all health program areas: \$955M
 - Ouagadougou Partnership family planning information and services: \$86.5M

Other measures of US foreign assistance to gender equality and women's human rights are available from the OECD and from public materials shared by UN agencies and are detailed below.

- **Gender Equality Official Development Assistance (as reported to OECD): \$690M**
 - **ODA with gender equality as the principal objective: \$690M¹⁹**
 - ODA for GBV: \$21.4M²⁰
 - ODA for women's rights organizations: \$3.9M²¹
- **UN Agencies: \$510.55M²²**
 - **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund: \$15.75M (on average 2023 - 2024)²³**
 - **UN Women: \$18.8M in 2023²⁴**
 - \$12M in core
 - 6.8M in non-core support
 - **UNFPA: \$377M²⁵**
 - **UNAIDS: \$99M²⁶**

¹⁹

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/dashboards/development-finance-for-gender-equality.html?oecdcontrol-42f528035a-var1=USA>. Accessed March 21, 2025.

²⁰

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/dashboards/development-finance-for-gender-equality.html?oecdcontrol-42f528035a-var1=USA>. Accessed March 21, 2025.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Core funding to UN agencies is included as bilateral allocable ODA, but earmarked support is not. Some of the support for these UN agencies may, therefore, be counted in the figure above, but not all of it would be.

²³ <https://mptf.undp.org/fund/gai00>. Accessed March 7, 2025.

²⁴ <https://unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/UN-Women-financial-brochure-2023-en.pdf>. Accessed March 7, 2025.

²⁵ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1160631>. Accessed March 7, 2025. This number represents the total worth of 49 grants between the US government (USAID and State Department) and UNFPA.

²⁶ <https://www.devex.com/news/the-us-aid-freeze-in-data-how-will-un-agencies-be-affected-109280>. Accessed March 7, 2025.

Data note: Core support to multilateral institutions is not considered bilateral allocable ODA, but earmarked support is. Therefore, some of the funds supporting UN agencies will be included in the OECD ODA figures, but others will not. Therefore, the two figures should not be combined since it may lead to double counting.

The US was the third largest bilateral donor and tenth largest donor overall to Prospera members from 2016 - 2020 providing \$6.8M in funding during that time or **\$1.36M on average per year**.²⁷

Context

On the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the landmark global agreement that cemented global consensus that women's rights as human rights, **one in four countries reported a backlash against women's rights**.²⁸ The assault on women's rights and gender equality comes in many forms - legislative and policy maneuvers, attacks against women human rights defenders, reductions in civic space - including financial undervaluing and defunding.

Despite the crucial role of feminist movements and women's rights organisations (WROs) in advancing progress towards multiple development goals, funding to these movements has remained fractional. According to OECD data on average from 2022-2023, bilateral funding for WROs amounted to just **\$481 million of ODA - representing 0.7% of all gender equality ODA, the lowest proportion since 2010**.²⁹ In 2021 - 2022, these organizations received **\$223 million of philanthropic funding** reported to the OECD representing only 1.8% of philanthropic giving tracked during that time.³⁰

This underfunding continues even though WROs and feminist movements could deploy an additional \$1.5B annually "to hold ground against the anti-gender movement and gain traction toward a just future for us all."³¹

²⁷ https://trends.prospera-inwf.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/PROSPERA_Informe_July12.pdf. Accessed March 7, 2025.
²⁸

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/03/1160866#:~:text=The%20basic%20rights%20of%20women,which%20support%20and%20protect%20women>. Accessed March 7, 2025.

²⁹ [Finance for sustainable development | OECD](#); Accessed March 6, 2025

³⁰ [Development Finance for Gender Equality 2024 | OECD](#); Accessed March 6, 2025

³¹ Shake the Table and the Bridgespan Group. "Lighting the Way: A Report for Philanthropy on the Power and Promise of Feminist Movements." Page 30.

<https://www.bridgespan.org/getmedia/ffacac3d-6b29-45ca-b82c-e836af6e1cb4/full-report-philanthropy-and-feminist-movements.pdf>.

Now, a domino effect of cuts to government budgets, shifting donor priorities, and the continued strengthening of anti-gender movements are making the critical work of feminist movements and organisations - work that anchors a broad range of human rights and development goals - almost impossible, by cutting off the essential funding they need to get the job done.

ODI Global calculated that in 2024, excluding the US, eight countries announced ODA cuts of \$17.2B over the next five years,³² including critical gender equality donors and champions like Sweden,³³ the Netherlands,³⁴ and France.³⁵

Including the recent shifts in the United States, we are now looking at **\$78 billion a year being slashed – over a third of all global foreign aid**,³⁶ which will have devastating implications on gender equality and women's rights efforts globally.

After the above figure was compiled, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom announced plans to reduce the ODA budget from 0.5% to 0.3% as of 2027.³⁷ This cut represents a 40% cut in today's prices.³⁸ UK aid spending on gender equality is already almost half of what it was pre-pandemic, with 2022 the "joint lowest year on record since the UK began recording its spending on gender equality in 2014."³⁹

Already, tentative findings show that at least **\$105 million in support to LGBTI communities and inclusive gender justice movements** is at risk following US and Dutch funding cuts.⁴⁰

These funding cuts are having life-threatening consequences.

- The Guttmacher Institute calculated that "after one week of the [US development assistance] freeze, 912,720 women and girls will have been denied care, and after one month, the figure will reach about four million. Over the course of the full 90-day review period, 11.7 million women and girls will be denied this essential care."⁴¹

³² <https://odi.org/en/insights/donors-in-a-post-aid-world-january-2025-update/>. Accessed February 27, 2025.

³³ [Sida terminates agreements with civil society organisations – CONCORD Sverige](#)

³⁴ [Minister Klever Opts for Devastating Cuts to Civil Society Organisations Working on Human Rights and International Rule of Law - WO=MEN](#)

³⁵ [France's proposed budget cuts set to slash overseas development aid](#); Accessed March 6, 2025

³⁶ [As USAID Is Gutted, Here's How Philanthropy Can Stop Panicking and Start Helping](#); Accessed March 5, 2025

³⁷ [UK to reduce aid to 0.3% of gross national income from 2027](#); Accessed on March 6, 2025

³⁸ <https://data.one.org/analysis/uk-aid-cuts>. Accessed March 7, 2025.

³⁹ [UK aid cuts: More than 90 activist and advocates call on UK Government to back women with UK Aid as polling shows public support | CARE International UK](#); Accessed on March 6, 2025

⁴⁰ [Holding the Line: Defending LGBTI movements in the 2025 Funding Crisis - Global Philanthropy Project](#)

⁴¹ [Family Planning Impact of the Trump Foreign Assistance Freeze | Guttmacher Institute](#); Accessed on March 6, 2025.

- In Uganda, a survey conducted by the Uganda Key Populations Consortium found that 97% of respondents reported negative effects on their HIV service.⁴²
- UNAIDS estimates an additional 2,000 new cases of HIV every day.⁴³

Several private foundations have decreased or closed their women's rights portfolios, which is happening in a broader context of flatlining philanthropic budgets.⁴⁴ Data from subsequent years is still forthcoming, however, given the funding cuts we are facing today, we anticipate a sharp decline in the coming years.

By contrast, from 2021-2022, **over \$1 billion was directed to just three anti-rights organizations**,⁴⁵ while funding for anti-gender networks more broadly continues to rise.

This is happening at the exact moment when the strength and power of women's rights organizations are most needed. Recent research found that gender equality is stalling or going backwards for **1.1 billion women and girls around the world**.⁴⁶ This stagnation and backsliding is directly connected with the undermining of WROs and feminist movements.

Economic equality, sustainable development, peace, safety from violence— we get there faster and stay there longer in places where women's movements thrive. Now is the time to accelerate this work, not to step back.

⁴²

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2025/february/20250218_us-funding-people-affected-hiv-community-groups. Accessed March 7, 2025.

⁴³

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/there-could-be-2000-new-hiv-infections-every-day-due-u-said-cuts-says-unaid-2025-03-24/>. Accessed April 1, 2025.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ globalresourcesreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/GRR_2021-2022_WEB-Spread-Colour_EN.pdf; Accessed March 6, 2025

⁴⁶ [Gender equality stalling or going backwards for 1bn women and girls | Women's rights and gender equality | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/mar/05/gender-equality-stalling-or-going-backwards-for-1bn-women-and-girls); Accessed March 5, 2025