Redefining risk

The Cost of Not Funding Women's Rights Organisations

JUNE 2025

Alliance for Feminist Movements

EQUAL MEASURES 2030

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments 2
Introduction 3
Methodology 3
Literature review 7
Findings 17
Bangladesh 22
Nicaragua 30
Türkiye 36
Zimbabwe 42
Recommendations 49
Limitations 51
Annex: Further detail on research methodology 53
Endnotes 55

Acronym List

AFM	The Alliance for Feminist Movements
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EM2030	Equal Measures 2030
GBV	Gender-based violence
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health rights
WHRD	Women human rights defender
WRO	Women's rights organisation

Acknowledgments

Rachel Jacobson from the Alliance for Feminist Movements and Sinéad Nolan, Coretta Jonah, Alison Holder and Albert Motivans from Equal Measures 2030 (EM2030) undertook this research and wrote this paper. EM2030 team members Amanda Austin, Cecilia Garcia and Gabrielle Leite also contributed to the research. The editor was Rebecca Heald.

The authors would like to thank all research participants for their time and insightful contributions. To protect their privacy and safety and in line with research ethics, participants have not been identified in this publication.

Thanks also go to the OECD for their support throughout, especially Jenny Hedman and Cibele Cesca and the OECD statisticians. The research has been greatly strengthened by contributions from colleagues at the United Nations Trust Fund (UNTF) to End Violence against Women and the Equality Fund. AFM Secretariat team members Sandra Macias del Villar and Nyasha Musandu also provided invaluable feedback.

This research builds on, and was partially funded by, the Walking the Talk consortium and the Financing for Feminist Futures research initiative. We are grateful to Walking the Talk for funding this study and for their support throughout the research process. A compendium of the research projects supported by Financing for Feminist Futures is available at: https://f4ff.global/program/research-projects/

About the Alliance for Feminist Movements

The Alliance for Feminist Movements (AFM) is a collaborative multi-stakeholder initiative with members from governments, philanthropy, women's and feminist funds, civil society and other allies. The Alliance and its members are dedicated to increasing and improving the quality of resources and political support for diverse feminist movements, agendas and policies.

About Equal Measures 2030

EM2030 is a global coalition of WROs working at national, regional and global levels to connect data and evidence with advocacy and action on gender equality, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About Walking the Talk

Walking the Talk is a global programme that aims to boost the adoption and implementation of Feminist Foreign Policies (FFPs) and gender equality in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the European Union. To achieve this, the programme advocates an increase in ODA dedicated to gender equality and women's rights, especially funding for progressive, intersectional WROs in the global majority.

Introduction

This study by EM2030 and the AFM seeks to strengthen the evidence base for advocates and funders who look to direct more and better funding to WROs.[i]

We know many donors face significant public and internal scrutiny over the perceived risks associated with funding WROs. These risks include scrutiny over whether funding WROs delivers sufficient measurable results, alongside perceived risks related to absorption capacity and misuse of funds. The AFM has consistently raised this issue, which came up repeatedly with panellists during the Dutch-hosted Shaping Feminist Foreign Policy Conference in The Hague in 2023.

In this context, AFM and EM2030 aim to flip the narrative of 'risk' on its head, interrogating what risks to gender equality and broader development outcomes arise when robust, well-funded and well-supported WROs cease to operate. To do this, the study explores four country contexts in which feminist movements have experienced a decline in funding or closing civic space since 2000: Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Türkiye and Zimbabwe.

This research will contribute evidence for campaigners to use both within funding bodies and in the broader WRO space to advocate more and better resources for feminist movements and thereby bolster gender-equality progress across issues and contexts.

Methodology

This small-scale research interrogates the concept of 'risk' by articulating the risks of not funding, not supporting or actively suppressing the work of WROs. Annex 1 contains details of the research methodology.

The primary research question focused on whether adverse gender-equality outcomes can be observed when WROs' funding decreases and/or space for their activities narrows or closes. We hypothesised that observable links exist between the de-funding and/or suppression of WROs and adverse outcomes related to gender equality and wider development progress. We considered national contexts in which funding decreased and space for WROs narrowed or closed since 2000, examining the correlation using various indicators and indices.

We collected data using a mixed methods approach. We reviewed the four country case studies with a quantitative analysis of funding and gender-equality outcomes. We based the country case studies on desktop research and one to three key informant interviews per country to validate the findings. Initial consultations with gender-equality experts informed the development of the conceptual framework and identification of country case studies.

Defining a conceptual framework for this work was a key step, as no existing framework was available. The research team defined key concepts such as 'a supported civil society', 'risk',

i We will use the phrase 'women's rights organisations and feminist movements' (shortened to WROs) throughout.

'defunding' and 'suppression' of movements and the relationship between these concepts through initial consultations with WROs, donor organisations and others in the gender-equality field.

The study began with establishing criteria to define a well-supported feminist civil society. The key components of this definition are presented in Box 1.

Box 1: What does a well-supported feminist civil society look like?

Legislative and policy elements:

- WROs can receive foreign funds and access banking systems.
- The registration process for civil society organisations (CSOs) is simple and efficient and the requirements are not overly burdensome.
- Legal protections are in place for women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and civic space, especially around gender-specific threats such as doxxing.
- Activists can organise public demonstrations freely and safely.
- Activists can freely leave and return to the country.

Funding elements:

- WROs have access to long-term, flexible core funding that enables them to implement their mission and work towards transformative, systems-level change.
- A range of organisations receive funding (from large, anchor organisations to small, non-registered ones).
- A variety of donors and approaches to support exist (bilateral donors, private philanthropy, women's funds, and local support).

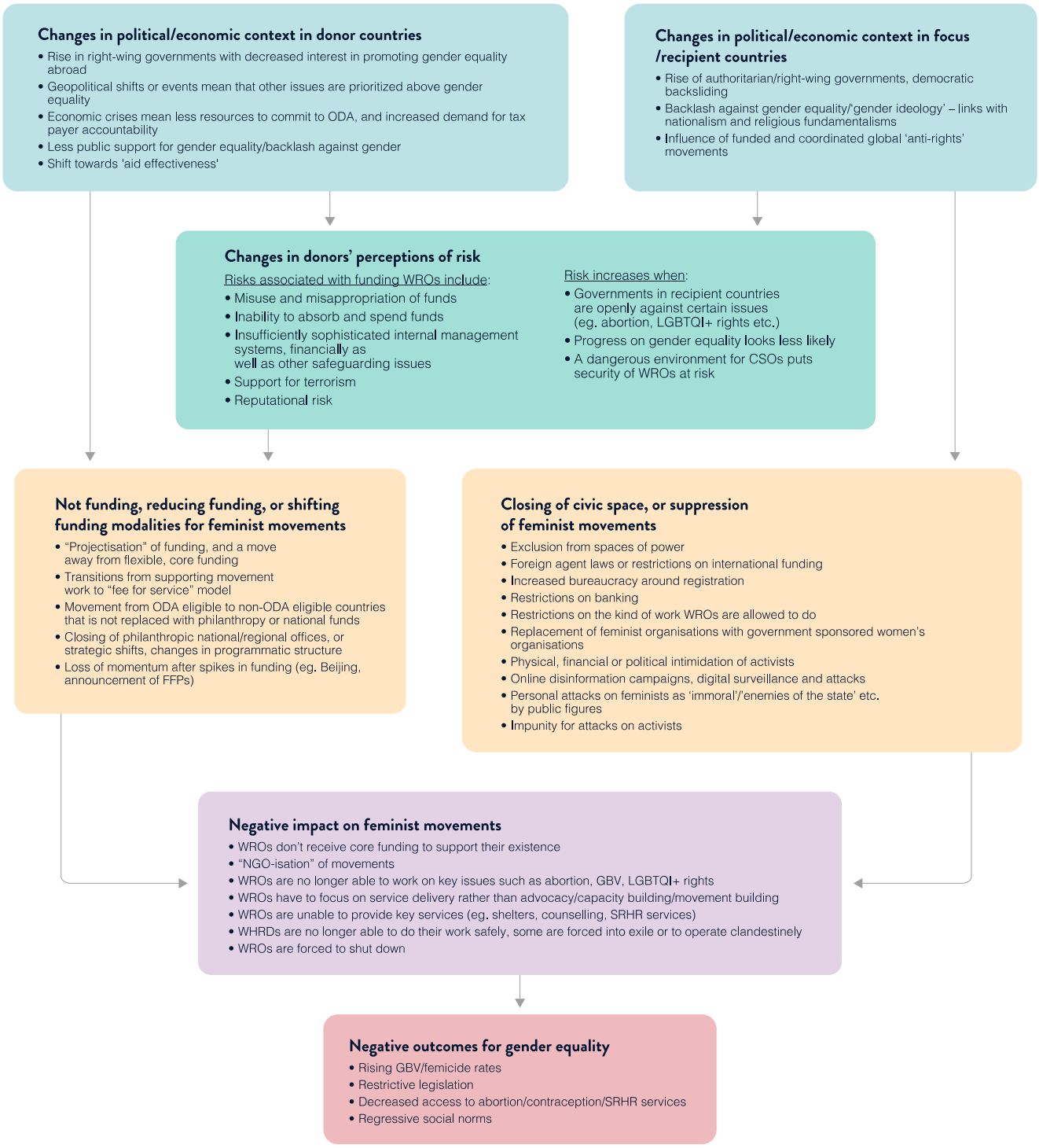
Organising elements:

- Connections, collaborations and partnerships can form within feminist civil society and with other movements in the country (and regionally and globally).
- WROs have access to digital technology.
- WROs are working on multiple issues and their intersections – policy, behaviour change, culture, etc.
- WROs are allowed access to spaces with power and are consulted by the government on issues related to women's rights and gender equality.

Subsequently, we constructed a conceptual framework (Figure 1) to explain the mechanisms through which alterations in the geopolitical and economic landscapes of both donor and recipient nations can expedite the suppression or defunding of WROs. These actions may

manifest directly or indirectly, through the cultivation of perceived heightened risk. The framework further delineates the consequential impacts on WROs and their operational capacity, ultimately explaining the potential for adverse effects on gender equality. This analytical tool was a foundational structure for selecting pertinent country case studies and provided a coherent lens through which to analyse each case. The intent is to illustrate the practical application of the framework's constituent concepts through concrete examples, acknowledging that the framework is not an exhaustive representation of all possible scenarios.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for 'redesigning risk' study



Source: Equal Measures 2030 and the Alliance for Feminist Movements, 2025. Redefining Risk: What happens when feminist movements are not funded or 'defunded' and their civic space narrowed or closed? in Walking the Talk. *The Architecture of Change: Feminist Pathways to Financing Gender Equality.* pp 10-57. Walking the Talk. https://f4ff.global/research-project/redefining-risk-what-happens-when-feminist-movements-are-de-funded-and-their-civic-space-narrowed-or-closed/

Literature review

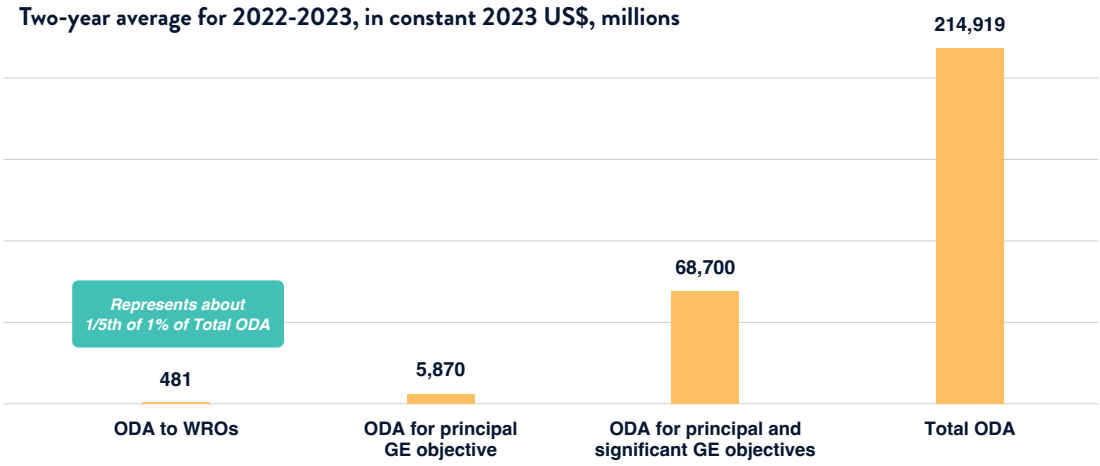
Evidence shows that WROs are “the key drivers of legal and policy change to address gender equality”.[1] A 2016 OECD study found that "few of the normative advances on women's rights would have been possible without the advocacy of women's rights organizations and movements to raise public awareness, pressure governments for change, and hold governments to account for implementation of laws and policies”.[2] Women’s collective action has been shown to increase women’s ability to hold their governments accountable and claim rights and resources through bottom-up.[3] Feminist mobilisation is the most critical factor in ensuring meaningful, enduring action on violence against women at the national level – more important than a country's wealth, the presence of left-wing parties or the number of women in politics.[4] Radhika Coomaraswamy, the first UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, has stated that the violence against women movement is “perhaps the greatest success story of international mobilisation around a specific human rights issue leading to the articulation of international norms and standards and the formulation of international programs and policies”.[1]

Feminist mobilisation is linked clearly to advances in women’s rights in the economic sphere[5] and women’s political participation.[6] The efforts of coalitions of domestic WROs are a key factor in the likelihood of governments adopting gender quotas[7] and WROs have been vital to lowering rates of child marriage and improving societal attention to gender-equality issues such as caste and labour rights.[8] Over several decades, because of the efforts of WROs and their transnational networks, women’s human rights have moved “from the margin to the centre” of the global agenda.[9]

Feminist movements have also shown capacity for resilient responses in situations of conflict or crisis and are uniquely positioned to do so. For example, women-led organisations have been at the forefront of humanitarian responses in the West Bank and Gaza where they have provided life-saving aid.[10] WROs can also play productive roles in peace negotiations and processes and their participation in peace processes can lower the risk of conflict relapse.[11] During the COVID-19 pandemic, WROs mobilised quickly to mitigate the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women and girls. Research by UN Women and UNDP found that countries with the strongest autonomous WROs adopted more gender-sensitive policy responses to the COVID pandemic, regardless of the country’s GDP.[12]

WROs' achievements have been realised despite extreme funding constraints, which are getting worse.

Figure 2: Only 0.2% of total ODA goes directly to WROs – despite their proven impact.



Notes: ODA to WROs includes spending marked with sector code 15170 (Women's Rights Organizations and Movements, and Government Institutions).

Source: OECD, 2025

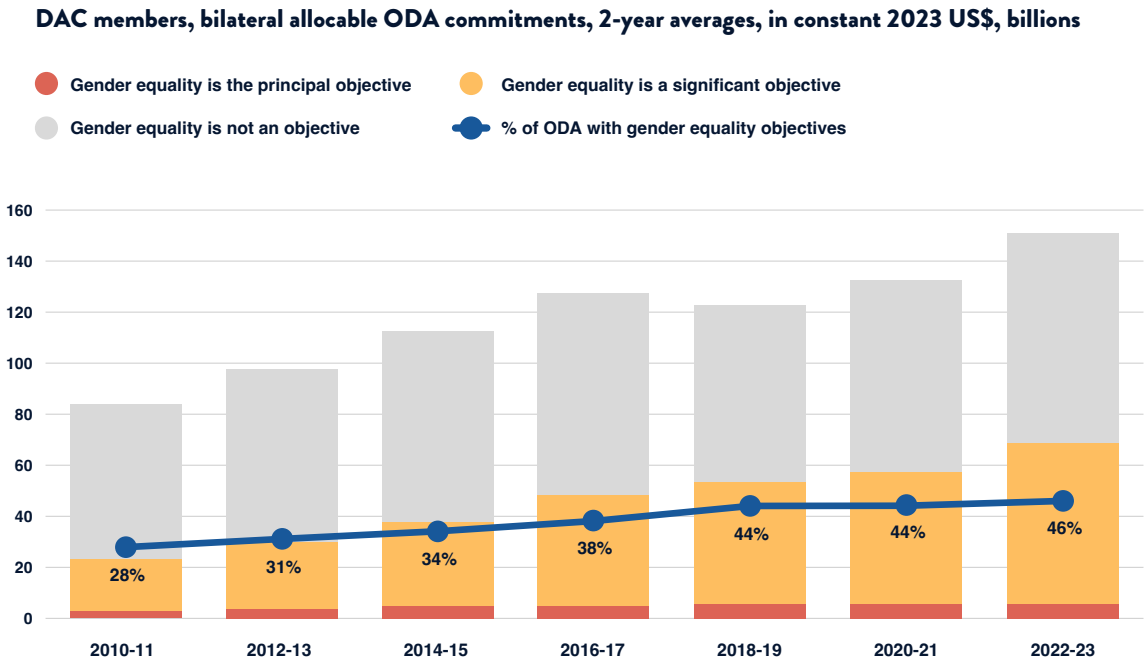
ODA specifically for WROs was already a miniscule proportion of total ODA. On average in 2022–23, ODA to WROs was US$481 million,[13,ii] making up less than 0.2% of total ODA ($215 billion in 2022–23) and representing a significant decline from 2020–21 ($603.2 million).[iii] "Despite DAC members' recognition of the importance of women's rights organisations and feminist movements, ODA to enhance their effectiveness, influence and sustainability remains low".[13]

In 2022-23, the share of ODA with gender equality as its principal objective was US$1.91 billion, or 3.9 per cent of total ODA. This figure has remained virtually unchanged since 2010. Although the share of ODA with gender equality objectives (significant or principal) has risen since 2010, this has shown stagnation since 2018–19.[14] A 2022 study showed that most WROs have never received unrestricted or multi-year funding.[15]

[ii] Excluding funding for public sector institutions, see page 51: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-finance-for-gender-equality-2024_e340afbf-en.html

[iii] Authors' calculations: based on $60.4 billion in ODA having gender equality objectives and this making up 45% of total ODA. Meaning aid to WROs is $500 million of $134.22 billion.

Figure 3: Volumes and shares of ODA with gender equality objectives



Source: OECD, 2025

The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) conducted a global survey of 958 WROs in 2006 that found between 1995 and 2005 bilateral and multilateral assistance provided the highest percentage of WRO revenue in 1995, 2000 and 2005, while private foundations provided the third, second and third highest percentage of WRO revenue in those years respectively.[16] WROs' sustainability has traditionally rested with a few bilateral donors and private foundations. In the past decade, consistent contributions from the Netherlands, Canada, Norway, Sweden and, more recently, France and the EU, have accounted for most of the bilateral allocable ODA directed to WROs.[13] Just 10 international foundations provided 97 per cent of total cross-border giving for gender equality in developing countries in 2021–22).[13]

The funding picture for gender equality and WROs is likely to worsen, with eight major donor countries (including Sweden, the Netherlands, the UK and Germany) announcing more than US$17.2 billion in aid cuts in 2024 to take effect in the next five years.[17] The loss of gender equality funding from four sources – the Netherlands and the US, and two philanthropic organisations that recently withdrew funding from the sector, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund and the Sigrid Rausing Trust – is expected to result in a loss of $2.83 billion per year starting in 2026.[18]

The rise and fall of funding for WROs: the role of the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference

In the decades leading up to and the years following the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995, funding for WROs rose as international donors paid more attention to struggles for women's rights across the world.[9,19] Beijing, and the other international conferences that immediately preceded it (Mexico City in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980, Nairobi in 1985), "created a special historical moment that mobilized major resources for women's rights and gender equality work with new organizations proliferating in some regions".[20] A key outcome from Beijing was the establishment of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, created through a General Assembly resolution. It remains the first and only global grant-making mechanism exclusively dedicated to addressing violence against women and girls.

Canada's National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) is one example of a WRO that flourished over this period; NAC was considered the main 'face' of the Canadian women's movement and a major player in Canadian politics between the early 1970s and late 1990s.[21] It is credited with pushing forward changes in Canada's criminal code, access to citizenship, women's access to the labour market and education.[22] In the late 1980s, at least 65% of their annual budget came from the government.[22]

But the interest in funding WROs didn't last. By the Beijing Conference's tenth anniversary in 2005, it was clear that donors were failing to meet their commitments, and resourcing for women's rights organising began to dry up.[23] Funding for Canada's NAC followed this trajectory: "...a gradual and ultimately complete loss of state funding alongside internal divisions which left it broke and struggling to survive".[21]

On the international stage, the rise and fall of the Canadian International Development Agency's Gender Funds tell the story of the waxing and waning of interest in funding for WROs from a donor country perspective (see Box 2).

Box 2: Canada/CIDA's 'Women's Funds' in Pakistan

In the 2024 book 'The Twelfth of February: Canadian Aid for Gender Equality During the Rise of Violent Extremism in Pakistan', author Rhonda Gossen delves into Canadian Aid for gender equality in Pakistan over recent decades,[24] making a strong case for the importance of funding for grassroots WROs. She makes an especially strong case for doing so in contexts facing rising extremism. These lessons are particularly salient given the changing political contexts across the globe in 2025.

A succession of five Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) women's funds in Pakistan between 1989 and 2009–10 provided muti-year core support to Pakistani organisations and aimed to grow and strengthen the gender equality movement. Between 1991 and 2010 CIDA's women's funds in Pakistan grew by more than four times, from around

US$250k per year to more than $1.1M per year. Over this period, thousands of grassroots WRO's in Pakistan alone received CIDA support.

Evaluations of CIDA's women's funds in Pakistan found that "much of the [gender equality] ...progress at the policy level...from 1989 to 2006 can be attributed to the contributions by the CIDA women's funds to Pakistan women's rights organizations."

Given the shifting political context and rising extremism in Pakistan over this period it is especially relevant to note that CIDA's grants to WROs "helped create and sustain a movement for equality and rights that could not be suppressed by extremists...The funding support for Pakistani gender equality and other civil society assisted their efforts in strengthening a democratic society and advocating for rights and equality."

With increased attention to the rise of anti-rights and extremist movements across the world in 2025, we should pay close attention to Rhonda Gossen's findings about the importance of CIDA's women's funds in Pakistan during a key period of rising extremism:

"Those participating in hundreds of projects [funded by CIDA's women's funds] were a monitor and a barometer of the situation in their regions, including on rights abuses and on rising extremism and radicalization...[They] were not only an early warning system, but also an identifier of risks to peace and development and to social cohesion, working from the front lines of critical response strategies and programs."

Unfortunately, in 2009 shifts in aid policy, geopolitical shifts (including related to the war in Afghanistan), and the 2008 financial crisis led to Canada ending 20 years of the CIDA Women's Funds in Pakistan.

In 2004, AWID started investigating what happened to WROs' funding and began to campaign on the issue. In a 2005 AWID survey of 406 WROs 59% of respondents said it was more difficult to fundraise for women's rights and gender equality than in the previous five years and most respondents said they spend more time fundraising in 2005 than they did ten years ago.[20]

In 2006 and 2007, the first and second reports of the 'Where is the Money for Feminist Organising?' initiative begun by AWID deeply analysed funding dynamics from 1995–2005 and attributed this decline in funding to:

1. Failures of the gender mainstreaming agenda as originally articulated in the Beijing Platform for Action. According to the report, the Platform originally intended gender mainstreaming as a two-track approach: integrating gender equality into all policies and programmes and maintaining a separate, specific focus on gender equality. The report quotes an OECD-DAC study that noted "almost all DAC Members have gender equality policies and many have strengthened them since 1999. But almost none of them have the staff, budgets and management practices needed to implement these policies. Lip service looms large, practice remains weak".[16]

2. Emphasis on time-bound, quantifiable log frames, indicators, and results that understand change as a linear, centralised process rather than a long-term unpredictable one. Echoing the findings in the following case studies the 2007 report found that "for so many women's rights advocates, the 'success' that they have been able to report to their donors in many cases has simply been their ability to hold the line of a policy, program or budget line in the face of conservative backlash".[16]

3. Shifts in aid modalities and priorities, especially as represented in the 2005 Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness and the Millennium Development Goals, which did not prioritise gender equality or human rights (e.g. Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [CEDAW] or the Beijing Platform for Action).

    a. The post-Beijing aid world saw more funding going to government budget support, as emphasised in the Paris Declaration, and to support new governments that emerged from the democratisation wave in the 1990s, at the expense of direct funding to "civil society actors that seek to hold [these governments] accountable".[20] Under these new models, donors expected CSOs to receive funding directly from their governments. As a result, local CSOs had less access to ODA funds, especially those that were "independent and critical of their own government's positions...".[16]
    b. Even when groups were able to receive funding from their governments, this funding primarily went to service provision rather than accountability.[16]

4. Increased influence of conservative religious actors, including the Bush administration during this time in the USA, which pushed for a return to traditional familial and gender roles, who gain power and influence during "a combination of deepening poverty, growing instability and dramatic changes happening as a result of globalization".[20]

5. The impacts of the "war on terror", including increased military spending at the expense of development and additional administrative constraints placed on cross-border philanthropic giving.

Many of the forces AWID identified in 2006 are the same ones shaping the funding landscape 19 years later, especially the narrow donor base, pressure on ODA budgets from military spending, ascendant backlash movements and the continued emphasis on time-bound, quantifiable measures of success and progress.

One bright spot during this time was the growth of women's and feminist funds that are dedicated to supporting WROs.[25],[iv]

[iv] Women's/feminist funds are public fundraising foundations that work to resource, strengthen the capacities of, accompany, and convene grassroots WROs, activists, networks and movements.

As described above, the loss of momentum in the early 2000s affected not only funding volumes but also funding modality and design. In many contexts (including the countries covered by this research), donors moved away from supporting movement-building and direct support to civil society more generally and WROs specifically. Many WROs, therefore, shifted to implementing shorter term projects and were placed in more direct competition with one another and other groups. This trend further constrained WROs' ability to work towards longer term systemic shifts in gender power relations.[26] Both WROs and donor staff saw this shift as detrimental to WROs' ability to affect transformational change.[23] A 2011 study by Pathways for Women's Empowerment quoted a government official as saying "'I recognise the value of mainstreaming [gender through government to government support for sector wide programs] but the [negative] impact on these [WROs] to carry on their transformative work has been enormous".[23] Additionally, increasingly complicated administrative requirements imposed by donors placed a considerable burden on WROs' capacities.[2] Many consider these extensive reporting requirements inappropriate for measuring the systemic and long-term changes WROs work towards.[2] As one donor noted in a 2016 review by GENDERNET: "We didn't have these administrative requirements 10 years ago".[2]

Box 3: The role of women's funds

Women's funds are philanthropic organisations whose primary purpose is to provide financial support to women-led organisations that advance the leadership and empowerment of women and girls.[27] While some important women's funds pre-dated the Beijing conference, the period after Beijing saw a surge in establishment of regional and national women's funds, and women's funds became a key alternative source of resources for WROs across the globe.[24] The rise of women's funds at this time signified a deliberate effort to challenge unequal power relations between donors and WROs and direct more resources to locally led organisations in the Global South.

What distinguishes women's funds from conventional funders is that they often provide multi-year, core, rapid-response and sustainable funding, and many have participatory grant-making models.[24] They use flexible and creative strategies to support non-registered groups and those working with the most marginalised people. Women's funds play a key role in the feminist funding ecosystem as they are closest to the movements they serve and often willing to fund more challenging issues and radical strategies than traditional donors are. Women's funds can be a useful bridge between traditional donors and WROs where donor constraints make it difficult to fund movements directly.[28]

In addition to directly funding WROs, women's funds also influence the broader philanthropic field to provide more and better resources to WROs in the Global South and have been key to establishing innovative funding partnerships for women's rights such as the Leading from The South model by the Dutch government and the Equality Fund by the Canadian government.[24]

Donor perceptions of 'risk' and 'efficiency' influence funding volumes and modalities

Donors have different appetites for risk, depending on where they sit in the funding ecosystem and how they are governed, including the legal and regulatory regimes in the country in which the donor is based. In general, donors are required to ensure their funding is directly connected to their mission, that the funds will not be misspent, and that the funding will not jeopardise the funder's reputation. Donors may have further requirements based on their laws, policies, statutes and governing documents.

Individual donor institutions will also have their own assessments and practices that may go beyond the legal requirements. For example, governments and bilateral and multilateral donors might take a more risk-averse approach than private philanthropy as they are accountable to the public.[29] The two groups' approaches to risk are often described in complementary terms, noting the possibility for philanthropy to take more risks and test innovations as opposed to the risk-averse approach governments adopt.

A donor's unique risk appetite, combined with a variety of other factors including an assessment of political context, determines whether a donor may take a cautious approach to funding WROs in a country, placing safer bets on tried-and-true strategies, or risk more unconventional ideas to address politically sensitive issues.[30]

The funding patterns outlined can be explained partly by changing perceptions of 'efficiency' among donors, as well as shifts in the perceptions of what constituted a 'risky' investment. As Mukhopadhyay et al. observed in 2011: "In the changed international funding scenario in which results and effectiveness are prioritised over social transformation, it has grown harder to establish the legitimacy of supporting processes of claiming women's rights as integral to the gender and development agenda."[23] In this way, and especially for bilateral aid programmes that are accountable to citizens for public spending, "the idea of risk is tied up with ideas of 'value' and 'effectiveness'".[31]

The aid effectiveness agenda that OECD countries committed to in 2005 has been accused of limiting experimentation and risk taking and contributing to a move away from 'rights' towards 'results', with NGOs shifting from being innovators to contractors (AWID, 2013).[32] This pressure to demonstrate results, coupled with the common perception that WROs do not have the capacity to deliver 'at scale', has led some bilateral donors to perceive funding WROs as 'risky'.[2]

The concept of and practices around 'risk' were also affected by the 9/11 attacks in 2001, which increased scrutiny of international spending and ushered in a rapid rise in legislation and measures intended to prevent terrorism and money laundering. These placed extensive requirements on donors and resulted in restricted financial flows to civil society, including WROs.[33] Governments have also used such legislation as a pretext for monitoring and restricting the work of CSOs, including preventing them from receiving international funding under the guise of national security.[34] As financial and legal compliance gets stricter for CSOs – getting resources to WROs, particularly to small, unregistered, grassroots groups – has

become increasingly complex.[1] Anti-terrorism concerns, alongside increased public demands for government accountability in donor countries, have made it difficult for donors to fund smaller local organisations, leading to a preference for funding familiar organisations – generally international CSOs or those based in donor countries.[35]

Donors' risk management is particularly challenging with closing civic space. When a country's political situation changes and progress seems less likely, or when restrictions are placed on civil society that make moving money more challenging, this increases donors' perceived risk level.[36] This can lead funders to pull out or, more commonly, decrease funds for politically sensitive issues and channel more aid through donor-based rather than foreign NGOs.[37]

After the start of this research, philanthropic organisations based in the USA have begun to substantially reconsider questions of risk and their risk appetite, following actions and possible actions of the Trump administration. In many ways, these actions in the USA echo the types of restrictions and crackdowns described in the case studies. Whereas some USA-based donors used to support their partners as they navigated these crackdowns, the situations are now reversed. The targeting of gender, diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as climate change, led some organisations to shift the way they presented their work in public materials, for example.[38] At the time of writing, the administration has not taken actions to restrict cross-border giving, investigate foundations or remove the tax-exempt status of organisations working on climate, but these actions were all seriously expected to take place.[39]

The massive shifts underway in ODA and philanthropic funding will undoubtedly continue to reshape conversations about risk in the coming years. Alongside these new legal and financial realities, the risks of inaction will need to be considered.

> *"What we often call "risk" in development and in philanthropy is a daily reality and lived experience for many people. It can be an "othering frame". If the funding is to work for local women's rights and feminist movements we can't be prescriptive, we have to be comfortable with shifting power and taking calculated risks. The donor perception has been that the heavier the compliance requirements, the better risk management we are doing. We think about the harm of not supporting our partners in flexible ways and for multiple years, especially with the current backlash against rights and gender justice. We advocate with donors to show we can't have feminist change through more and more bureaucratic controls. In our experience, feminist principles of mutual accountability and horizontal relationship building is a more effective approach. We make very intentional efforts to meet the terms and conditions of funders without making things harder for partners – like testing easier ways to report, including verbal updates."*
>
> – Equality Fund.

But what about the risk of inaction?

Countries worldwide are experiencing 'democratic backsliding', with organisations such as Freedom House and Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) producing annual data showing a steady decline in democratic principles and practices across most regions.[40] The 2024 SDG Gender Index shows that 91 out of 139 countries were rated "poor" or "very poor" in an expert assessment of whether the country protects "personal autonomy, individual rights, and freedom from discrimination" (Index 10.2) in 2022. The Index also shows that, globally, women's rights to openly discuss political issues, both in private and in public spaces (Index 10.4), saw a consistent decline from 2015–22, evident across all regions, with Asia and the Pacific experiencing the most significant setbacks, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean.[41]

The decline of democracy and growing backlash[42] against gender equality are closely linked and recent years have seen a rise in authoritarian, 'strongman' leaders who use traditional gender roles as markers of patriotism and attack women's and LGBTQI+ rights to solidify their power.[43] As feminist activism is an engine of democratic progress, such leaders see WROs as a direct threat to consolidating power and seek to delegitimise them, framing them as enemies of the nation.[44] Attacks on activists, including women's rights, LGBTQI+ and environmental activists, are increasing alongside the rise in authoritarian governments, with 300 human rights defenders killed globally in 2023.[45] Such attacks are often one of the first steps in the authoritarian playbook, and as such can be a bellwether of broader democratic backsliding.[46]

The global anti-gender movement[v] is growing in influence, driven by right-wing political and conservative religious forces, and WROs increasingly face coordinated and well-funded opposition to their work.[15] The Global Philanthropy Project estimates that, from 2021–22, the aggregate revenue of just three large anti-rights organisations was more than US$1 billion.[47] The anti-gender movement has successfully increased donors' nervousness around taking risks, and confronting the movement requires them to navigate additional tensions and complexities around risk.[48]

> *"At the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, we witness every day how backlash against our grantee partners, especially women's rights organizations and feminist movements across the globe, unfolds – it can take administrative, financial, and digital forms, but is ultimately systemic. Even in the face of this pressure, our partners continue to protect hard-won gains, prevent regression, and hold space for future progress. Resourcing them is not a question of risk – it is a strategic investment in their resilience and in long-term change. And pushing for feminist funding i.e. core, flexible, long-term and unconditional funding within our institutions is not an additional responsibility, it is at the heart of the work."*
>
> – Abigail Erikson, Chief, UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

[v] The global anti-gender or anti-rights movement is an umbrella term that refers to movements opposing what they call "gender ideology", or "gender theory". The movement brings together conservative governments, religious groups and civil society groups to form a coordinated opposition to a range of issues related to gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights and gender studies.

Donors must carefully weigh the risks of any funding decision. However, the multiple crises facing the world today mean the cost of inaction should also be considered. To date, research has not yet extensively explored the risks of inaction. By examining four countries that have experienced periods in which WROs have been defunded or suppressed (or, in many cases, both), and the impact on gender-equality outcomes, we aim to raise awareness of the risks and missed opportunities that result from not funding WROs.

Findings

Cross-case study analysis

The four case studies present a diverse range of WROs across the globe and how they have been affected by and responded to periods of suppression, repression and declining and/or shifting funding. In this section, we identify salient themes across them.

1. WROs are deeply interconnected with democracy.

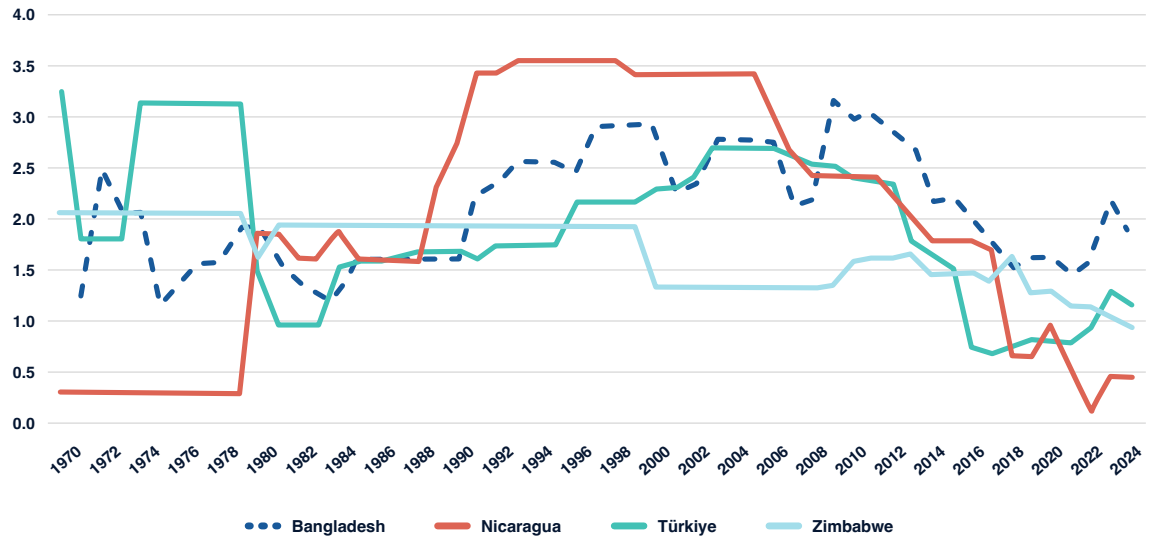
The case studies highlight the relationships between feminist activism, democracy and the rule of law. In Bangladesh, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe, WROs played roles in independence struggles and revolutions. Similarly, in Türkiye WROs were key in the country's re-democratisation. The link between democracy and rule of law is further strengthened by evidence that authoritarian leaders see such movements as direct threats to their consolidation of power. The studies show that attacking women's and LGBTQI+ rights is often a first step of an authoritarian leader. WROs are often united with other CSOs that speak up about democratic backsliding, as shown in Türkiye and Nicaragua. In Zimbabwe, WROs were key in the push for constitutional reform. For this reason, as in Nicaragua, authoritarian leaders often seek to maintain a veneer of democracy to the wider world, and engage in 'autocratic genderwashing', in which they publicly proclaim a commitment to gender equality while in practice systematically eroding women's rights. Or, in some cases, leaders co-opt the language of progressive women's rights agendas to promote traditional gender roles, as in the case of Erdoğan's use of the term 'gender justice'.

2. Closing of civic space and rights backlash is increasing across contexts, making WROs' work even more important.

The CIVICUS Monitor assesses the extent to which three core civil society rights are respected and upheld, and the degree to which states protect civil society. Of the case study countries, all are ranked as 'repressed' or 'closed'.[49] The SDG Gender Index shows that indicators for women's access to justice, freedom to discuss politics, freedom from discrimination and the state of the criminal justice system have all stalled or are trending in the wrong direction for all case study countries since 2015.[41] Figure 3, the Varieties of Democracies (V-DEM) graph, shows that each country had a relatively open period and periods of repression. The uptick in

the indicators show, for example, that the early 1990s–1995 was an era of progress for women's rights and civil society in each country.

Figure 4. *Varieties of Democracy Study:* national trends in "CSO repression," 1970–2023



Source: V-DEM dataset, accessed at https://v-dem.net/data_analysis/VariableGraph/ on 01/25/2025.

Governments across countries have attempted to prevent WROs from working by imposing extra-judicial requirements for organising protests – community-level meetings require higher level clearance, usually granted to organisations whose programming is pro-government. In some cases, WHRDs and activists have been targeted with arbitrary arrests and detentions. Additional tactics include the use of legislation and the legal framework, and increased regulation and audit requirements to systematically undermine WROs. Governments have attacked women's rights through new regressive legislation, including laws that criminalise dissent and 'foreign agent' laws that can be used to cancel NGOs' registration, limit their access to funding and criminalise activists and organisations. States have used public disinformation campaigns discrediting or othering feminists and their agendas. In many cases, WROs have shifted their focus away from human rights and advocacy work to service delivery or stopped working on more contentious issues such as SRHR or LGBTQI+ rights. This can be a result of direct government pressure, pressure from donors seeking to avoid tensions with governments or a survival strategy of WROs themselves.

3. Funding for WROs is less available, less flexible and comes with more strings attached than funding for other causes.

The case studies show international funding has been central to the work of WROs, although these funds have ebbed and flowed. Funding was most available and flexible in the 1990s, following major international conferences such as Beijing and Cairo that boosted international

interest and attention to women's rights.[50] These convenings catalysed the movement not only through increased access to international funding, but also by enabling movements to network and mobilise across and within regions. The increase in commitments, funding, visibility and mobilisation brought many wins, especially in policy and legal frameworks, as highlighted in the case studies. However, flexible funding became rarer, and donors began to finance individual projects on specific themes of interest. Increased competition for the limited funding, from other sectors such as governance and democratisation, also led to competition among WROs. Many informants also pointed to the excessive bureaucracy involved in securing international funding, and impact measurement requirements unsuited to the kinds of long-term change they are working towards, even less so in times of repression and shrinking civic space.

4. Without funding, movements fade into silence.

Defunding of or reduced funding for WROs often goes hand in hand with repression, because shrinking civic space increases challenges and risks for funders while restrictive laws and regulations limit WROs' access to external funding. When activists face restrictions on their work, this reduces their impact and inevitably affects their access to funding. The case studies highlight not only direct funding restrictions but also more indirect forms of defunding, and issues arising not only when funding is consistently reduced but also resulting from significant instability and inconsistencies in available funds year on year. For instance, in Zimbabwe, sanctions and the increased focus on governance resulted in funding reductions for WROs.

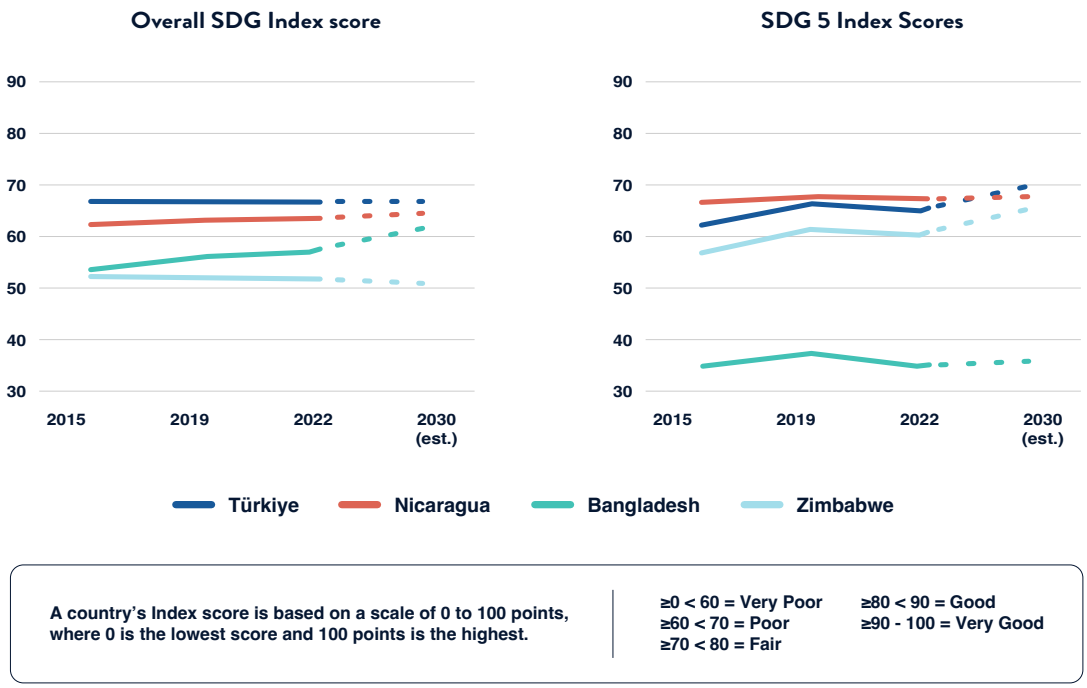
Changes in funding availability have led to the 'NGO-isation' of movements across case studies, where a movement gradually takes the form of a collective of NGOs. This happens when, in the search for resources, feminist activists establish NGOs that have the form and structure to meet donor requirements or adapt their form and structure to become more NGO-like. This occurs alongside the "projectisation" of WRO's work, in which they turn their work into short-term projects to access funding. Projectisation means WROs often feel like they are implementing donor agendas and are constantly at the whim of changing donor priorities, instead of being able to implement their context-driven solutions and work towards long-term social norms and systems-level change.

5. Weakened movements lead to negative outcomes for gender equality.

All countries studied show worrying trends in measures of gender equality. Key indicators on issues of critical importance to women have either stagnated or are moving in the wrong direction. The SDG Gender Index,[41] for example, shows all case study countries score either "poor" or "very poor" on SDG 5: Gender Equality. The Index also shows that indicators such as freedom from discrimination and freedom of association, and those specific to the lives of women such as women's ability to discuss politics freely and women's access to justice, have also consistently declined or stagnated across all countries. Here, as in other countries, WROs not only push for change on issues related to gender equality but also are largely the only gatekeepers on issues related to women's rights. They invest a lot of time in tracking,

monitoring and holding leaders accountable for gender equality. Without WROs, this task is largely left undone.

Figure 5. SDG Gender Index and SDG 5 on gender equality scores, 2015–2030



Source: Equal Measures 2030, 2024.[41]

In all case study countries, governments have rolled back or attempted to roll back gender-equality progress, for example systematically eroding existing legislation that WROs have worked towards for decades. Legislation on GBV has been attacked in several countries, where governments have attempted to tilt the contents of the law towards 'family protection', redefine concepts such as femicide, or weaken provisions on their responsibility for preventing and responding to cases of violence. Re-entrenching hierarchies of power and control is key to the authoritarian project and legitimising, or even encouraging, violence against women is a common strategy leaders use to accomplish this.[42] The Turkish government successfully withdrew from the Istanbul Convention. In Bangladesh, momentum on key legal reforms has stagnated. In 2015, the Nicaraguan government shut down the women's police stations established to investigate cases of GBV. The right to abortion is another right that WROs have staunchly defended and that conservative leaders seek to attack. In Zimbabwe and Türkiye, for example, the governments have tried many times to ban abortions. It is therefore not surprising that across all these countries we see increases in the rate of or the inability to rein in violence and femicides, and decreased access to abortion and contraception.

The case studies show progress on some gender related indicators is possible even in the absence of WROs or in periods of closing civic space, especially on development indicators such as health and education, or issues that can be improved through a top-down approach, such as women in ministerial positions and other appointed roles. But eradicating GBV or protecting women's right to bodily autonomy require the type of bottom-up change and large-scale social norm transformation that WROs are uniquely positioned to do, so we see indicators on these issues decline alongside the influence of WROs.

6. Feminist movements are resilient, but this comes at a cost.

Feminist activists have shown remarkable courage, creativity and resilience to continue to operate, despite sustained overt efforts to weaken or destroy them, or more direct undervaluing of their contributions. In many cases, they have been able to continue to document human rights violations, stage public protests, ensure activists' safety and advocate internationally despite severely restricted civic space and often with little or no funding. However, this resilience comes at a cost, with activists paying a high price and experiencing threats to their safety and risking severe trauma or burnout.[51,52] While WROs might be able to survive during challenging periods, they are forced to constantly react to emerging crises and attempts to attack their rights, instead of being able to proactively implement their agendas and influence genuine progress. Efforts to secure funding can occupy a disproportionate amount of time and leave little time for strategising or other activities.

Resilience looks different across country contexts. While WROs from Nicaragua largely operate from outside the country, WROs in Türkiye have been able to adopt a stance of resistance from within the state. Zimbabwean WROs have largely focused on service delivery and development projects, and Bangladeshi WROs have also focused heavily on project-based work and more one-off advocacy events.

These four countries represent distinct modalities of backlash against women's rights movements, illustrating the different ways governments and funding environments can constrain feminist organizing.

Bangladesh

Despite significant volumes of international development assistance flowing into the country, resources for civil society organizations and women's rights groups began declining markedly from the mid-2000s onward. This funding reorientation, combined restricted civic space, forced WROs to adopt short-term, project-based approaches rather than pursuing cross-organisation movement building, strategic advocacy and sustained political influencing work.

Nicaragua

In Nicaragua, civil society has faced severe repression under Daniel Ortega's presidency, beginning in 2006, and further intensified following the 2018 protests that broke out across the

country. International funding streams have been completely severed for WROs, resulting in the closure of most organizations or forcing them to operate in exile.

Turkey

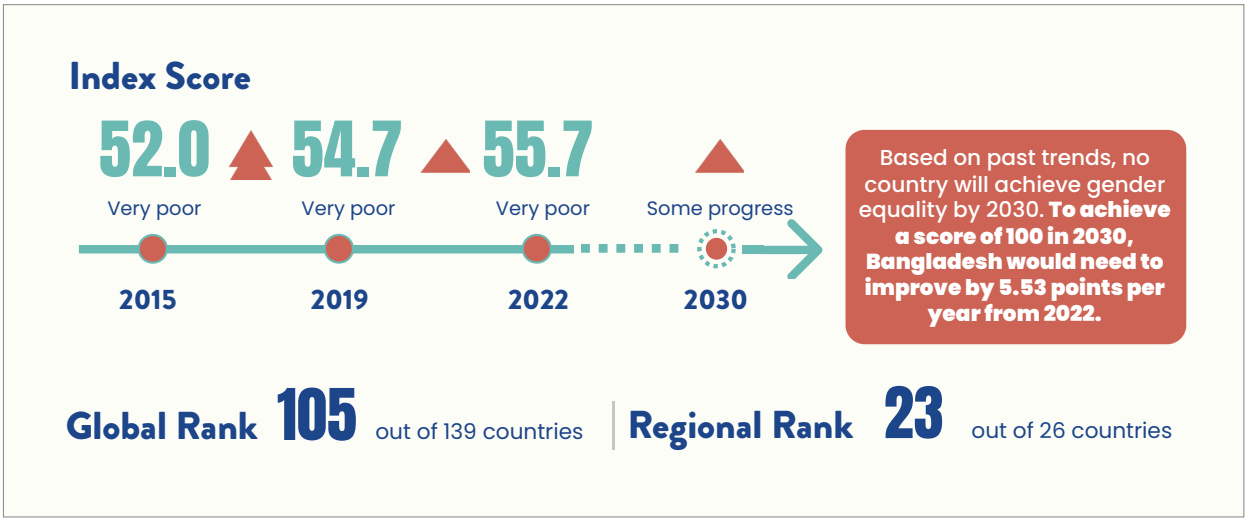
Under the rule of president Recep Tayyip Erdoğa, Turkey's civic space has become steadily more restricted, creating an increasingly hostile climate for WROs. Whilst is has remained low, a modest increase in international support during this period has allowed Turkish feminist organizations to maintain resistance on several critical fronts, even while facing major setbacks.

Zimbabwe

Since the late 1990s, successive governments have left WROs in Zimbabwe facing a closed civic space. The combination of this restrictive environment, volatile international funding patterns, and broader economic instability has significantly undermined the capacity and influence of the feminist movement.

Bangladesh

Figure 6: SDG Gender Index scores for Bangladesh, 2015 - 2022



Source: 2024 SDG Gender Index, Bangladesh Country Profile.[41]

The women's movement in Bangladesh before 2000

Bangladesh has a long history of women's mobilisation which can be traced back to the anti-colonial nationalist movement. WROs have been active in pro-democracy movements and

have established strong links with human rights, cultural and other social movements during these periods.

In the late 1980s and 1990s many women's NGOs were formed, partly in response to increased interest and funding for women's rights organising (including in the period leading up to and after the 1995 Beijing women's rights conference).

During the 1990s and early 2000s, Bangladeshi civil society was particularly successful in promoting the empowerment of women, reforms of law and governance, greater transparency and accountability, more financial inclusion through micro-credit institutions, and other public goods.[40]

A key achievement during this period was the passing of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 (DVPPA), which has been "praised as an example of outstanding collaboration between the government and the women's movement".[53] Especially progressive provisions within the Act included protection orders for women, the right to reside in the marital home, temporary custody of children, and the recovery of personal assets and assets acquired during marriage.[52]

But the 2000s also saw shifts in international funding priorities and approaches. These shifts contributed to changes in how social mobilisation on women's issues was undertaken in Bangladesh. NGOs shifted from the consciousness-raising activities of the mid-1980s towards service delivery and advocacy-related work.

And since the early 2010s, civic space has been greatly reduced in Bangladesh (as discussed in Section 2), with legislative changes since 2016 particularly making it increasingly difficult for foreign-funded NGOs to have their work approved by the Bangladesh government.

Shifts in political, economic and social context from 2000

Bangladesh has received a sizable amount of foreign assistance over time. In the 1970s, soon after independence, foreign assistance financed more than 70 per cent of the country's investment. However, in 2012, this fell to about 7 per cent of gross investment.[54] Over the decades following independence, Bangladesh saw significant economic growth and improvements in a range of social indicators, including poverty reduction, mortality rates, and life expectancy. At different times, Bangladesh has been described as a "development darling"[55] and a "development test case".[56]

Sheikh Hasina's Government (ruling from 2009–24) was known for its focus on economic growth and for aiming to have Bangladesh graduate to 'middle income country' status. The economic and social gains made over this period, however, came alongside rising inequality and an increasingly repressive environment for civil society.[54]

"A lot of the statistics, development information, economic information that was being provided [by] the government…were…exaggerated and intended to…push that [economic growth] agenda." (Interview BD001)

Mid-2024 saw Bangladesh's civil society organise and protest on a mass scale – July and August 2024 saw an uprising of civil society in response to the detention of student movement leaders.[57] But this came after a period of high repression from approximately 2013 to mid-2024, with election fraud, enforced disappearances and systemic governance failures. Some have described the period between the early 2010s and 2024 as a period of "inaction" for civil society in Bangladesh.[56] It was a period of heavy repression.

In December 2023, CIVICUS downgraded Bangladesh's civic space rating to "closed" – its worst rating,[58] not least because several laws were amended or passed that enabled the government to target journalists and human rights activists, many of whom were jailed. Over the past decade or so, human rights organisations working on more politically challenging issues such as rising inequalities, access to justice, or the state of the economy faced the greatest pressure, and many of them did not survive.[57]

A recent study found that rising anxiety and fear, coupled with reduced funding options, left CSOs deeply divided on issues of human rights versus service delivery. Over time, some shifted to this service delivery role reluctantly, while others remained as isolated advocacy groups.[57]

In a 2023 survey by the Asia Foundation 85 per cent of survey respondents said civic spaces are shrinking. About 77 per cent believed it was increasingly difficult for CSOs to protest government decisions.[40]

Shifts in funding for NGOs and WROs

NGOs, especially those receiving foreign funding, operate in a highly controlled environment in Bangladesh. Since 1990, organisations must be registered under the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) to receive foreign funding. The Bureau also approves each foreign-funded NGO project as well as their annual budgets.

Sources of funding for NGOs have evolved over the years, with the late 1980s and early 1990s seeing an influx of funding for civil society. This started with small international charities and foundations, then larger international NGOs (INGOs) and international foundations. Through the early 2000s, INGOs evolved from doing direct implementation work to more working in partnership with local organisations, which increased funding for local NGOs in Bangladesh.[59]

Bilateral funding for NGOs became important in the late 1990s and early 2000s and was the main funding source in the promotion and development of WROs after Beijing (1995) and up until the mid-2000s: "[Bilateral organisations'] small grants programmes and civil society grants were often the mainstay for women's organisations and small NGOs".[58] Up until the mid-2000s, the share of aid to NGOs as a percentage of total aid increased from 11 per cent in 1990–91 to 28 per cent in 2004–05.[58]

An example of the kinds of bilateral funds available for WROs around the mid-1990s included Canada (CIDA)'s Gender Fund in Bangladesh, which they described as follows:

> *"The targeted groups are women's organizations supporting and advocating policy and/or legislative reform to safeguard women's legal rights. Funded activities are expected to strengthen the institutional capacity of women's groups and reinforce domestic and international linkages between them and other interest groups. These efforts should also promote gender-awareness in Bangladesh, contributing to an environment more sensitive to women's rights".*[60]

An in-depth 2011 study of WROs in Bangladesh[58] reinforced the importance of foreign, and especially bilateral government, funding for their work in the late 1990s and early 2000s. All the case study organisations described initially receiving small grants from foundations (such as Ford Foundation and Asia Foundation), the British Council or INGOs (such as Oxfam) to help them start. These funds helped to develop ideas and try out activities on a small scale.

Later, when the organisations were more established, they were able to secure bilateral funding, including from CIDA's Gender Funds and bilateral grants from DANIDA and NORAD. Over this period, providing long-term funding was the common practice, even for bilateral donors.

However, from the mid-2000s onwards, several donor organisations (especially bilateral donors) revisited their missions and strategies, including downsizing their in-county operations and shifting away from long-term to project-based funding.

A "growing homogeneity" in agendas and strategies has seen important tactics, such as street protest, sidelined – or, if they do still happen, they are not reported through formal grant reporting mechanisms.[23] WROs have increasingly had to chase funding through short-term projects and neglect longer-term, more strategic goals, such as movement building.[23]

> *"In Bangladesh, we refer to the NGO-isation of the movement space. [N]ot just the feminist movement, but the broader rights movement, workers' movements. [T]his focus on short-term projects means that organisations get stuck in this cycle of doing very similar capacity building and training and advocacy events work, and not so much strengthening of communities or continuous advocacy. [A] lot of grassroots organisations, instead of being able to focus on service provision or engaging with the community, they get wrapped into short-term projects and creating new proposals and finding new funding sources." (Interview BD001)*

Using competitive grant mechanisms tends to disincentivise cross-organisational collaboration and movement building, crucial to civic spaces' resilience.[40] Civic space in Bangladesh has

suffered substantially, notably at the same time as this move from long-term, direct funding towards more significant, more competitive, project-based funding.

One factor driving this trend was the Paris Aid Effectiveness Declaration, agreed by donor countries in 2005. This marked a shift that saw bilateral aid organisations harmonising their agenda with government priorities and channeling funding directly to the government, multilateral institutions, pooled trust funds and larger international tenders.

As a result, after 2005 most small and medium-sized NGOs in Bangladesh lost their bilateral funder support. The authors of the 'Mobilising for Women's Rights and The Role of Resources' study concluded: "Most bilateral agencies have ended their NGO grants, small grants and women's funds programmes or are in the process of doing so".[58]

Increasing economic pressures within donor countries also played a role in aid priorities in a way that affected available funding for civil society in Bangladesh, especially after the financial crisis of 2008:

> *"Around 2019/20, when the Syrian refugee crisis really hit European countries, that had a big effect on aid being [diverted] from the Bangladesh portfolio back into their own countries (especially Germany and the UK)." (Interview BD0001)*

The Government of Canada's Gender Fund in Bangladesh, specifically for projects on women's rights and women's participation in decision-making, came to an end in November 2010. And around 2011 Norway announced they would be cutting their support to WROs and local NGOs in Bangladesh in half, and that in future this work would be organised through the Norwegian Embassy's support to a multi-donor challenge fund (the Manusher Jonno Foundation, which issues project, not core, funding).

A 2023 Asia Foundation study found that this trend towards reducing funding for civil society in Bangladesh countries across Asia has continued and the pandemic further exacerbated the decline.[40] In their survey of CSOs in Bangladesh 59 per cent of respondents noted a decline in donor funding for their activities. The pandemic further exacerbated reductions, especially in Bangladesh, where they found that 74 per cent of respondents experienced a decrease in funding. Interviewees believed that small CSOs and organisations based outside Dhaka likely felt the reductions most acutely.[40]

Funders and their perceptions of the risks of funding WROs in Bangladesh

The mid-2000s saw a shift in strategy and philosophy related to the direct funding of CSOs and WROs among bilateral donors. In the 1990s and early 2000s, WROs in Bangladesh described a situation in which they felt solidarity from donor staff, who had representatives in country. They noted that donor agency staff had been 'creative' in ensuring funding for innovative approaches that may not have otherwise received funds under mainstream schemes.[58]

But by 2011, they expressed that this direct relationship based on solidarity had been replaced by a more business-like approach, which emphasised 'value for money'.[26] In a 2010 interview,

the CIDA representative in Bangladesh explained the reason for cutting their funding for civil society: "…due to changes in policy direction, CIDA's focus in recent years has shifted towards fewer and bigger initiatives through a harmonised approach with other development partners. In this context, we are not encouraging gender specific programming at this stage".[58]

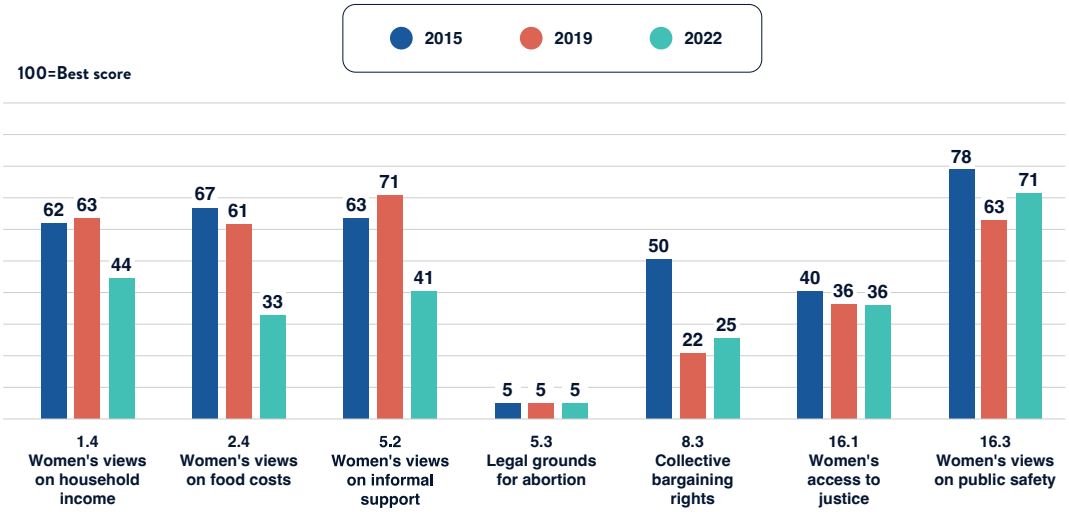
A representative from Bangladesh's women's movement noted that donors have been especially focused on reducing funding from areas that are perceived to have less direct 'benefit' for the donor countries themselves: "[We] have worked with the Embassy of the Netherlands and in the last few years [they are] shifting away from education [and] the 'soft side' of development into more trade and economic-related areas. We're definitely seeing a shift away from the kind of work [WROs] focus on." (Interview BD0001)

Evidence of impact of the funding shifts in Bangladesh

Poor and stagnating performance across the SDG Gender Index

In the 2024 SDG Gender Index, Bangladesh ranked almost last for SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Work) and SDG 10 (Inequalities) in 2015. By 2022, this had not changed.[41] Between 2015 and 2022, women's satisfaction with their household income, money to buy food or shelter, and whether they had family or friends they could count on dropped enormously (see Figure 7). The same period saw a significant rollback in collective bargaining and freedom of association laws, reflecting a crumbling legal framework for workers' rights. Several indicators within SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Institutions) also worsened substantially for women and girls: access to justice, homicide rates and whether women feel safe at night in their neighbourhood.[41]

Figure 7: Selected SDG Gender Index indicator scores for Bangladesh, 2015 - 2022



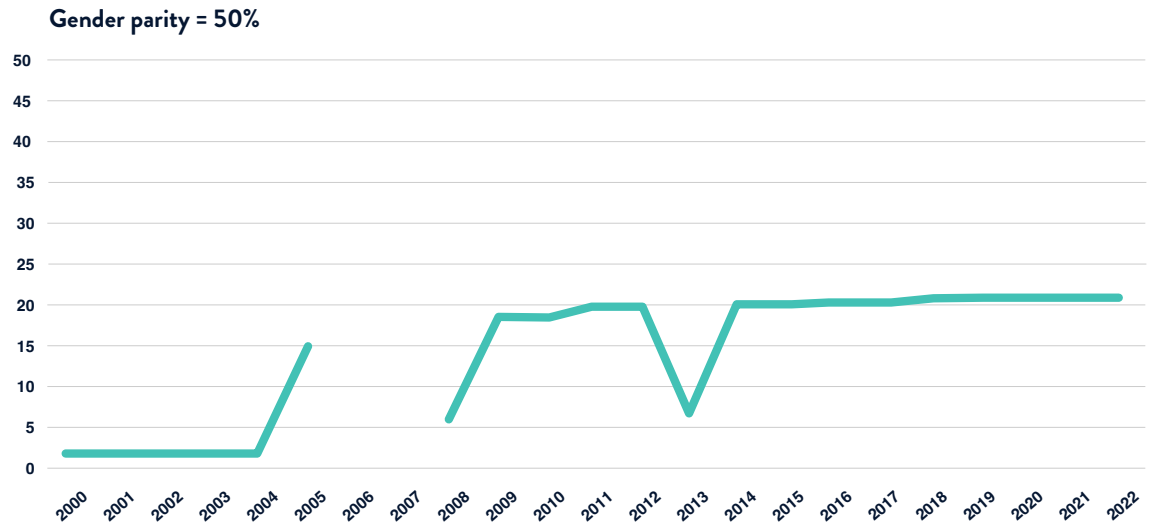
Notes: These five indicators from the SDG Gender Index are all standardised to the same scale where 100 is the best score and 0 is the worst score. The full descriptions and data sources for the indicators by reference number can be found at: www.equalmeasures2030.org/2024-sdg-gender-index/

Source: Equal Measures 2030, 2024.[41]

We examined the issues within the SDG Gender Index to see if there were shifts in outcomes after the early 2010s, the period that aligns with the funding shifts for WROs in Bangladesh. The lack of sufficient historical trend data for many gender issues makes this analysis challenging, but two problems from the Index for which there is historical data show some evidence of stagnation in the period after the early 2010s compared to the decade before: unmet need' for family planning; and women's representation in parliament. Between 1994 and 2004, the percentage of women with 'unmet need' for family planning dropped by 31 per cent, a positive trend meaning that more women had access to contraception. Between 2004 and 2014, progress continued in the right direction but slowed, improving by 20 per cent.

Women's representation in parliament showed a similar 'improving then stagnating' trend over roughly the same period (though there are gaps in the data in some years). From around 2000–08, the percentage of women in parliament jumped from less than 5 per cent to around 20 per cent. However, from 2008 onwards, women's representation stagnated at 20 per cent (except for 2013, where representation worsened dramatically for a short period; see Figure 8).

Figure 8: The proportion of women in Parliament in Bangladesh, 2000 - 2022



Source: IPU cited in Equal Measures 2030, 2024.[41]

Stagnation in reform of gender equality policies and laws.

Several global research studies have demonstrated links between the strength of feminist mobilisation and women's rights organising with law reform related to gender equality.[8,61,62] While we can't definitively tie this to the shifts in funding for WROs in Bangladesh, qualitative evidence indicates that momentum on key legal reforms in Bangladesh has stagnated since around 2010.[63]

One example is that the Women, Business and the Law research shows a rapid period of change in Bangladesh between 1970 and 2010 in laws that affect women in the workplace. For example, in 2006 Bangladesh increased the duration of paid maternity leave to 16 weeks and lifted restrictions on women's ability to work at night. In 2010, Bangladesh enacted legislation protecting women from domestic violence. But despite this progress, the country made no further reforms between 2010 and 2020.[62]

And there has also been a notable slowdown in progress on GBV legal reform since around the same period. In 2010, the Bangladesh government adopted the landmark Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act. This legal reform has been praised as "an example of outstanding collaboration between the government and the women's movement". However, since the law was enacted, its implementation has been weak.[52] To translate the law into action, one of the most significant strategies for women's rights activists working on the issue of GBV would require coalition-building and the forming of 'collectives' to build a mass base to amplify their voice, vision and struggle.[64]

Impact on women's rights organising in Bangladesh

The funding shifts, especially among bilateral donors, away from in-country funding of local CSOs and WROs, has had an impact on the agendas and strategies of women's rights organising in the country, leading to greater uniformity.Ways of working and strategies that might be particularly effective in the local context (such as street activism) are sidelined – or if they still happen, are not reported.[23]The search for financial sustainability has driven WROs to taking on more and more short-term projects while at the same time having to neglect the pursuit of longer term more strategic goals.[26]

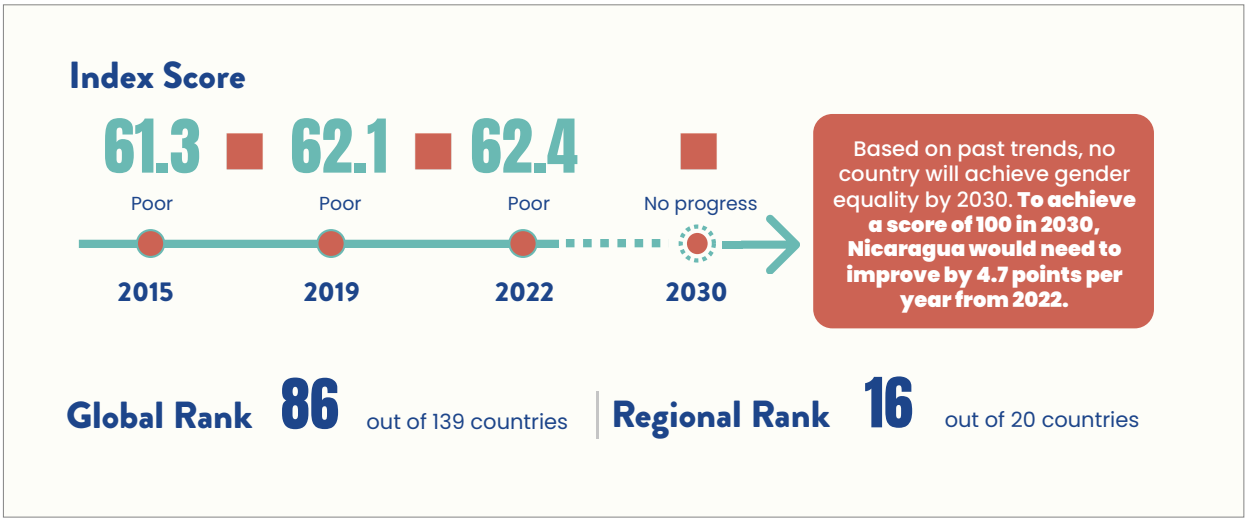
The use of competitive grant mechanisms tends to disincentivise the inter-civic-actor and cross-organisation collaboration and movement building that is so critically important for the resilience of civic spaces.[40] Civic space in Bangladesh suffered greatly in the last decade or so, and it is notable that this period aligns with a period in which funding moved away from long-term, core and 'movement building' direct to WROs towards larger, more competitive project-based funding.

Conclusion

Bangladesh stands at a crossroads following the 2024 student protests that resulted in the ousting of the long-standing government. Activists hope this will bring a new era of progress, but government promises to collaborate with civil society in this transition have not yet materialised (Interview BD001). In a context of a growing anti-rights movement in the country and rising insecurity for minority groups, a strengthened and well-funded women's movement – and one with the flexibility to pivot their tactics to respond to real needs, including street protest, providing physical protection for activists, and mental health support – will be crucial in ensuring the years to come bring tangible benefits for women and girls.

Nicaragua

Figure 9: SDG Gender Index scores for Nicaragua, 2015 - 2022



Source: 2024 SDG Gender Index, Nicaragua Country Profile.[41]

History of WROs in Nicaragua

Nicaragua has a history of active involvement of civil society, including women's movements, since before the Sandinista Revolution in the 1970s and 80s. The post-revolutionary period that followed saw some crucial gains for women's rights, including the acquisition of legal rights in the family and in marriage, and a massive incorporation of Nicaraguan women into education and the labour market.[65] An autonomous feminist movement emerged in Nicaragua in the 1990s, in an era of feminist mobilisations globally known as the decade of conferences in which commitment to women's rights and development cooperation surged. New WROs emerged and began to coordinate as a movement and international funding reached its highest level (interview NC001). The participation of WROs was key, for example in the establishment of specialised women's police stations known as 'comisarías de la mujer' in 1997, and the passing of the country's first law outlawing family violence (Interview NC001).

Shifts in political, economic and social context 2006–18

Daniel Ortega of the Sandinista party was re-elected president in 2006, following a campaign in which he allied himself with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and right-wing parties to stand against abortion rights and took an anti-feminist stance. Ortega's presidency was marked from the start by his targeting of feminists and other progressive movements who opposed his 'caudillo' (strongman) style of politics, as they were framed as 'imperialist enemies' of the Sandinista ideals.[64]

One of the Ortega government's first objectives was to cut the funding pipeline of the feminist movement and eliminate any possibility of dialogue with state institutions. He attempted this

first through increased regulation, and then by criminalising advocates and dismantling their organisations:

> *"The movement knew that things would be difficult, and from the very start, they were. The government's first objective was to take away funding from feminist organisations, specifically, before any other organisations." (Interview NC001).*
>
> *"Dictatorships have understood very well the relationship between well-funded movements and their capacity for influence, even better than the donors themselves." (Interview NC002)*

WROs were pressured by the government, some UN officials and other development actors in the country to stop working on issues that were in opposition to the government, including SRHR and decriminalising abortion. Some WROs chose to work in collaboration with the government, but many defended their autonomy. In 2008, the government conducted legal proceedings against several- high profile WROs and feminist networks, accusing them of "money laundering and subversion of the 'constitutional order'".[66]

By 2012, most donors that had supported WROs in Nicaragua had decided to leave the country. Many organisations closed but others were able to survive through this period through crucial support by a limited number of INGOs. Although the situation was extremely challenging, some WROs managed to survive, continuing to document and denounce human rights violations, provide support to victims of violence and link with regional advocacy and mutual support networks.

> *"In spite of all their campaigns against us, they didn't manage to disarm the movement. They tried to build a counter movement against us but they couldn't. During this time [2006–18], we were the only movement they couldn't take off the streets, and we continued to march on 8 March and 25 November. We were the first ones to raise our voices about the clearly authoritarian and antidemocratic direction of the regime". (Interview NC001)*

2018 protests and period following

In April 2018, Nicaraguans took to the streets in large numbers to protest against the government and were met with violence. A brutal crackdown by the police against groups of protesters occurred in the months that followed, leaving more than 350 people dead .[67] Hundreds of people were imprisoned because of the protests, and more than 440,000 Nicaraguans have sought asylum abroad between 2018 and 2023.[68] Since 2018, Nicaragua's descent into dictatorship has accelerated, with new laws passed consolidating government control of the electoral process and suppressing any opposition parties, media and civil society.

During the pandemic, the government passed three bills consolidating its power: one that controls NGO funds; one that puts governmental controls on digital information and social media and one criminalising protest and dissent that aims to persecute and denationalise opposition leaders and human rights defenders. Most recently, in 2024, the government passed further laws to regulate NGOs, including a foreign agent law banning them from receiving foreign funding, and a law obliging NGOs to work in partnership with the government and to present their proposals for any programmes to the government for approval.[69]

The government has forcibly cancelled the legal status and seized the assets of at least 5,437 non-profit organisations since December 2018[70] .Civil society has now been virtually eliminated in Nicaragua; about 80% of the non-profit organisations registered in the country in 2017 have disappeared.[65]

Impact on WROs

The 2018 protests were organised primarily by young people, women and peasant farmers. Aiming to justify the brutal crackdown, the Ortega regime has presented the peaceful protests as an attempted coup d'état by these groups. This has resulted in a more severe backlash in recent years, and since 2018 more than 300 feminist and LGBTQI+ organisations have been shut down and had their assets seized.[71] WROs were key in providing support and awareness to communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the government denied its existence, but by 2021 all had ceased to operate. Some of the organisations that were shut down have managed to reestablish themselves from abroad, from where they continue to document and denounce the regime's human rights violations and build a women's movement in exile.

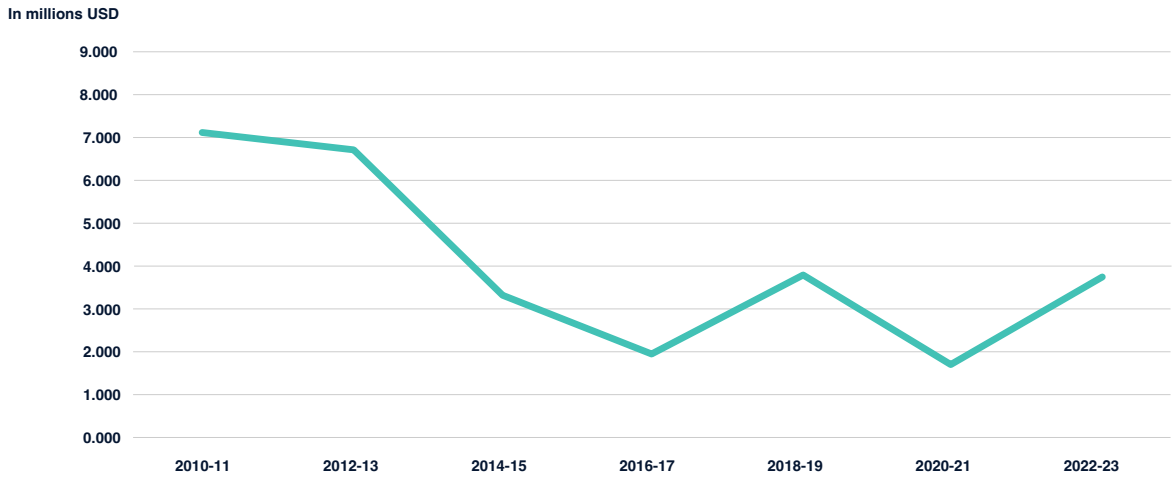
The funding landscape

Since the 1980s Nicaragua has received international development aid. But it is only since the 1990s that CSOs, including WROs, started to receive funding from development agencies, especially the Nordic governments and particularly Sweden, as well as Spanish, Canadian and German agencies. Various Nordic governments formed a common fund, which financed the creation of the comiserías and invested in important work training law enforcement and judges on GBV, as well as initiatives on women's land rights. However, Sweden stopped funding NGOs in Nicaragua almost entirely in 2010. An analysis of all ODA reaching WROs in Nicaragua shows that funding has declined significantly from an average of US$7 million (or 2.1 percent of all ODA) from 2010–11, to an average of just $3.8 million (or 1.5 percent of all ODA) from 2022–23. (see figure 10)[14] Levels of funding to Nicaragua with gender equality as a principal objective have stayed relatively constant, with an increase from 2015/16 to 2017/18, although this has been directed entirely to organisations based in donor countries, not to CSOs in Nicaragua.[vi]

[vi] Based on OECD communication, 2025.

Figure 10: ODA to WROs in Nicaragua, 2011 - 2023

Two-year averages, in US$ millions



Notes: ODA to WROs includes spending marked with sector code 15170 (Women's Rights Organizations and Movements, and Government Institutions).

Source: Authors' calculations based on OECD communication.

INGOs, particularly Oxfam who had supported WROs in Nicaragua since the 1980s, continued to fund WROs even after bilateral donors had stopped and played a key role in this period, until they were forced to leave the country in 2020. However, INGOs were targeted by the government through tax compliance procedures and were used to identify and investigate smaller organisations they partnered with. Some smaller WROs were left directly exposed and had to distance themselves and stop receiving support (Interview NC003).

Networks of Nicaraguan women in exile struggle to raise funds for their crucial work. Most of these groups are in Costa Rica, the USA or Europe, and since they are classified as middle or high-income countries, it is challenging for them to receive funds. Since 2020, some of the NGOs that had to leave the country and some women's funds have found ways to offer some support, through groups outside the country and other means, but the funding is only enough to keep a handful of organisations in existence, and only in survival mode (Interview NC001).

Impact on gender-equality outcomes

Ortega and his wife, Vice-President Rosario Murillo, have often publicly expressed their commitment to gender equality and on the international stage and have regularly boasted that since 2006 Nicaragua has ranked in the top 10 globally in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index.[64] While the country has made progress on some development indicators on gender equality including girl's education and early marriage,[41] a closer look at the data reveals a much more worrying picture of life for women and girls in the country. The monitoring and documentation of WROs has been fundamental to understand the scope and negative

impact of Ortega's policies on gender equality, as government control raises questions about the reliability of official data.

Women's political participation

The Ortega dictatorship often claims it was the first country to achieve parity in political representation. This was mandated in 2012 through the '50/50 law' and imposes 50 per cent electoral quotas and steps to increase women's representation in all state institutions. In 2022, women represented more than 50 per cent of parliamentary and cabinet seats.[41] Although the presence of women in public offices is increasingly noticeable, in practice women in these positions have little power or influence, with Rosario Murillo being the only woman with real power in the dictatorship.[72] These advances in women's formal political participation must also be viewed within the wider context of crackdown on informal political participation and civil society. Indicators measuring women's individual rights, ability to discuss politics, freedom of expression and association and CSO participation have all declined significantly since 2006, and particularly drastically since the 2018 protests.[41]

Gender-based violence

In 2012, Nicaragua passed Law 779, a comprehensive law addressing GBV and femicide, the passage of which was largely due to decades of sustained feminist activism and financial support by European development cooperation agencies.[73] However, just 10 months after the law's passing, due to conservative and religious backlash, the law was revised. The government systematically weakened its provisions and changed the purpose of the law to protecting the family, not women's rights. A reform in 2014 limited the concept of GBV to only include violence within intimate partner relationships and included mandatory mediation between the perpetrator and the victim. In 2015, the government shut down the comisarías established to investigate cases of domestic violence, citing a lack of funding as the reason for the closure.[74] In the past four years, the government claims to have reopened over 300 comisarías, but WROs point out serious deficiencies, including a lack of human rights training for officers and a lack of material and financial resources to ensure their effective performance.[75]

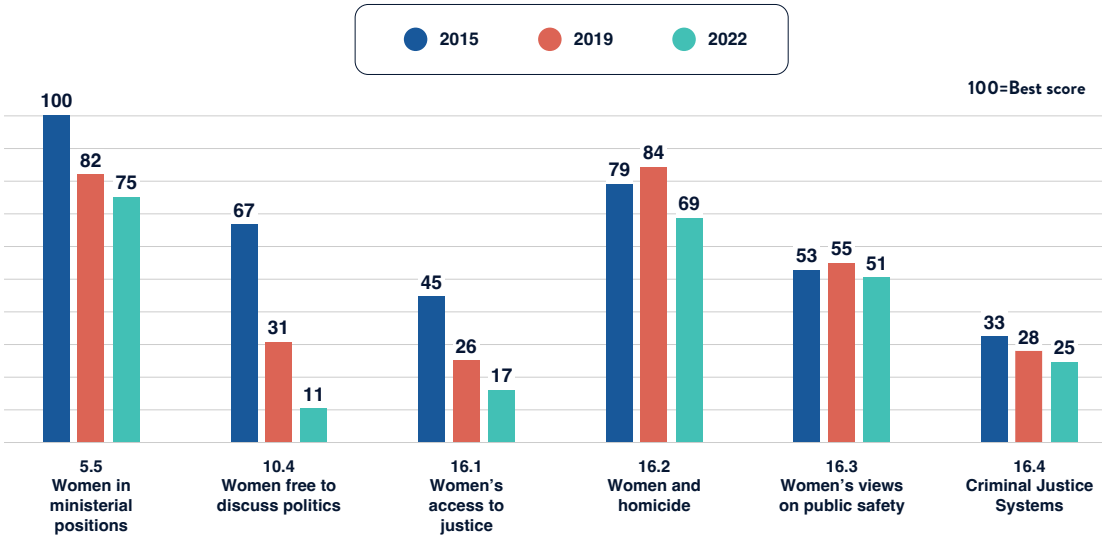
Nicaragua continues to have alarmingly high rates of GBV and a society in which sexual abuse of minors is normalised and occurs with complete impunity. Femicide rates increased from 2015 to 2021.[41] The government did not publish figures on femicides and other forms of violence against women in 2022 and 2023, but, according to the CSO Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir (Catholics for Choice), femicides have only decreased slightly since the height of the pandemic, with 57 cases in 2024.[63] Survivors of violence are left unprotected and without key services, many of which were operated by WROs that were shut down. Until 2015, there were at least 16 shelters for victims of GBV. Today, only two shelters remain.[70]

High rates of sexual violence, a total ban on abortion since 2006 and a complete lack of sexuality education contribute to Nicaragua being the country with the highest adolescent birth rates in Latin America and the Caribbean, with 82 cases per 1,000 adolescents[41] and the

birthrate among girls aged 10–14 was almost twice as high as the regional average in 2022.[76] Many of these pregnancies are the result of sexual assault. According to data from the Legal Medical Institute, 80 per cent of women and girls treated for sexual violence between 2017 and 2023 were adolescents under 17.[74]

Significant declines in women's access to justice and the function of the criminal justice system make this situation even more concerning. According to the 2024 SDG Gender Index, women's access to justice declined from a score of 45.3 in 2015 to just 16.5 in 2022, the lowest score in the region and second lowest globally.[41] Nicaragua's score on the functioning of its criminal justice system also declined significantly.

Figure 11. Selected SDG Gender Index indicator scores for Nicaragua, 2015 - 2022



Notes: These five indicators from the SDG Gender Index are standardised to the same scale where 100 is the best and 0 is the worst. The indicators' full descriptions and data sources by reference number can be found at: www.equalmeasures2030.org/2024-sdg-gender-index/

Source: Equal Measures 2030, 2024.[41]

Conclusion

The context of multiple crises in Nicaragua (socio-political, human rights and economic) poses multiples challenges to donors, but the country's human rights situation and lack of progress on gender equality measures urges us to think of unconventional ways to support WROs inside and outside the country. Nicaraguan organisations are calling for crisis funding that is less rigid and bureaucratic and takes into account the conditions posed by repression within Nicaragua and the challenges in exile.

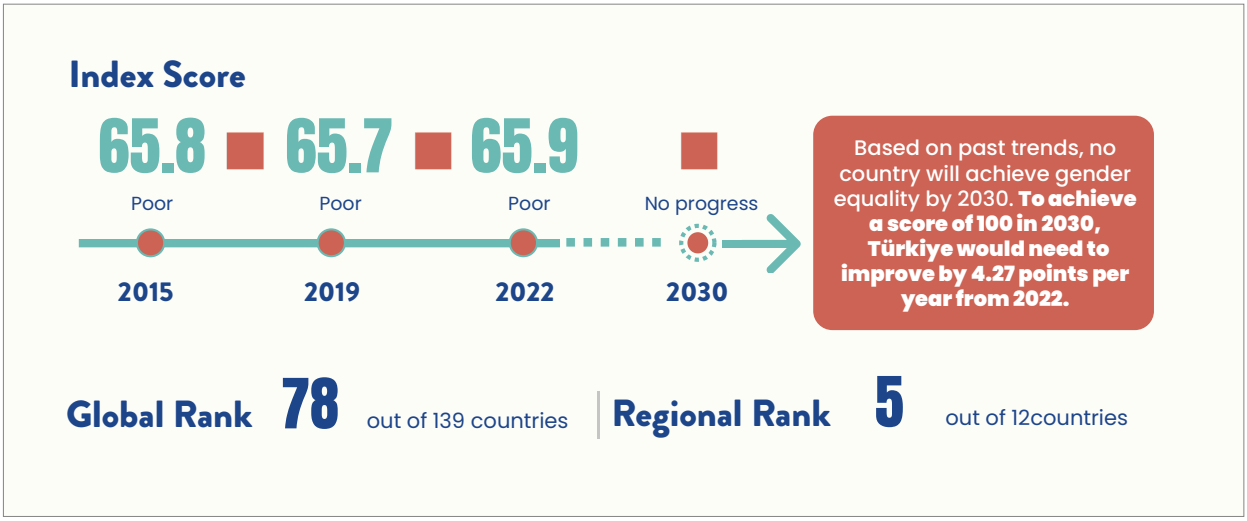
In the words of one activist:

> *"Political change is going to take time. When it comes time to rebuild the movement, we need a movement with the same critical consciousness and same capacity as*

before, so we need to maintain a pluralistic movement of rural women, domestic workers, lesbian women, afro-descendent women etc. To maintain this richness we need to meet, maintain connections with regional networks in Central America and to go through a healing process together." (Interview NC002).

Türkiye

Figure 12: SDG Gender Index scores for Türkiye, 2015 - 2022



Source: 2024 SDG Gender Index, Türkiye Country Profile.[41]

WROs in Türkiye before 2000

Diverse women's movements in Türkiye have historically been crucial in advocating women's rights since the Ottoman period. Following the 1980 coup, autonomous feminist movements emerged, contributing significantly to Türkiye's redemocratisation and advancing key reforms.[77] The 1990s saw a strong wave of feminist activism, leading to important reforms on GBV as well as the establishment of essential women's institutions. This period coincided with a boom in WROs in Türkiye, with the number of registered WROs increasing fivefold between 1983 and 2004.[78]

The late 1990s and early 2000s marked a golden age for feminist activism because of Türkiye's recognition as an EU candidate in 1999. The drive to align national laws with EU regulations, known as 'Europeanisation', and the presence of several key allies in government enabled feminist movements to push for reforms.[79] This period resulted in significant legal changes, including a revised civic code in 2001 extending equal rights to women in marriage, divorce and property, and a revised penal code in 2004 that criminalised marital rape and lengthened sentences for honour killings and sexual abuse. European funding through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) supported gender-equality projects.[80]

Changes in political, economic and social context from 2000–24

The landscape began to shift when the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002. Initially, the AKP continued the Europeanisation agenda, but, by 2010, under President Erdoğan's increasingly authoritarian leadership, the government began to openly reject gender equality. This was further consolidated in 2014 with the country's shift to a presidential system and the election of Erdogan to the presidency in 2014. The president cut off dialogue with WROs and opposition to gender equality and the promotion of traditional gender roles through the concept of women's 'fitrat' ('natural' role) became a core tenet of Erdogan's conservative, ethno-nationalist ideology.[81] State policies began replacing gender equality with family-centered initiatives, portraying women primarily as caregivers to relieve the state of welfare responsibilities. Educational reforms emphasised patriarchal and Islamist values, divisive propaganda promoted religious nationalism and pro-natalist policies forced conservative gender roles. Women who conformed to these traditional values were venerated and seen as central to the idea of the Turkish nation, while feminists, along with leftists and any other political dissenters, were demonised and 'othered'.[82] The last meaningful dialogue between feminist movements and the government occurred when Türkiye signed the Istanbul Convention in 2011, and in the creation of law 6284 on the convention's implementation, although many of the feminist movement's proposed amendments to the law were ignored (Interview TY001).

Evidence of the closing of civic space/suppression of feminist movements during this period

Erdogan's presidency has been increasingly characterised by democratic backsliding, criminalisation of dissent and the restriction of civic space. An attempted coup in 2016 led to a two-year state of emergency, during which 400 NGOs, including many WROs, were shut down under counterterrorism pretexts and several activists imprisoned. Kurdish WROs were particularly targeted, and municipal shelters in Kurdish areas were closed.[76]

Since then, the government has continued to restrict freedom of expression and banned Pride marches in 2015, followed by International Women's Day marches. Restrictive laws have meant all international funding must be reported on through a portal of the Ministry of the Interior and have enabled the government to closely monitor and disrupt CSOs through extensive audits and trustee appointments. Public sector institutions can selectively use laws to prevent NGOs from doing their work and accessing resources, for example by requiring organisations to apply for permission to collect donations from the public (Interview TY002). A proposed 2024 foreign agent law threatens to further restrict access to international funding for CSOs and journalists.[83]

A key element of the government's strategy for reducing the influence of feminist civil society has been to create a parallel structure of government-controlled organisations, known as GONGOs. Any domestic funding previously available to feminist groups is now directed to these organisations, who co-opt the language of 'gender justice' to promote traditional, Islamist

roles for women.[78] The government legitimises civil society participation in policy and legislative processes through these groups, and they are visible in international processes, for example preparing shadow reports to the CEDAW committee and other human rights bodies The Directorate of Religious Affairs has also replaced independent NGOs in the provision of services such as counselling and domestic violence shelters, in many cases advising women to remain in abusive relationships and advising against divorce.[84]

Impact on WROs

In this period of restricted civic space, the role of the feminist movement in Türkiye transitioned to one of resistance, and 'holding the line' to prevent the government from reversing progress on gender equality. It has become riskier to publicly identify as a feminist organizations, and many have experienced threats and repeated attempts to shut them down, including the prominent feminist organisation We Will Stop Femicides, which has faced lawsuits alleging violations of public morality.[85] The government has also used public campaigns to spread misinformation discrediting feminist organisations. Many organisations have chosen to identity as CSOs instead, or concentrate on less contentious activities such as service provision over rights-based work or advocacy.[86]

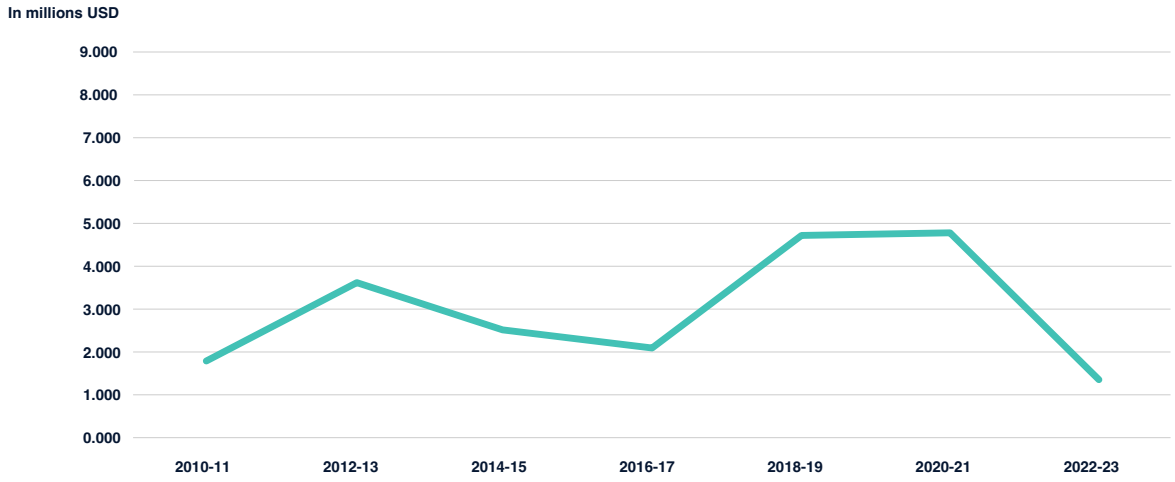
In the absence of any dialogue with the government, WROs have developed new tactics, including public protests, court-monitoring efforts in GBV cases, blogging and organizing 'mini publics' or discussion forums on key issues.[81] New feminist networks such as We Will Stop Femicides have emerged, led by a younger generation, and new alliances have been formed including between Muslim feminist groups and secular groups. Coalitions of women's groups have successfully blocked regressive legislation in several cases by organising large scale public opposition, including an attempt to implement a ban on abortion in 2012, an attempt to remove women's alimony rights in 2018 and proposed legislation in both 2016 and 2020 that would pardon rapists if they marry their victims. However, a crucial blow was dealt to the feminist movement in 2021 when, despite huge protests and legal action, Türkiye withdrew from the Istanbul Convention, the regional human rights treaty on GBV.

Changes in the funding landscape for WROs in Türkiye

Historically, the feminist movement in Türkiye has not received significant funding and has relied primarily on volunteers to do its work. The past 10 years have seen the increasing NGO-isation or professionalisation of the sector and increasing levels of international funding become available.[77] Some of the larger feminist organisations that have played key roles in the movement have been able to sustain themselves and institutionalise because of external funding. ODA to WROs increased between 2010/11 and 2020/23, a possible response to the worsening political situation, although it remained low. The average for 2010/11 was US$1.8 million (or 0.1 percent of total ODA), and this rose to $4.8 million in 2020/21 (0.2 percent of total ODA). However, in 2022/23 ODA to WROs dropped significantly (see figure 13).

Figure 13: ODA to WROs in Türkiye, 2011 - 2023

Two-year averages, in US$ millions



Notes: ODA to WROs includes spending marked with sector code 15170 (Women's Rights Organizations and Movements, and Government Institutions).

Source: Authors' calculations based on OECD communication.

The primary funders of feminist organisations in Türkiye over these years have been European governments such as Sweden and the Netherlands, and the European Union Delegation. Sida, the Swedish government's development agency, has been a particularly crucial funder for WROs. For example, for 16 years Sida consistently provided core support to the organisation Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR), an organisation that was instrumental in blocking the government's attempted abortion bans and the 2016 rape law. Over 27 years (1998–24) 12 per cent (US$22.32 million) of Sida's total funding for gender equality in Türkiye went directly to feminist organisations.[87] However, this funding has fluctuated according to Sweden's changing priorities. It peaked in 2015 following the announcement of Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) and was severely cut in 2024 due to Sweden's reliance on Erdogan in their NATO application process and their abandonment of their FFP in 2022 (Interview TY001). Activists have also expressed concern that, although EU governments continue to fund gender-equality initiatives in Türkiye, much of this funding is directed toward government institutions and organisations, many of which are working to undermine women's rights (Interview TY002).

Access to funding is a persistent challenge for WROs in Türkiye and most funding goes to a small number of large national organisations. In a recent study, WROs reported a range of challenges in accessing funding, including donors being unwilling to support human resources, 'projectisation' of funding and poor availability of long-term grants (with 56 per cent of reported grants lasting for a year or less), and donors being unwilling to fund small, new or local organisations. In addition, faced with increasingly challenging economic circumstances in recent years, many activists can no longer afford to volunteer their time and organisations are struggling to survive (Silva, 2023).[77]

The restrictions the government have put in place further complicate the situation and make receiving international funding a mixed blessing. In the words of one activist:

> *"You have to be careful if you receive money from international sources. You need a lot of HR capacity and lot of documentation which is challenging for smaller organisations. If you don't pay fees or report every single detail you are punished. There is a culture of fear." (Interview TY001).*

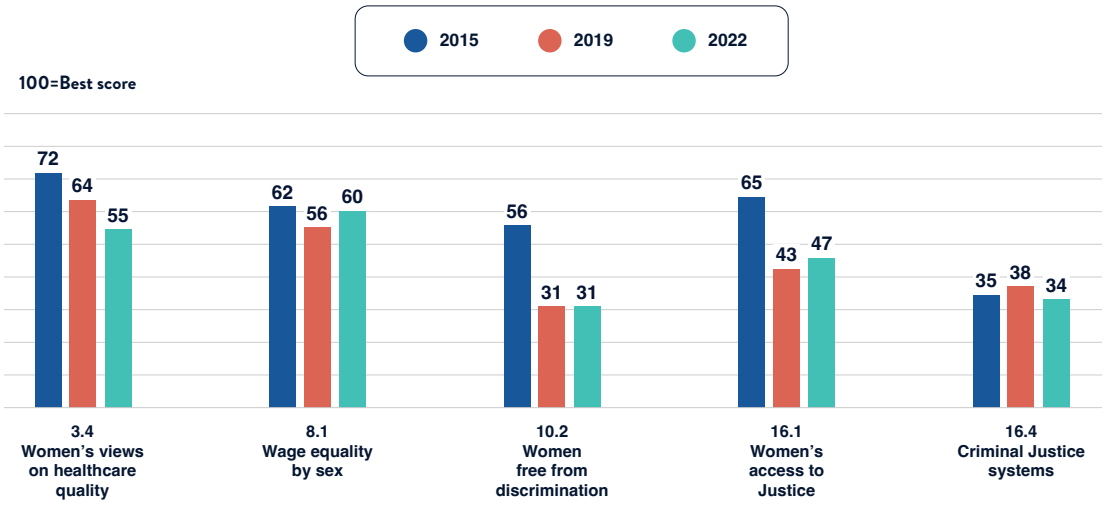
Impact on gender-equality indicators

While Türkiye has made progress on several key gender-equality issues, including girls' education, child marriage and women's political participation,[41] it is clear that more than a decade of authoritarian rule and restricted civic space has had an impact on the lives and freedoms of Turkish women and girls. According to the SDG Gender Index, Türkiye made no progress on gender equality between 2015 and 2022 and has an overall 'poor' score. Scores on women's personal autonomy, freedom from discrimination and ability to openly discuss political issues have declined drastically.[41]

Levels of violence against women in Türkiye remain very high and continue to rise. According to We Will Stop Femicides, at least 394 femicides were committed in 2023.[88] There was a 16 per cent rise in femicides from 2021 to 2022 after Türkiye's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, and rates have increased every year since the platform started collecting data in 2010, except in 2011 when the convention was signed.[89] A concerning trend alongside these increasing levels of violence is a significant decline in women's access to justice during this period[41]. Abortion access is another area in which progress is being reversed. Although abortion is legal, access has become increasingly challenging in practice. A 2020 study found that out of 295 public hospitals only 10 provided abortion to the full extent of the law, and that abortion is often only available to those who can pay for private healthcare.[90] A 2021 study found that, due to misinformation and abortion-deterrent policies of the state, women in Türkiye are largely unaware of their rights and unable to access medical and legal advice on abortion (Women for Women's Human Rights, 2021).[91]

Although rates have increased very slowly over this period, Türkiye still has the lowest female labour force participation of OECD countries[92], and women are increasingly in informal, insecure jobs.[93] Other indicators that have declined or stagnated during this period are wage equality, and women not in education, employment or training.[41] Turkish women are also increasingly frustrated with their economic situation and services available to them, with their reported satisfaction with their income levels, infrastructure, water quality and health systems all declining since 2015.[41]

Figure 14. Selected SDG Gender Index indicator scores for Türkiye, 2015 - 2022



Notes: These five indicators from the SDG Gender Index are standardised to the same scale where 100 is the best and 0 is the worst. The full descriptions and data sources for the indicators by reference number can be found at: https://equalmeasures2030.org/2024-sdg-gender-index/explore-the-data/indicators-and-scores/

Source: Equal Measures 2030, 2024.[41]

Conclusion

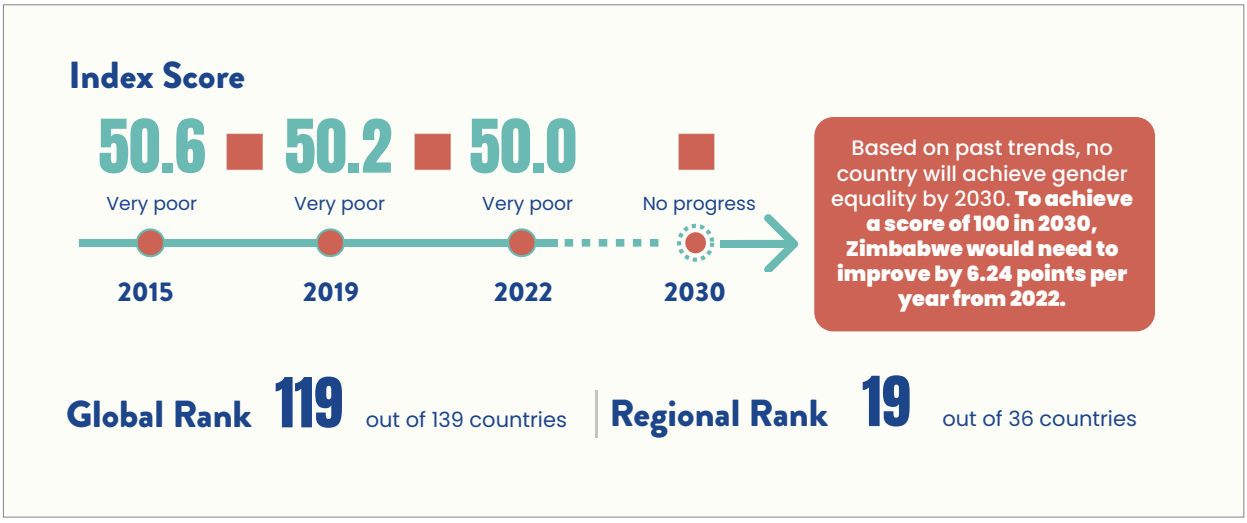
Despite extremely challenging circumstances, Türkiye's feminist movement has proved remarkably resilient and is more determined than ever to protect the rights of all women and girls in Türkiye. The limited international funding that feminist organisations have been able to secure has been a lifeline and enabled the movement to hold the line on several key gender equality issues. However, Turkish feminists are warning that this resilience may only last so long. In the words of one activist:

> "*It's not just about shrinking spaces or diminishing funds anymore, we are now also facing criminal law and procedures and in a country where the rule of law has been severely eroded. The foreign agent law wasn't passed this time but they will try again and probably succeed, and then they can shut us down at any moment." (Interview TY001).*

With progress on key gender equality outcomes being reversed and worsening restrictions on Turkish civil society on the horizon, international solidarity is needed more than ever in the years ahead.

Zimbabwe

Figure 15: SDG Gender Index scores for Zimbabwe, 2015 - 2022



Source: 2024 SDG Gender Index, Zimbabwe Country Profile.[41]

History and evolution of the women's movement in Zimbabwe

WROs have played a crucial role in organising women socially, engaging in political activism and providing community support.[94] During the colonial period, these movements mobilised women in towns and urban centres – through platforms such as Ruwadzano (Church Mothers' Unions) – to voice their economic, social and political challenges despite restrictive laws. Over time, they evolved into social clubs that equipped members with survival skills, which later fed into the armed liberation struggle, in which women actively participated, challenging traditional gender roles.

Key legislation in the newly independent Zimbabwe sought to advance women's rights and recognised the role women played.[95] The Legal Age of Majority Act in 1982, for example, gave women independence and allowed them to hold public office. During the 1980s, the WROs focused on welfare, supporting members with economic initiatives. Organisations such as the Association of Women's Clubs (AWC) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) were born out of the early clubs. After independence, they were crucial in ensuring women participated in national development and reconstruction efforts.

In 1983, a police action – 'Operation Clean Up' – led to the arrests of more than 6,000 women accused of loitering and prostitution.[96] This sparked outrage among women's groups and led to the formation of collectives such as the Women's Action Group, which adopted a rights-based approach to address women's issues.

WROs began to address broader issues of access to justice, power and rights well into the 1990s. This period saw increased organisation bolstered by development funding and

engagement at global platforms such as the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), and the African Platform for Action (Dakar, 1994). The Women Coalition of Zimbabwe, which was formed as a cluster on gender equality during the constitution-making process, organised in 1998–2001 and 2007–13 to influence these processes to be inclusive.

Shifts in political, economic and social context from 2000–2018

President Robert Mugabe's prolonged rule after independence in 1980 saw increasing political uncertainty, which worsened with a highly contested election in 2000. Sanctions placed in response to addressing human rights violations and suppression of CSOs disconnected the country from global markets, increased financial transaction costs and stifled economic growth and development projects. These factors, combined with the closing of civic space, forced many CSOs and WROs to withdraw or leave the country.

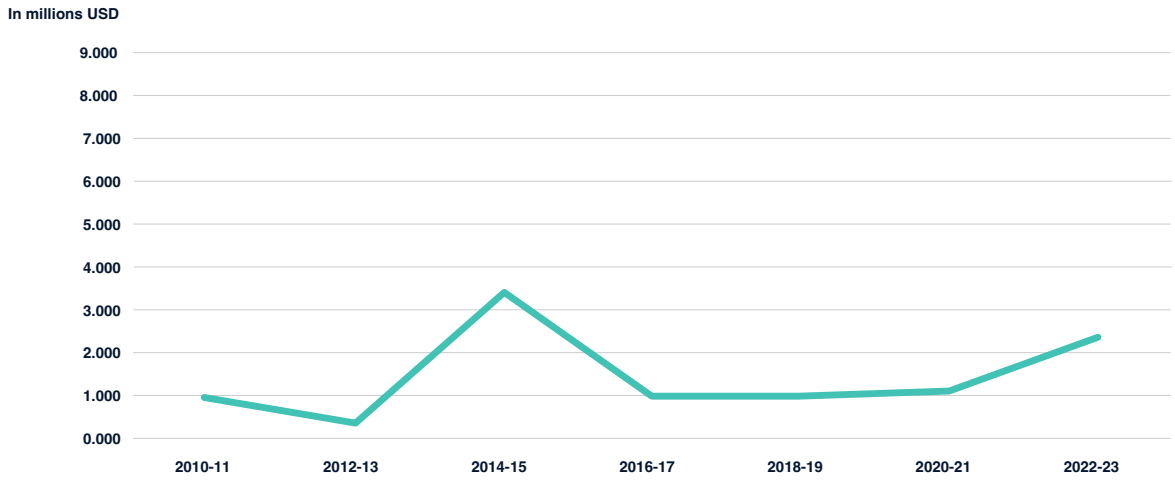
Governance and economic challenges persisted, leading to an economic crash in 2008.[97] In 2017, after years of economic turmoil and months of civil action, President Mugabe resigned, and President Emmerson Mnangagwa's leadership initially inspired optimism following the 2018 elections. However, governance issues, economic hardship, and political corruption continued to limit opportunities. Civic spaces remained restricted, further hindering advocacy efforts.[98]

Multiple global crises (the COVID-19 pandemic and conflict in the Middle East and Ukraine) exacerbated difficulties for WROs in Zimbabwe. With the post-9/11 focus on national security and anti-terrorism, in 2018 Zimbabwe was placed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global action to tackle money laundering, terrorist and proliferation financing grey list, for deficiencies in its legal and financial systems.[99]

Changes in the funding landscape for WROs in Zimbabwe

Decades of economic and political instability in Zimbabwe significantly affected the funding landscape for WROs. In the immediate post-independence period, donors provided substantial financial support for development initiatives, benefitting the women's movement. However, a political crisis initiated a shift in funding to governance and politics while domestic economic challenges led to a sharp decline in available resources for development work, including for WROs. As shown in Figure 16, aid to Zimbabwean WROs declined from 2010 to 2012 then rose again. Since then, funding has remained unpredictable, fluctuating sharply over time.

Figure 16: Aid to WROs in Zimbabwe, 2011 - 2023



Notes: ODA to WROs includes spending marked with sector code 15170 (Women's Rights Organizations and Movements, and Government Institutions).

Source: Authors' calculations based on OECD communication.

These economic pressures[95] pushed several WROs into survival mode and left them almost completely reliant on project-based funding. The heavy reliance on donor projects was at a time when the number of available donors had dwindled due to the country's instability. 'NGO-isation' of the women's movement in Zimbabwe was rife. Organisations and their staff, to sustain themselves, shifted priorities to align with the interests of the INGOs that held the funds. Some organisations and their leaders became stewards of the sector, controlling funds and activities.

This situation was further exacerbated by the shrinking pool of global funding for women's rights. Financial resources, when available, are now often tied to specific projects and interventions, limiting the flexibility of WROs to pursue their own advocacy and movement-building efforts.[100] Some donors do not fund organisations that do not have a memorandum of agreement with the government, as highlighted by an interviewee:

> *"The movement has stagnated since the rise of NGO-isation, with many NGOs and their leaders becoming gatekeepers. As a result, the movement is fragmented, lacks cohesion, and struggles to reach a consensus on key issues." (Interview ZN001).*

Indicators of civic space restriction and suppression of feminist movements during this period

WROs have, under various political regimes, contended with a closed civic space and suppression. These have mirrored the general repression of civic space in Zimbabwe. The political upheaval and economic challenges since the late 1990s and its resulting tensions ultimately led to a clampdown on CSOs, including WROs.[101]

CSOs welcomed the change in government in 2018 and were optimistic that it was a signal of positive change, but this was not to be. The civic space has remained repressed since 2018 with a score of 30 out of 100 on the CIVICUS Monitor (CIVICUS, 2024).[48] Authorities continued to intimidate, harass and arbitrarily arrest activists, journalists, opposition members and women, and human rights defenders are constantly targeted.[102,vii] As a result, some women activists have become more cautious, often resorting to self-censorship to avoid conflicts with the government.

> *"The singer had changed but the song and the melody were still the same." (Interview ZN002).*

Several new laws impose restrictions on public gatherings, criminalise any actions or speech deemed to undermine the dignity and sovereignty of Zimbabwe and enable the government to prosecute human rights defenders for dissent and criticism of the government. These include the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act [Chapter 11:23] (formerly POSA), the amended Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23] and the Cyber and Data Protection Act [Chapter 12:07].[99] They raise concerns regarding potential surveillance of online activities and could target activists and curtail digital dissent.

Despite CSOs flagging the PVO Bill in its current form on the premise that it would significantly hinder CSO operations and restrict their access to funding,[103] it was passed into law in 2023 without any changes under the guise of complying with the FATF, although the country was removed from the grey list in January 2022[viii] and it is not fully compliant with FATF standards and requirements.[99] The biggest risks to CSO funding are that the bill enables the CSO Registry to summarily revoke licensing without due process, and requires CSOs to disclose foreign funding as a condition in the registration or auditing processes. Additionally, under this bill, the Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare designated CSOs to be at "high risk" or "vulnerable to" terrorism abuse in terms of undetermined criteria.

Each regulation is challenging and stifling; their combined effect creates an extremely restrictive space for CSOs and WROs.

[vii] https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr46/7221/2023/en/
[viii] https://zendetect.com/blog/economic-cost-of-greylisting

Impact of political and economic shifts on feminist movements and their operational capacity

WROs in Zimbabwe have long operated under challenging conditions, from colonial-era restrictions on women's assembly and association to post-independence confrontations with a once-allied government. Over time, they have evolved into a resilient resistance movement advocating the rights of women and girls and broader social justice.

However, through all these struggles have emerged significant wins. An array of laws in the post-independence period created a more inclusive environment for women to contribute to national development. Through strategic alliances, WROs were able to block legislation that would worsen women's rights – a ban on abortion (2012), and a bill that would pardon rapists if they married their victims (2016). The movement has also been able to block multiple government attempts in 2016, 2018 and 2020 to ban abortion.

The following quotes from interviewees highlights exactly how these wins have been achieved amid the turmoil. The activists point out that the environment within which WROs operate in Zimbabwe has been difficult for a long time, but access to funding enabled them to organise.

> "*Funding base continues to shrink Zimbabwe is no longer a donor darling – some donors have described the gender sector as a bottomless pit – the results are slow, patriarchal norms despite new laws not changing quickly – preference is shifting to tangible results like women economic empowerment – this too has been challenged by a volatile economy regressing the results therefore funds are not at scale." (Interview ZN003).*
>
> *"The environment has been tight for a long time, but then, when there was money, people were still able to organise." (Interview ZN001).*

However, ongoing suppression and limited access to funds throughout these periods have also hindered their effectiveness. A major consequence, for example, of limited funding has been the tendency of WROs to 'follow the money', essentially meaning the movement cannot focus on their interests and objectives but must sing to the tune of donors who offer limited funds to support their work.

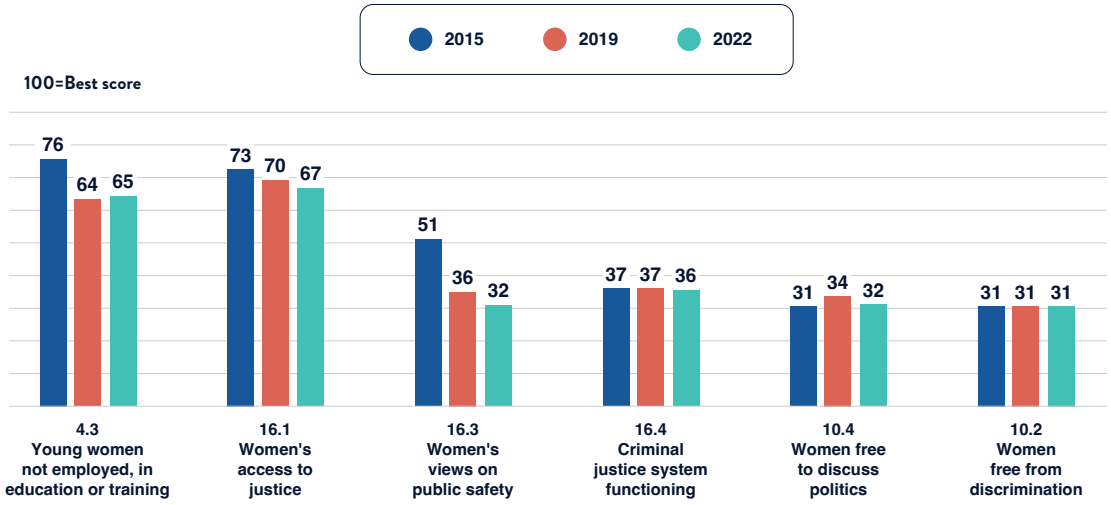
> *"That voice is gone, but also the independence. And as funding has decreased more and more – even just looking at external funding coming in – we see the movement stagnate. It becomes the reserve of very few people, it is very fractured, and it is very hard to see where it fits into the broader ecosystem of the issues being tackled. I would say, quite honestly, that we are seeing a very strong regression back into a deeply patriarchal society. I think Zimbabwe had made great leaps and bounds, even socially, in the way we spoke about issues, but we are now seeing that progress start to disappear." (Interview ZN001).*

"I would say that when I was growing up, some key organisations used to be widely spoken of – Musasa Project, KATWE, Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network, ZWALA Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association – there were quite a few prolific organisations that you would hear about and see in your everyday life, and you were aware of their organising and activities. In the past couple of years, those organisations have disappeared. I am not even sure if KATWE is still functioning, and I'm also unsure whether Musasa Project is still operational. So, you see a significant drop in visibility and mobilization in these spaces." (Interview ZN001).

Impact on gender equality outcomes and key indicators

Scores of 50.6 in 2015, 50.2 in 2019 and 50.0 in 2022 for the 2024 EM2030 SDG Gender Index mean Zimbabwe has made no progress on gender equality in that time.[41] Violence against women remains prevalent and women's political representation is limited.[104]

Figure 17. Selected SDG Gender Index indicator scores for Zimbabwe, 2015 - 2022



Notes: These six indicators from the SDG Gender Index are standardised to the same scale where 100 is the best and 0 is the worst. The full descriptions and data sources for the indicators by reference number can be found at: www.equalmeasures2030.org/2024-sdg-gender-index/

Source: Equal Measures 2030, 2024.[41]

An analysis of the underlying factors for this decline shows a downward trend in several key indicators for gender equality. Figure 17 shows two indicators in the SDG on education are experiencing reversals. Indicators on 'freedom from discrimination' and 'women's ability to discuss politics' have stagnated from 2015 to 2022 and 'women's access to justice' and 'views on public safety' have declined.

Violence against women is high with one in three women experiencing GBV, while one in four has experienced sexual violence.[105] Further, only 35 per cent of parliamentary seats are held

by women, primarily under the proportional representation system that allocates 30 per cent of seats in parliament to women.

Conclusion

Over the years, the movement in Zimbabwe has evolved, changing its strategies to survive under uncertain and often dangerous conditions. The inconsistent and unstable nature of funding for the movement has made operating in a generally oppressive environment even more difficult and has driven many activists out of the country or into survival mode. Despite the precarity of its existence, the movement is also contending with a global downturn in funding for WROs.

WROs and women in Zimbabwe have experienced consequences. It has been challenging to systematically work as a movement with a shared vision and strategy. The need to follow the money has led to a project-driven movement, often pulled in different directions. Evidence on outcomes for girls and women – education, political participation and violence against women – shows gains have begun to erode. This erosion has been facilitated by economic, political and social challenges.

However, WRO activists in Zimbabwe believe achieving transformative change in women's rights and gender equality is possible with collective action from like-minded individuals who share feminist principles and values.

> "*My wish for the women's movement in Zimbabwe and globally is taking a step back, back to basics of analysis, politically, deep political analyses of what is going on in our country, in the world, in our region, leading to deep, deep strategic thinking and strategising for transformative change, transformation of the political, economic and social systems that are keeping us in a certain space." (Interview ZN002).*

Recommendations

WROs have for more than a decade clearly articulated their priorities and demands for feminist funding principles. Examples include:

- Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice Feminist Funding Principles[106]
- COFEM Handbook on Feminist Grantmaking[107]
- Equality Fund, Canadian Women's Foundation, and Community Foundations of Canada Principles for Feminist Funding[108]
- Urgent Action Funds Sisterhood Feminist Principles of Philanthropy[109]
- Mama Cash and AWID Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders Can Resource Feminist Movements (PDF)[110]
- Walking the Talk's Common Ask Framework[111]
- What do Feminist and Women's Rights Organizations want from Partnerships with INGOs? Perspectives from Feminist and Women's Rights Organizations in Africa (PDF) [112]

The recommendations that follow do not repeat the recommendations found in these foundational documents but respond to the specific funding issues raised through this research project.

Government donors

- When direct funding of local groups is not possible, consult and cooperate with local WROs to identify the most appropriate intermediary funder, recognising that different types of intermediaries offer different types of political and programming benefits.
- Support legal and compliance teams to engage with grantee partners and their contexts and with other legal and compliance officers to learn from and adapt other flexible, responsible contracting practices.
- Continue to support intermediary funds, especially women's and feminist funds, that are embedded in local contexts. These funds provide long-term unrestricted support and legal and other types of protective support to local WROs and activists.
- When advised by local activists, speak out against and resist measures that restrict civic space and limit activists' and organisations' abilities to safely organise, receive and distribute funds and demand accountability.
- Embed support for the collection and use of gender data into ODA not only to monitor projects but to contribute towards building sustainable and comprehensive gender data ecosystems.

Philanthropy

- Use philanthropy's unique position to support diaspora WROs that may not otherwise be able to access ODA or other types of funding.
- Engage and coordinate with other institutions and networks, such as the Human Rights Funders Network Better Preparedness initiative, to move money and support organisations operating in restrictive contexts, building complementary funding strategies for various risk tolerance levels among institutions.
- Ensure that funding portfolios support the full range of organisations crucial to healthy movements, including established organisations and emerging networks, and groups led by young people. Whenever possible, build this complementarity with other donors, including government donors.
- Support legal and compliance teams in engaging with grantee partners and their contexts and with other legal and compliance officers to learn from and adapt other flexible, responsible contracting practices.
- When advised by local activists, speak out against and resist measures that restrict civic space and limit the ability of activists and organisations to safely organise, receive and distribute funds and demand accountability.
- Report funding data to the OECD Creditor Report System, using the DAC gender equality policy marker, especially direct funding to WROs.

Multilateral institutions

- Adopt best practices outlined by groups such as the Inter-agency Task Force for Advancing a United Nations-wide Funding Framework for Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations (the Task Force) (for example, the Preliminary Analysis of United Nations System Approaches to Resourcing Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations[113]) and the OECD through frameworks such as the 2024 DAC Recommendation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance.[114]
- Continue negotiating with institutional donors to avoid pushing onerous compliance measures onto WROs.
- Engage with other intermediary funders and local activists to develop localised funding strategies that determine which intermediary funders are best placed to move funds in each context.
- Support partners and institutional donors to find new ways of measuring the impact of WROs, including ways to measure 'holding the line' and preventing rollback of rights.
- Report funding data to the OECD Creditor Report System, using the DAC gender equality policy marker, especially direct funding to WROs.

Civil society

- Continue to engage in cross-movement and cross-border solidarity, including by: supporting diaspora movements; building support among the public in the Global North for ODA as an expression of global solidarity; and developing collaborative resource mobilisation strategies.
- Continue to engage in resource justice advocacy using an ecosystem approach in addition to institutionally specific resource mobilisation efforts.

Limitations

Our study faced some limitations. First, the lack of granular quantitative data on funding to WROs and internal data from within WROs in the case study countries limited our ability to establish clear causal links between civic space suppression, funding cuts and gender equality outcomes. Second, the short timeframe for the research and limited funding constrained the scope and depth of data collection. To mitigate these challenges, we employed a mixed-methods approach using in-depth interviews with WROs at the country level, which provided valuable insights into their lived experiences and challenges faced by WROs in each context.

Conclusion and way forward

The case studies highlighted the vital role of WROs, as well as the increasingly urgent need for coordinated resistance in a climate of closing civic space. Without sustained support, progress made by WROs over decades is at risk of being reversed, leaving millions of women and girls more vulnerable to discriminatunmion and violence and without access to fundamental reproductive rights and economic opportunities. While risk management is a reality for bilateral donors, philanthropists and movements themselves, there is a serious 'risk' that donors' overall goals of gender equality will not be achieved without funding WROs.

The current global context of aid cuts and closing civic space calls for courageous action and creative strategies to enable donors to fund potentially transformative solutions led by WROs. Donors must view funding for WROs not only as essential for improving the lives of women and girls around the world but also for defending and strengthening democracy. Those donors who can support WROs must take bolder action to ensure feminist movements can not only withstand the headwinds they are facing but bring their vision of a feminist future to life.

In this study we have gained initial evidence on the consequences of not supporting WROs and some recommendations for actors working in challenging contexts, intended to help those advocating from civil society or within donor organisations for increased funding for WROs. However, further evidence building and articulation of this cost, in addition to growing research on the impact of WROs, is needed to enable advocates to continue making the case for this investment. Future research could consider conducting in-depth, country-specific studies

focused on the four case study countries, and additional countries we longlisted during the research process. Such studies should prioritise the use of national-level funding data from WROs, rather than relying solely on global datasets. Additionally, extensive interviews with key stakeholders at all levels would rigorously examine potential causal relationships between funding cuts, the suppression of civic space and gender-equality outcomes.

Annex: Further detail on research methodology

Research objectives

The objectives of this study were to investigate the following, through data analysis and literature for four case study countries:

- Do negative outcomes occur for gender equality when funding for WROs decreased and/or space for their activities narrowed or closed?
    - What sort of negative outcomes and can these be observed in the data at the level of an individual country?
    - Is there similarity in the types of negative outcomes that occur across contexts? Can any broad trends or themes be observed?

Research approach and key activities

1. Develop a common framework to define how we identify contexts and time periods where WROs have been de-funded, repressed, stopped or diverted from doing their work.
    - How: AFM led discussions and focus groups across its network.
2. Determine contexts/countries that have experienced periods where WROs have been de-funded, repressed, stopped or diverted from doing their work.
    - How: AFM held discussions/focus groups using the common framework, identifying a longlist of countries, time periods, and top-line details on context. EM2030 proposed contexts where "stagnation" or "decline" on key metrics can be observed over recent years.
3. Use longlist of countries and analyse a range of "outcome" indicators.
    - How: EM2030 reviewed a range of global, regional and country-level data sets (including the SDG Gender Index, other relevant Indices, UN databases, national data sources, opinion polling, values surveys, etc.) to see if data show shifts/increase in negative outcomes after the "crackdown/de-funding" periods. This was then corroborated with desk-research and a review of available literature.
4. Upon agreement across geographies of a short list of countries for study, the researchers sought key informants in each context to shape understanding of the de-funding/diversion of action by WROs and the impacts. Key informants received honoraria in recognition of their time and expertise and were invited to review and validate the consolidated findings.
5. Finalise external report with findings.
6. Dissemination of report with AFM network at learning and sharing virtual event and at Financing Feminist Futures Conference.

Case study selection

To ensure selection of countries and contexts that would facilitate completion of the study, we adopted a multistage sampling approach. The first stage involved compilation of a long list of 19 countries that had declining scores on gender equality indices and indicators of civic space. We presented this list to key stakeholders in the feminist movement in the respective countries for further insights and validation, with the guidance of AFM. We based the final selection of case study countries on data availability, stakeholder recommendations and access to potential interview participants. We also considered diversity in geographical and historical context and relative strength of feminist movements.

Endnotes

[1] Chugh, A. and Gaind, S. (2023) 'Shifting paradigms through feminist funding', Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters, 31(3), p. 2344361. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2024.2344361.

[2] OECD (2016) Donor Support to Southern Women's Rights Organizations. OECD DAC Committee on Gender Equality (Gendernet). Available at: https://docslib.org/doc/8990495/donor-support-to-southern-womens-rights-organisations.

[3] Evans, A. and Nambiar, D. (2013) Collective action and women's agency : a background paper, World Bank. Available at: https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/en/511631468154151855 (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[4] Htun, M. and Weldon, S.L. (2012) 'The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975–2005', American Political Science Review, 106(3), pp. 548–569. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055412000226 (accessed 20 May 2015).

[5] Weldon, L., Forester, S., et al. (2020) Handmaidens of Heroes? Feminist Mobilization as a Force for Economic Justice. Vancouver Canada: Simon Fraser University. Available at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/politics/FeministMovement/Working%20Paper%202.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[6] Weldon, L., Kelly-Thompson, K., et al. (2020) When and How Does Transnational Feminist Promote Gender Justice? New Measures and Exploratory Findings. Working Paper. Simon Fraser University. Available at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/politics/FeministMovement/Working%20Paper%203.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[7] Kang, A.J. and Tripp, A.M. (2018) Coalitions Matter: Citizenship, Women, and Quota Adoption in Africa. Perspectives on Politics, 16(1), pp. 73–91. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592717002225 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[8] The Alliance for Feminist Movements and Equal Measures 2030 (2024) Fast Track or Backtrack. The Prospects for Gender Equality by 2049. The Alliance for Feminist Movements. Available at: https://equalmeasures2030.org/publications/fast-track-or-backtrack (accessed 20 May 2025).

[9] Bunch, C. and Fried, S. (1996) 'Beijing '95: Moving Women's Human Rights from Margin to Center', Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 22(1), pp. 200–204. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1086/495143 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[10] UN Women (2024) Voices of Strength: Contributions of Palestinian WomenLed Organizations to the Humanitarian Response in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Available at:

https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/gender-alert_palestine-wlos-en.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[11] UN Women (2015) Women's Participation and a Better Understanding of the Political | Global study on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325. Available at: https://wps.unwomen.org/participation/ (Accessed: 24 February 2025).

[12] UN Women (2022) GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO COVID-19: Lessons on gender equality for a world in turmoil. Available at: https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Government-responses-to-COVID-19-Lessons-on-gender-equality-for-a-world-in-turmoil-en_0.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[13] OECD (2024) How philanthropic foundations support gender equality and women's empowerment. OECD Development Policy Papers 55. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1787/3fbec947-en (accessed 20 May 2025).

[14] OECD (2025) Development Finance for Gender Equality. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/data/dashboards/development-finance-for-gender-equality.html (accessed 20 May 2025).

[15] Shake the Table (2022) Lighting the Way: A Report for Philanthropy on the Power and Promise of Feminist Movements. Shake the Table and the Bridgespan Group. Available at: https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/philanthropy-and-feminist-movements (Accessed: 24 February 2025).

[16] AWID (2007) The Second Fundher Report: Financial Sustainability for Women's Movements Worldwide. AWID. Available at: https://issuu.com/awid/docs/fundher_report2_2007?mode=embed&layout=http%3A%2F%2Fskin.issuu.com%2Fv%2Flight%2Flayout.xml&showFlipBtn=true (accessed 20 May 20205).

[17] ODI Global (2025) Donors In A Post-Aid World January 2025 update. Available at: https://odi.org/en/insights/donors-in-a-post-aid-world-january-2025-update/ (accessed 20 May 2025).

[18] The Alliance for Feminist Movements (2025) Global Projected Losses to Women's Rights. Available at: https://www.allianceforfeministmovements.org/reports/#globalloss.

[19] Alpízar Durán, L. (2015) 20 years of Shamefully Scarce Funding for Feminists and Women's Rights Movements, AWID. Available at: https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/20-years-shamefully-scarce-funding-feminists-and-womens-rights-movements (accessed 20 May 2025).

[20] AWID (2006) Where is the money for women's rights? Assessing the resources and the role of donors in the promotion of women's rights and the support of women's rights organizations. Available at: https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/assessing_resources_and_role_of_donors_fundher.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[21] Collier, C 2014. Not Quite the Death of Organized Feminism in Canada: Understanding the Demise of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. Canadian Political Science Review Vol. 8, No.2, 2014, pp. 17-33. Available at https://doi.org/10.24124/c677/2014383 (Acessed 20 May 2025).

[22] Loreto, N 2020 Take Back The Fight: Organizing Feminism for the Digital Age. Fernwood Publishing, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

[23] Mukhopadhyay, M. et al. (2011) Rights and Resources: The Effects of External Financing on Organising for Women's Rights. online resource. Pathways of Women's Empowerment and Royal Tropical Institute. Available at: https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/articles/online_resource/Rights_and_Resources_The_Effects_of_External_Financing_on_Organising_for_Women_s_Rights/26482099/1 (Accessed: 24 February 2025).

[24] Gossen, R. (2024) The Twelfth of February: Canadian Aid for Gender Equality During the Rise of Violent Extremism in Pakistan. 1st ed. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press (McGill-Queen's/Brian Mulroney Institute of Government Studies in Leadership, Public Policy, and Governance Series, v. 17).

[25] Hessini, L. (2020) Financing for gender equality and women's rights: the role of feminist funds, Gender & Development, 28(2), pp. 357–376. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2020.1766830 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[26] Batliwala, S. (2008) Changing Their World. Concepts and Practices of Women's Movements. An AWID publication. The Association for Women's Rights in Development. Available at: https://www.awid.org/publications/changing-their-world-concepts-and-practices-womens-movements#:~:text=This%20compilation%20of%20case%20studies%20highlights%20the%20origins%2C,that%20have%20mobilized%20women%20to%20make%20a%20difference.

[27] Global Fund for Women https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/womens-funds/

[28] Tant E. and Michalko J. (2024) Why donors must finance feminist movements. Available at https://odi.org/en/insights/why-donors-must-finance-feminist-movements/ (accessed 20 May 2025).

[29] Gray, A. (2024) Taking risks and innovating is our role, now the wider sector must reap the rewards, Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in humanitarian action. Available at: https://alnap.org/commentary-multimedia/index/taking-risks-and-innovating-is-our-role/#:~:text=Philanthropy%20has%20a%20lot%20more,innovative%20ways%20of%20doing%20things (accessed 20 May 2025).

[30] Human Rights Funders Network (2024). Better Preparedness Playbook: risk and role. Available at https://www.hrfn.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Better-Preparedness-Playbook-Risk-and-Role.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[31] Jackson, P. (2016) 'Value for money and international development: Deconstructing myths to promote a more constructive discussion', eVALUation Matters [Preprint]. Available at:

https://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/Evaluations/2020-02/Value%20for%20money%20and%20international%20development.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[32] AWID (2013) Primer 3: Civil Society's Engagement in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda: The Parallel Process, Key Concerns and Recommendations. Available at https://issuu.com/awid/docs/primer3?e=0 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[33] Duke Law and Women Peacemakers Program (2017) Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security. Duke University School of Law and Women Peacemakers Program. Available at: https://law.duke.edu/sites/default/files/humanrights/tighteningpursestrings.pdf (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[34] Njoku, E.T. (2025) Counter-terrorism measures and civil society organisations: A review of literature and agenda for future research. Journal of Civil Society, pp. 1–31. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2025.2451928 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[35] OECD (2023) Funding civil society in partner countries: Toolkit for implementing the DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance. Best Practices in Development Co-operation. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1787/9ea40a9c-en (accessed 20 May 2025).

[36] Eddens, S. and Kroeger, K. (2022) Funders, it's time to change how we think about risk. 15 November. Available at: https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/funders-its-time-to-change-how-we-think-about-risk/ (Accessed 20 May 2025).

[37] Chaudhry, S. and Heiss, A. (2018) Are Donors Really Responding? Analyzing the Impact of Global Restrictions on NGOs. Available at: https://www.andrewheiss.com/research/working-papers/chaudhry-heiss-ngos-aid/chaudhry-heiss-ngos-aid.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[38] Beasley, S. (2024). How philanthropy is working around a DEI backlash. Available at https://www.devex.com/news/how-philanthropy-is-working-around-a-dei-backlash-107058 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[39] Chase-Lubitz, J. (2025) Philanthropies fear Trump will target their tax-exempt status. Available at https://www.devex.com/news/philanthropies-fear-trump-will-target-their-tax-exempt-status-109892 (av=ccessed 20 May 2025).

[40] Surie, M.D., Saluja, S. and Nixon, N. (2023) Glass Half Full: Civic Space and Contestation in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The Asia Foundation. Available at: https://docs.adaptdev.info/lib/KYRCBQIH (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[41] Equal Measures 2030 (2024) 2024 SDG Gender Index. Available at: https://equalmeasures2030.org/2024-sdg-gender-index/ (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[42] Erikson, Abigail and Majumdar, Shruti (2025): "Beyond Backlash: Advancing Movements to End Violence against Women; Insights from Grantee Partners of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women". UN Women, New York. Available at: untf_backlash_paper_v4_final.pdf (accessed 26 May 2025).

[43] Chenoweth, E. and Marks, Z. (2022) Revenge of the Patriarchs: Why Autocrats Fear Women, Foreign Affairs. Available at: https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/revenge-patriarchs-why-autocrats-fear-women-essays (accessed 20 May 2025).

[44] Kaul, N. (2021) The Misogyny of Authoritarians in Contemporary Democracies, International Studies Review, 23(4), pp. 1619–1645. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viab028 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[45] Front Line Defenders (2024). Global Analysis 2023/24. Available at https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/resource-publication/global-analysis-202324 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[46] Kathleen J. McInnis, K. J. and Hunter, K. M. (2024) RAND. Gender Wars Are an Early Warning Sign for Authoritarianism. Available at:

https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/11/gender-wars-are-an-early-warning-sign-for-authoritarianism.html (accessed 20 May 2025).

[47] The Global Philanthropy Project (2024) 2021–2022 Global Resources Report: Government & Philanthropic Support for LGBTI Communities. Available at: https://globalresourcesreport.org/ (accessed 20 May 2025).

[48] VeneKlasen, L. (2024) Anti-Gender Backlash: Where is Philanthropy? Institute of Development Studies. Available at: https://doi.org/10.19088/BACKLASH.2024.001 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[49] CIVICUS (2024) Facts, Civicus Monitor. Available at: https://monitor.civicus.org/facts/ (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[50] Chen, Martha Alter. 1995. Engendering World Conferences: The International Women's Movement and the United Nations. Third World Quarterly 16 (3): 477–93.

[51] Amnesty International. 2018. How Women Activists in Türkiye Keep Fighting in a Climate of Fear. Amnesty International. 26 April 2018. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/04/how-women-activists-in-turkey-keep-fighting-in-a-climate-of-fear/ (accessed 20 May 2025).

[52] OHCHR. 2024. Risking It All to Stand up for Human Rights in Exile. 2024. https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2024/04/risking-it-all-stand-human-rights-exile (accessed 20 May 2025).

[53] Sultan, M. and Mahpara, P. (2023) Backlash in Action? Or Inaction? Stalled Implementation of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 in Bangladesh. Institute of Development Studies. Available at: https://doi.org/10.19088/IDS.2023.030 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[54] Quibria, M.G. and Islam, A. (2014) Aid Effectiveness in Bangladesh: Development with Governance Challenges. Available at: https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/63759/1/MPRA_paper_63759.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[55] Davison, C. (2024) The rise and fall (and rise?) of Bangladesh as a development darling. DEVEX. Available at: https://www.devex.com/news/the-rise-and-fall-and-rise-of-bangladesh-as-a-development-darling-108106 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[56] Bertocci, P.J. (1977) Bangladesh: The Test Case for Development. By Just Faaland and J. R. Parkinson. Boulder: Westview Press, 1976. xi, 203 pp. Notes, Tables, Index. $20.00. The Journal of Asian Studies, 36(4), pp. 783–784. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/2054489 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[57] The Daily Star (2024) Democracy needs civil society to thrive. Available at: https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/news/democracy-needs-civil-society-thrive-3779351 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[58] Bin Seraj, K. F., Hassan, M., Shahan and A., Nixon, N. (2024). Rebuilding civic spaces: A new era for civil society in Bangladesh? Available at: https://devpolicy.org/rebuilding-civic-spaces-a-new-era-for-civil-society-in-bangladesh-20240928/ (accessed 20 May 2025).

[59] BRAC Development Institute and Pathways to Empowerment (2011) Mobilising for Women's Rights and the Role of Resources. Synthesis report - Bangladesh. Available at: https://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/publications/mobilising-for-womens-rights-and-the-role-of-resources-synthesis-report-bangladesh/ (accessed 20 May 2025).

[60] CIDA, 1992. Women in development policy. Available at https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/11240603_02.pdf (accessed 14 May 2025).

[61] Forester, S. et al. (2022) New Dimensions of Global Feminist Influence: Tracking Feminist Mobilization Worldwide, 1975–2015, International Studies Quarterly, 66(1), p. sqab093. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqab093 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[62] Weldon, S.L. and Htun, M. (2013) Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women, Gender & Development, 21(2), pp. 231–247. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2013.802158 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[63] Women, Business and the Law (2021) Women, Business and the Law 2021. Economy Summary, Bangladesh. Available at: https://wbl.worldbank.org/content/dam/sites/wbl/documents/2021/02/2021.11.24_WBL_Economy_Summary_Bangladesh.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[64] Nazneen, S., Hickey, S. and Sifaki, E. (2019) Negotiating Gender Equity in the Global South: The Politics of Domestic Violence Policy. 1st edn. London: Routledge. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351245623 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[65] Marques, B.M. (2022) Two Tails of Nicaragua's Experience with Gender Inequality: the Neoliberal Politics of Measurement and Evaluation on the Global Gender Gap Index Reports (2006 - 2019). Universidade Federal da Integração Latino-Americana - UNILA. Available at: https://dspace.unila.edu.br/handle/123456789/7252 (accessed 24 February 2025).

[66] Neumann, P. (2018) Gender-based violence and the patrimonial state in Nicaragua: The rise and fall of Ley 779, Cahiers des Amériques latines, (87), pp. 69–90. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4000/cal.8515 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[67] Neumann, Pamela (2022) "If It's Not Femicide, It's Still Murder": Contestations Over Femicide in Nicaragua. Feminist Criminology 17 (1): 139–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/15570851211037271 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[68] Confidencial (2024) 'ACNUR corrige cifra de solicitudes de asilo de nicaragüenses entre 2018 y 2023'. Available at: https://confidencial.digital/migrantes/acnur-corrige-cifra-de-solicitudes-de-asilo-de-nicaraguenses-entre-2018-y-2023/

[69] Confidencial (2024) 'Dictadura obliga a las oenegés a trabajar junto al sector público en Nicaragua', Confidencial, 20 August. Available at: https://confidencial.digital/nacion/obligan-a-las-oeneges-a-trabajar-junto-al-sector-publico-en-nicaragua/

[70] OHCHR (2025) Report of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua. Report submitted to the Human Rights Coucil, 58th session. Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/grhe-nicaragua/a-hrc-58-26-auv-en.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[71] Brunori, A. (2023) El drama de Nicaragua: "Estamos presas en el país... Vivimos en una gran cárcel", El País. Available at: https://elpais.com/opinion/2023-04-12/el-drama-de-nicaragua-estamos-presas-en-el-pais-vivimos-en-una-gran-carcel.html (accessed 20 May 2025).

[72] Confidencial (2024) '#8M: Una lista de los 8 principales retrocesos en los derechos de las mujeres en Nicaragua'. Available at: https://confidencial.digital/nacion/ocho-retrocesos-en-los-derechos-de-las-mujeres-en-nicaragua/

[73] Neumann, P. (2022) "If It's Not Femicide, It's Still Murder": Contestations Over Femicide in Nicaragua. Feminist Criminology, 17(1), pp. 139–159. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/15570851211037271 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[74] Neumann, P. (2017) Women's Rights in Retrograde: Understanding the Contentious Politics of Gender Violence Law in Nicaragua. LSE Human Rights, 24 March. Available at:

https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/humanrights/2017/03/24/womens-rights-in-retrograde-understanding-the-contentious-politics-of-gender-violence-law-in-nicaragua/ (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[75] La Corriente and Sexual Rights Initiative (2024) Contribución presentada al Consejo de Derechos Humanos para el 4to ciclo de revisión del Examen Periódico Universal (EPU) de Nicaragua. La Corriente and Sexual Rights Initiative. Available at: https://www.sexualrightsinitiative.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/2024-12/UPR47-%20NICARAGUA-%20LA%20CORRIENTE%26SRI%20-%20FULL%20REPORT.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[76] CEPAL (2025) Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group (SDG indicator 3.7.2). | Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development. Available at: https://consensomontevideo.cepal.org/en/indicadores/adolescent-birth-rate-aged-10-14-years-aged-15-19-years-1000-women-age-group-sdg (accessed: 25 February 2025).

[77] Dursun, A. (2022) Organized Muslim Women in Turkey: An Intersectional Approach to Building Women's Coalitions. Cham: Springer International Publishing (Citizenship, Gender and Diversity). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-09308-1.

[78] Association of Civil Society Development Center (2023). Fund Relations and Policy Recommendations Research Report from the Perspective of Women+ Organizations in a Time of Multiple Crises. Available at https://www.stgm.org.tr/en/e-library/fund-relations-and-policy-recommendations-research-report-perspective-women-organizations (accessed 20 May 2025).

[79] Gülel, D. (2021) Feminist movement and law-making in Turkey: a critical appraisal from 1998 to 2018. Women's History Review, 30(1), pp. 2–27. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2019.1695357 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[80] Landig, J.M. (2011) Bringing women to the table: European Union funding for women's empowerment projects in Turkey. Women's Studies International Forum, 34(3), pp. 206–219. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2011.01.009 (accessed 20 May 2025).

[81] Eslen-Ziya, Hande, and Nazlı Kazanoğlu (2022). De-Democratization under the New Challenges for Women's Organizations. Mediterranean Politics 27 (1): 101–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2020.1765524

[82] Yabanci, B. and Maritato, C. (2023) Gender Politics under Autocratization and Two Decades of Women's Movement in Turkey, in. Routledge. Available at: https://iris.unive.it/handle/10278/5021081 (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[83] Buyuk, H.F. (2024) 'Turkey's "Foreign Influence Agent Law" Alarms Media, Civil Society', Balkan Insight. Available at: https://balkaninsight.com/2024/05/09/turkeys-foreign-influence-agent-law-alarms-media-civil-society/.

[84] Karakaş, B. (2021) Women in Turkey: Pioneering Change: The Women's Movement in Turkey. Available at: https://www.freiheit.org/turkey/pioneering-change-womens-movement-turkey (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[85] Williams, J. (2023)' What's at stake for women in Turkey's election, Open Democracy. Available at : https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/turkey-erdogan-election-2023-womens-rights-we-will-stop-femicides/

[86] Ehrhart, A. (2023) Between Strategic Political Power and a Daunting Task: Exploring Dimensions of Women's Political Participation in Hybrid Regimes. PhD Thesis.

[87] Parlak, Ç. et al. (2025) Building Transformative, Collaborative, Feminist and Accountable Funding Ecosystems for Feminist Organisations in Türkiye.

[88] We Will Stop Femicides (2025) We Will Stop Femicides 2024 Annual Report. We Will Stop Femicides. Available at: https://kadincinayetlerinidurduracagiz.net/veriler/3130/we-will-stop-femicides-platform-2024-annual-report.

[89] We Will Stop Femicides (2023) We Will Stop Femicides 2022 Annual report. We Will Stop Femicides. Available at: https://kadincinayetlerinidurduracagiz.net/veriler/3041/we-will-stop-femicides-platform-2022-annual-report.

[90] O'Neill, M. L. Altuntaş, D. and Keskin, A.Ş. (2020) Legal But Not Necessarily Available: Abortion Services at Public Hospitals in Turkey - 2020. Kadir Has University Gender and Women's Studies Research Center. Available at: https://gender.khas.edu.tr/sites/gender.khas.edu.tr/files/inline-files/Abortion-Report-2020-ENG-new.pdf.

[91] Women for Women's Human Rights (2024) From Local to Global / Global to Local: What a Difference 30 Years Make!. Available at: https://kadinininsanhaklari.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/30-yilda-neler-olmaz-ki-en.pdf

[92] OECD (2024c) Statistics New Release. Labour Market Release. OECD. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/data/insights/statistical-releases/2024/4/labour-market-situation-oecd-04-2024.pdf.

[93] Tok, Hilal (2025), 'Women in Turkey's factories speak out over discrimination and unsafe conditions', Inside Turkey, 4 May 2025. Available at: https://insideturkey.news/2025/05/04/women-in-turkeys-factories-speak-out-over-discrimination-and-unsafe-conditions/

[94] Win, E. (2004) 'When sharing female identity is not enough: coalition building in the midst of political polarisation in Zimbabwe', Gender & Development, 12(1), pp. 19–27. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13552070410001726486.

[95] Chabaya, O., Rembe, S. and Wadesango, N. (2009) 'The persistence of gender inequality in Zimbabwe: factors that impede the advancement of women into leadership positions in primary schools',

South African Journal of Education, 29(2). Available at: https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0256-01002009000200006.

[96] Mudiwa, R. (2018) 'Stop the Woman, Save the State: Policing, Order, and the Black Woman's Body', in Panic, Transnational Cultural Studies, and the Affective Contours of Power. Routledge.

[97] Munangagwa, C. (2009) 'The Economic Decline of Zimbabwe', Gettysburg Economic Review, 3(1). Available at: https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/ger/vol3/iss1/9.

[98] Oosterom, M. (2019) 'The Implications of Closing Civic Space for Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe'. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/120578252/The_Implications_of_Closing_Civic_Space_for_Sustainable_Development_in_Zimbabwe (Accessed: 24 February 2025).

[99] FATF (2012) International Standards on Combatting Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation. The FATF Recommendations. The Financial Action Task Force. Available at: https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/Fatfrecommendations/Fatf-recommendations.html (Accessed: 24 February 2025).

[100] van Eerdewijk , A. and Mugadza, T. (2015) 'Resilience in Adversity: the Changing Face of Women's Activism in Zimbabwe (2000-2014)'. KIT, Royal Tropical Institute. Available at: https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.2770.7608.

[101] (FIDH-OMCT) (2024) "We Are Coming After Them" 2024 State Of Civic Space Report. Zimbabwe Human Rights Defenders and The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (FIDH-OMCT). Available at: https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/2024_state_of_civic_space_report_expanded_version.pdf.

[102] https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/interviews/7263-zimbabwe-the-government-is-using-widespread-intimidation-to-silence-pro-democracy-voices

[103] Saki, O. (2023) 'Hiding behind the Financial Action Task Force finger: the intended consequences of the proposed Zimbabwe Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill, 2021 on civic space', The Journal of Democracy, Governance and Human Rights in Zimbabwe, 2(2). Available at: https://law.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/media/documents/law_uct_ac_za/2353/dgru-journal.pdf.

[104] UNFPA (2023) Zimbabwe National GBV strategy 2023 to 2030. UNFPA. Available at: https://zimbabwe.unfpa.org/en/publications/zimbabwe-national-gbv-strategy-2023-2030 (accessed: 24 February 2025).

[105] Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency and ICF International. 2016. Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey 2015: Final Report. Rockville, Maryland, USA: Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) and ICF International. Available at https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR322/FR322.pdf (accessed 20 May 2025).

[106] Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (2017). Feminist Funding principles. Available at: https://www.alliancemagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Feminist-Funding-Principles-Rev19-v10-pages-2-1.pdf (accessed 14 May 2025).

[107] COFEM (2021). COFEM Handbook on Feminist Grantmaking: Applying a Feminist Lens to Grantmaking for Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls: Funding For Transformative Change. Available at https://cofemsocialchange.org/learning-advocacy-tools/handbook-on-feminist-grantmaking/ (accessed 14 May 2025).

[108] Woroniuk, B. (2020). Shifting Power and Redefining Philanthropy: Launching the Principles for Feminist Funding - Equality Fund Fonds Égalité. Available at: https://equalityfund.ca/news-releases/shifting-power-and-redefining-philanthropy-launching-the-principles-for-feminist-funding/ (accessed 14 May 2025).

[109] Urgent Action Funds (2021). Sisterhood Feminist Principles of Philanthropy. Available at: https://urgentactionsisterfunds.org/sisterhood-feminist-principles-of-philanthropy/ (accessed 14 May 2025).

[110] AWID & Mama Cash (2020). Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders Can Resource Feminist Movements. Available a:t https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/MovingMoreMoney_FINALFINAL.pdf (accessed 14 May 2025).

[111] Walking the Talk. Common Ask Framework. Available at https://f4ff.global/resources-common-ask-framework/ (accessed 14 May 2025).

[112] Walking the Talk. Common Ask Framework. Available at https://f4ff.global/resources-common-ask-framework/ (accessed 14 May 2025).

[113] The Inter-agency Task Force for Advancing a United Nations-wide Funding Framework for Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations (2025), Preliminary Analysis of United Nations System Approaches to Resourcing Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations, https://untf.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/un_discussion_paper_on_feminist_funding_-_framework_final-compressed.pdf

[114] OECD (2024), DAC Recommendation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance, OECD/LEGAL/5022, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-5022#dates