

ADVOCACY NOTE: INCREASED AND EFFICIENT FUNDING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Supporting Transformative
Approaches



SUMMARY

Introduction

Page 3

01

Significantly increase funding dedicated to gender equality and ensure direct, sustained support for all type of feminist organizations

Page 5

02

Ensure Accessibility and Equity of Funding for Feminist Organizations

Page 6

03

Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

Page 7

04

Supporting Systemic Change in Financing

Page 8

For years, governments, politicians, and economists have tirelessly repeated that financially supporting gender equality is a key lever for building a more just, inclusive, and sustainable future including all marginalized groups, including groups whose economic exclusion is produced by intersecting systems of racism, patriarchy, coloniality, and class inequality. Unfortunately, governments' repeated verbal commitments to reducing gender inequalities have increasingly been contradicted by the recent approval of unprecedented cuts to public spending—particularly in official development assistance—the implementation of regressive tax systems, and the expansion of the war economy—which not only impoverish public services and destroy the planet but also actively undermine the gains made in the area of equality¹. These setbacks are not race-neutral: they disproportionately affect women of African descent, who are more exposed to poverty, informality, care burdens, restricted access to credit, and exclusion from decision-making spaces.

According to the OECD² Official Development Assistance (ODA) targeting gender equality grew steadily until 2023, but has declined significantly since 2024. This drop has had wide-ranging consequences, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights. The decline is largely driven by funding cuts announced by four major ODA providers: Germany, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom;

France serves as a notable case in point. Despite its forthcoming role as G7 host, a recent report³ indicates that France's ODA budget has been subject to five consecutive reductions over the course of less than two years, resulting in a 40% decrease in available resources. The budget currently stands at 0.45% of national expenditure, significantly below the 0.7%, the figure it should have been aiming for. These successive cuts have had a direct and detrimental impact on the FSOF (Fonds de Soutien aux Organisations Féministes), the cornerstone mechanism of France's feminist foreign policy⁴. Designed to fund civil society organizations advancing gender equality globally, the fund's operational capacity has been substantially weakened, and serious concerns now surround its long-term viability — undermining both France's diplomatic credibility and the broader international effort to achieve gender equality.

Meanwhile, feminist organizations worldwide are living in extreme precarity, as highlighted by the latest study published in 2025 by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). The median annual budget of feminist and women's rights organizations continues to stagnate at a very low level, standing at \$22,000⁵ in 2023 compared to \$20,000 in 2010—demonstrating how little progress has been made over 13 years.

1. In 2023, 612 million women lived near a war zone, a figure that had increased by 50% in [a decade](#); 1 in 4 countries experienced a decline in women's rights (observed in 2024, confirmed [in the 2025 analyses](#));

2. OECD, Development Finance for Gender Equality,

3. 2026 Finance Law: A fifth cut in public development aid, [Focus 2030, 2026](#)

4. Coordination Sud, [Adoption du projet loi de finances pour 2025 : qu'est-ce que cela change pour la solidarité internationale ?](#)

5. [Where is the Money? An Evidence-Driven Call to Resource Feminist Organizing by AWID, 2025](#)

This funding gap is even more acute for marginalized groups such as people with disabilities, as well as women of African descent-led organizations, which remain structurally excluded from traditional funding channels despite their central role in advancing racial, gender, economic, and social justice.

While funding allocated to gender equality is decreasing, funding directed toward anti-rights movements is steadily increasing, intensifying pressure on those working toward feminist progress. Between 2019 and 2023, USD 1.18 billion was allocated to 275 organizations involved in anti-gender initiatives in Europe⁶.

In a context of multiple and interconnected crises, France has committed, alongside other countries, to adopting a feminist foreign policy. This commitment must now be translated into concrete actions and financial investments commensurate with the scale of the challenges.

For all these reasons, the W7 calls on France and its allies in advancing gender equality to strengthen their leadership by adopting ambitious financial commitments, more equitable, transparent, and sustainable funding policies, placing formal and informal feminist organizations at the center of their strategies, and by ensuring direct, flexible, and sustainable access to resources that can be adapted to each specific context. It is indeed important to emphasize that in contexts where LGBTQIA+ organizations are criminalized, they cannot legally register. They are thus excluded from public funding and, very often, from international funding that requires legal recognition, even as they are repeatedly targeted by anti-rights movements.

The W7 makes the following four priority recommendations on gender equality/funding needs.

6. Neil Datta, [“The next wave”](#), European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive rights

01

SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE FUNDING DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND ENSURE DIRECT, SUSTAINED SUPPORT FOR ALL TYPE OF FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS.



Allocate 20% of bilateral official development assistance (ODA) to projects and programs whose primary objective is gender equality (DAC2), and ensure that a significant portion directly targets feminist organizations. According to the OECD⁷, 2024, only 5.7% of bilateral ODA on average had gender equality as its principal objective, and less than 1% reached organizations working for the rights of women, adolescent girls, and girls. It is therefore particularly urgent to increase funding levels for gender equality. Funding targets must include racial justice indicators to ensure that resources effectively reach those most affected by intersecting racial, gender, and economic inequalities. Special emphasis must be placed on funding for sexual and reproductive health and rights, which have been heavily impacted by recent ODA budget cuts, particularly in the context of the dismantling of USAID (United States Agency for International Development), which accounted for a major share of this funding.



Ensure the sustainability of Funds for Feminist organisations where they already exist (such as the FSOE in France, and the Equality Fund supported by countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany) and promote the creation of similar funds across G7 countries and allied nations, including south developing Countries.



Strengthen rapid-response feminist emergency funds to enable feminist organizations to respond effectively to crises and maintain their activities in emergency contexts.



Encourage foundations and corporations to take a more active role—particularly those that do not already allocate most of their funding to gender equality—in building more equal societies. While private funding cannot and must not replace state funding, it should nevertheless be mobilized. Currently, private philanthropic flows for development targeting gender equality do not exceed 7%. Companies and foundations are integral parts of society and benefit from its human resources and infrastructure. They are therefore accountable and increasingly expected to demonstrate social impact and must invest in gender equality and human rights.

7. OECD, Development Finance for Gender Equality, 2025



Defend international commitments and funding—both national and international—that promote gender equality, including funding allocated to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

02

ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY AND EQUITY OF FUNDING FOR FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS



Simplify funding access mechanisms, particularly for local and small organizations.



Guarantee flexible, pooled, core funding that allows women's, adolescent girls', LGBTQIA+ rights organizations, people with disabilities and racialized groups to define their priorities. This includes shifting from project-based funding to core, flexible funding for feminist and women's rights organizations.



Reduce administrative, linguistic, and structural barriers that limit access to funding.



Ensure equitable distribution of resources to organizations in the Global South, particularly those working at the intersection of these different forms of marginalization—which are often excluded from traditional funding models.






Integrate an intersectional approach into funding allocation. This requires explicitly naming racial inequalities and addressing barriers faced by women of African descent, indigenous Women.



France and allied countries must use their influence in multilateral spaces to achieve current objectives for gender equality funding, set new ones if necessary, and ensure transparency of reports and mechanisms on investments devoted to organizations defending the rights of girls, adolescent girls, women and LGBTQIA+ and people with disabilities.


03


STRENGTHEN TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY


-  **Publish detailed, comparable, and disaggregated data on funding** allocated to gender equality, DAC1 and DAC2 projects, and projects targeting marginalized and vulnerable communities, including people with disabilities.
-  **Establish monitoring mechanisms** that include civil society and feminist organizations.
-  **Evaluate, through a feminist approach (this include intersectional lens)**, the actual impact of funding on transforming gender inequalities. Funding is feminist when it truly addresses the root causes of inequalities and questions the power dynamics between donors and organizations (for example, the feminist approach answers questions such as: who decides on funding allocation, which projects are funded and do they meet local needs, what accountability measures are in place, how are resources redistributed, what is the division of labor, and what monitoring and evaluation are implemented?).

04

SUPPORTING SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN FINANCING

-  **By integrating gender equality into all financing** (with particular attention to women whose economic realities are shaped by racialized inequalities) through gender mainstreaming (gender-responsive budgeting), feminist tax reform, and an overhaul of debt, taxes, and public spending to make them fairer for women, adolescent girls, and girls. In concrete terms, this means integrating a gender perspective into all budgets, systematically analyzing how resources are allocated and the differentiated effects they may have on women and men in all their diversity. This approach involves assessing the impact of each investment—both upstream and downstream—to determine whether it helps reduce, maintain, or exacerbate existing inequalities, and to act accordingly by making the necessary adjustments.

-  **Moving from ad hoc funding to a structural vision:** to adopt a long-term approach and ensure overall coherence. The aim is to support strategies that act simultaneously on several dimensions: public policies, institutions, social norms, and power relations. It is to encourage investment in essential political actions, such as advocacy, legislative reform, and so on.

-  **Reforming the Multilateral Financing System** insuring that financial institutions support the economic independence of women particularly those from racialized groups. France and its allies should use their influence on the international stage to amplify calls from governments in the Global South for reform of the multilateral system, thereby improving their fiscal space. This includes, among other things, support for:
 - A United Nations Framework Convention on Sovereign Debt as a legally binding, transparent, and rights-based framework for debt settlement and prevention.
 - An end to harmful conditionality and austerity measures, given the disproportionate harm they inflict on women and girls.

