

# FUND FOR GENDER EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT 2015



*“UN Women is working closely with civil society and women’s organizations to ensure women’s meaningful participation in influential spaces of policy-making around fragility, peace and security, economic growth, social cohesion and development, and the implementation of high-impact initiatives. This is what Agenda 2030 actually is about. When we talk about leaving no one behind, this is exactly the constituency that we are talking about. Missing out on this constituency means we are missing the direction to 2030.”*

**Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**  
UN Women Executive Director

# 2015: A YEAR OF LEARNING AND OPPORTUNITY

*As the world adopts a new framework to tackle its most acute development problems, UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) has a clear vision for its role. Building on high-impact grant-making since 2009, the Fund is poised to directly support civil society's strategic work to propel women's political and economic empowerment across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

2015 was a momentous year for the FGE, UN Women's grant-making mechanism and a vital source of funding for women's organizations around the world. The new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has set 17 Global Goals to eliminate poverty, reduce inequality and combat climate change, and calls for upholding human rights principles for every person—leaving no one behind. In line with its commitment to civil society, the Fund launched a global call for proposals affirming UN Women's resolve to place women's organizations at the forefront of implementation efforts.

The call drew attention from 1,400 organizations, seeking over US\$ 500 million in funding. The Fund awarded US\$ 7.3 million to 24 leading women's organizations. From strengthening rural women's organic farming capacities in Haiti, to promoting women's political participation amid the ongoing conflict in Yemen, these programmes will help localize 11 SDGs in their national contexts, and push forward women's empowerment and gender equality.

In the past seven years, 10 million women and men have been positively affected by FGE programme results. In 2015, the active portfolio impacted 218,000 women, specifically supporting

300 to achieve leadership positions and ensuring sustainable income for 13,000 of them.

Moreover, two powerful learning initiatives helped FGE understand impact and generate evidence-based models. First, a meta-analysis looked at 22 evaluations of completed FGE programmes. It identified partnerships and locally tailored interventions as key conditions for impact and sustainability. Second, a programme-based research generated new data on challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment in fragile contexts. The burden of unpaid care work was found to be one of the most pressing barriers for women's financial autonomy. These findings will inform the Fund's future programmatic and grant-making work.

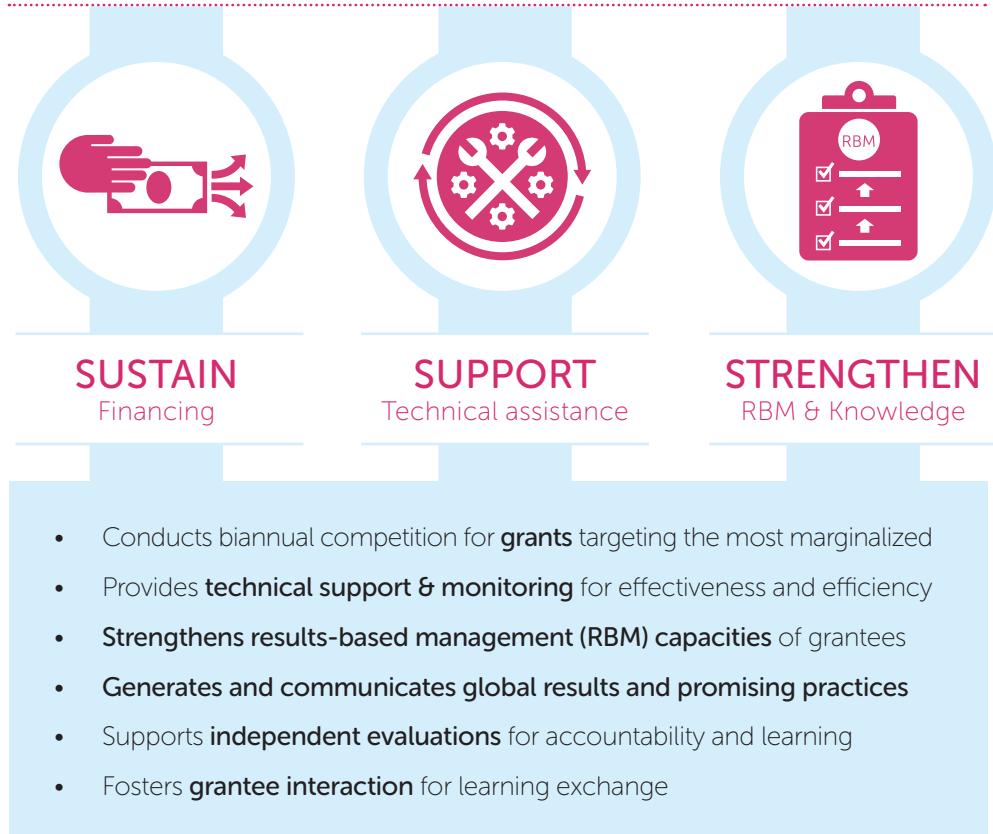
In 2016, the FGE will continue responding to the needs and priorities of women and girls in vulnerable and marginalized situations within the SDG framework. To that end, our efforts will be geared towards re-capitalising the Fund for a new call for proposals in 2017. Sufficient and sustained funding is critical to transform commitments into action, enabling strategic civil society actors on the ground to make Agenda 2030 a reality for all.

**Elisa Fernández**  
Chief, UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality

# MORE THAN A FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT

*The FGE is the largest global financial instrument dedicated exclusively to empowering women politically and economically through support for civil society-led programmes.*

## FGE'S 3-PILLAR APPROACH



### Who does all this

A dedicated team of passionate and experienced professionals including **specialists** and focal points deployed in UN Women field offices, **and a team in headquarters coordinating** global processes.

### Why what we do matters

**Women-led civil society organizations** know the realities on the ground. Without their transformational capacity, **women's empowerment** and sustainable development cannot happen.

### How we spend the money

At least three-quarters of our resources are invested in **grants**. The rest is devoted to **technical support** to grantees, **knowledge generation and sharing**, management and support costs.

## What they say about us

### OUR GRANTEES

"The Fund was different. **We perceived them more as a partner than a donor.** Right at the onset of the project we worked very closely in refining the indicators and this was really helpful. We also appreciated them bringing us together as grantees to learn from each other."

Forum for Women in Democracy, Uganda

### OUR DONORS

**"The Fund for Gender Equality is a trustworthy mechanism** that not only offers the financial means but also accompanies them in the process, strengthening their capacities and providing technical guidance to ensure effective results on the ground. Germany is proud to support this mechanism. **This is one of our best investments.**"

Government of Germany

### EVALUATIONS

**"The demand-driven and grantee-led approach** of the FGE is a significant comparative advantage and ensured that projects were relevant, responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and sustainable."

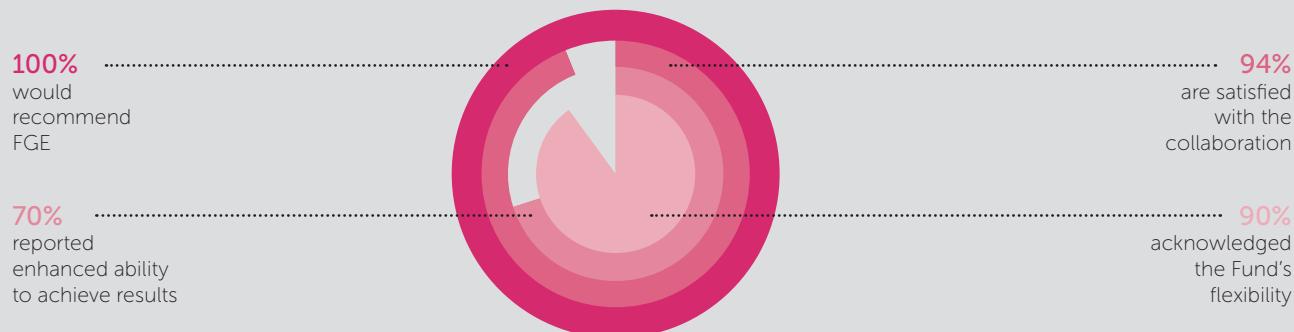
Independent meta-analysis of FGE grantee evaluations (2015)

### DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

"Through the grant awarding process and later implementation of the successful projects, an eye is kept on the selection of the highest quality proposals that will actually have an effective impact on society [...]. Thanks to this approach, UN Women's **impact on (the) field can be measured and appraised.**"

European Commission, DEVCO Pillar Assessment Report of UN Women (2015)

## Insights from Grantee Survey



A 2016 online survey asked previous grantees about their FGE experience. The representative sample of respondents from 102 organizations were very satisfied with the collaboration, and all would recommend FGE to other organizations. Other findings include:

- 94 per cent indicated that their programmes resulted in high impact for target women and communities
- 70 per cent found FGE's technical assistance helpful and enhanced their abilities to achieve results
- 90 per cent acknowledged the importance of programmatic flexibility when circumstances required

Additionally, a majority or 77 per cent suggested that the Fund's partnership strengthened their ability to innovate, through regular feedback and programme support and the flexibility to adjust strategies. Almost two-thirds indicated that they were able to "think outside the box" when analysing problems and examining solutions, involving beneficiaries in their design.

Areas for improvement included the simplification of monitoring and reporting processes, and facilitation of interactions between grantees and other potential partners.



A vertical photograph of a woman from the waist up. She is wearing a vibrant green headwrap and a blue and yellow patterned dress with large, stylized floral motifs. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing some foliage.

# 01. GEARED UP FOR THE SDGS

*In 2015, the Fund launched its third grant-making cycle, awarding 24 grants totaling US\$ 7.3 million for programmes localizing 11 of the 17 SDGs. This section presents the Fund's 2016-2018 portfolio.*

# 2015 GRANT-MAKING CYCLE

*“Experience from FGE projects shows that implementing (civil society) organizations are now well-positioned to inform and further contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.”*

## Independent meta-analysis of the FGE grantee evaluations

In 2015, 193 UN Member States agreed on the 2030 Agenda, with commitments to inclusion and sustainability, and 17 SDGs. The goals guide actions to end poverty, promote equality and human rights, and safeguard the environment. Gender equality and women's empowerment appear across the Agenda and as a standalone Goal 5. Women-led organizations will be critical in accelerating progress for women and girls across the globe.

The FGE contributes to the SDGs by:

- 1. Supporting initiatives that directly contribute to the implementation of at least 11 SDGs by enabling women's participation, leadership and agency; and**
- 2. Strengthening grantees' capacities to implement high-impact initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda.**

The FGE aimed to ensure that women's organizations will play a key part in the new Agenda by releasing its third global Call for

Proposals in March 2015, with a focus on implementing the SDGs. A rigorous and competitive review process **selected 24 grantees and awarded US\$ 7.3 million to reach over 325,000 direct beneficiaries** over the next three years. The most common beneficiaries include rural and agricultural workers, indigenous women, domestic and informal workers, and young women, among other groups. About 45 per cent of the programmes will be implemented in low-income countries and 53 per cent will target women's economic and/or political empowerment in fragile states.

New programmes will meaningfully contribute to SDG 5 on gender equality and will help advance progress towards 10 additional goals, reflecting the multi dimensional nature of women's empowerment.

Here are some selected examples from the new portfolio that illustrate this diversity. For the full list of selected grantees in 2015, please go to [www.unwomen.org/en/trust-funds/fund-for-gender-equality/grantees](http://www.unwomen.org/en/trust-funds/fund-for-gender-equality/grantees).

*"Through these grants, we start to implement 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the most practical way possible. [Through them,] UN Women reaffirms its commitment to strengthening women's organizations as highly accountable, fundamental players in realizing women's empowerment and achieving full human development."*

**Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**  
UN Women Executive Director



**3**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Bolivia: RED Habitat**

Improved social and legal protection for 180 female construction workers will end multiple forms of discrimination including a lack of social security and health insurance, lower pay and unsafe working conditions.



**15**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Mali: Aid and Development Association**

1,500 rural women in the Sikasso and Segou regions will enhance entrepreneurial opportunities in food-processing and agri-business, improving their livelihoods and lifting themselves out of the cycle of poverty.



**9**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Haiti: Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn (SOFA)**

Young women farmers and agricultural cooperatives in 13 communities will adopt organic and sustainable agricultural methods to improve livelihoods and end hunger among 18,000 target beneficiaries.



**1**  
PROGRAMME

#### **Cambodia: Banteay Srei**

In five rural districts, 2,000 vulnerable women will lead efforts to improve water resource management, land use and soil preservation.



**24**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Turkey: Mother Child Education Foundation (ACEV)**

Training in four cities aims to provide over 5,000 women and adolescent girls with literacy skills and knowledge to claim civil and political rights, and influence local decision-making.



**24**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Yemen: Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF)**

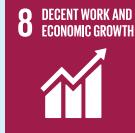
Promoting young women's leadership and participation in decision-making will open room for them to engage in key institutions, and shape a peaceful, inclusive society.



**10**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Armenia: Green Lane**

Organic and sustainable farming by 15 rural women's farmer groups will spread natural and environmentally friendly agricultural production practices while reducing food insecurity and poverty.



**16**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **South Asia Regional: Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO)**

The promotion of women's economic rights, specifically in terms of decent work and entrepreneurial activities, will empower 2,000 Dalit women in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.



**24**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Tanzania: Pastoral Women's Council**

Dispelling discriminatory norms that restrict economic opportunities, access to land and resources, decision-making and active participation will help 1,000 Maasai women and girls realize their full potential.



**3**  
PROGRAMMES

#### **Algeria: El Ghaith**

Rural women will build greater resilience to negative climate change effects in the Bordj Bou Arreridj region through sustainable agricultural cooperatives.



**17**  
PROGRAMMES

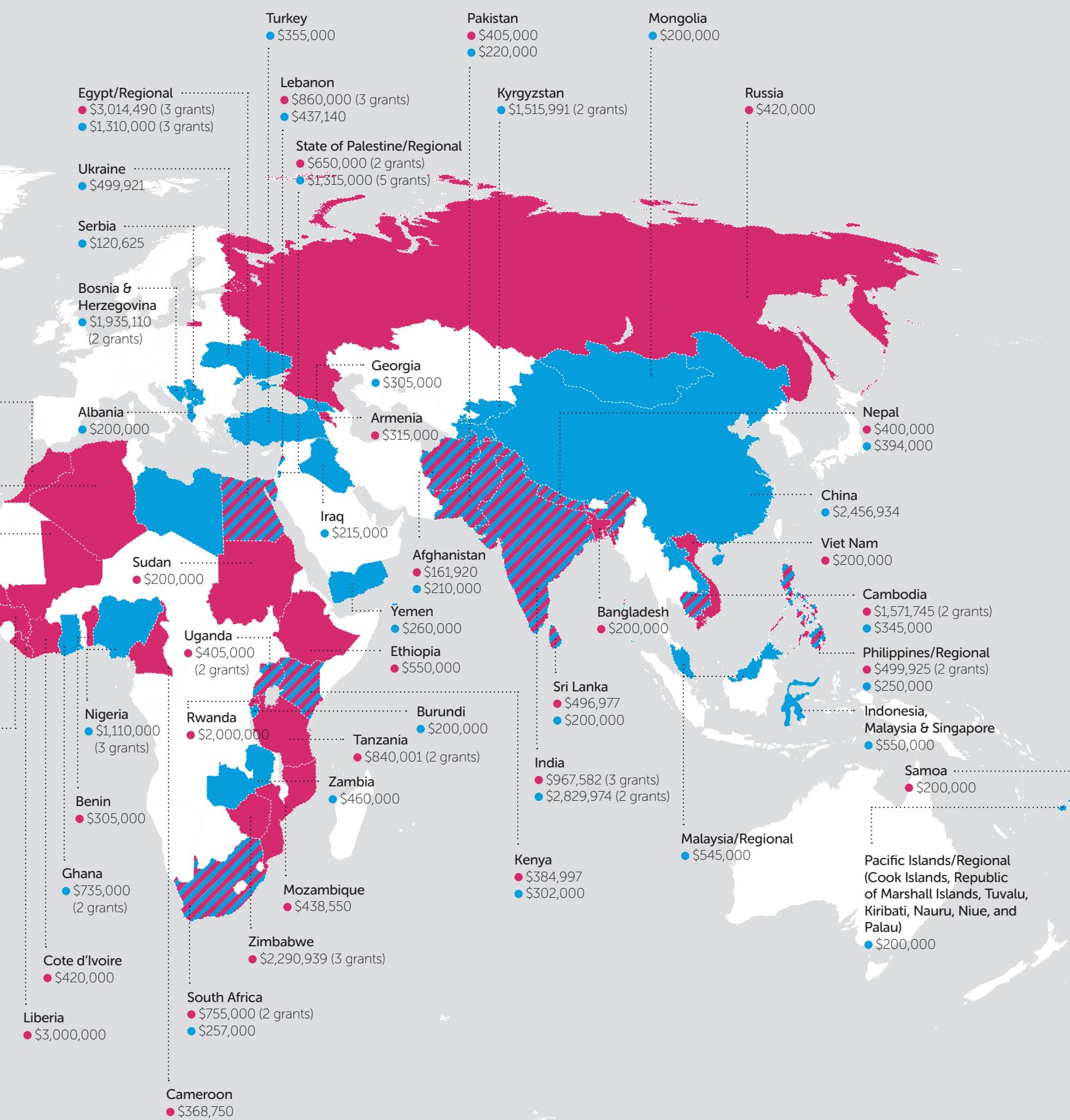
#### **Albania: Association for Women with Social Problems (AWSP)**

Women's organizations will advocate for the adoption of a National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and advocate for women's imperative roles in conflict management and sustainable peace.

# FGE 2009-2016 PORTFOLIO



- Economic empowerment grants
- Political empowerment grants
- Both economic and political empowerment grants







## 02.

# 2015 IMPACT RESULTS: MODELS FOR CHANGE

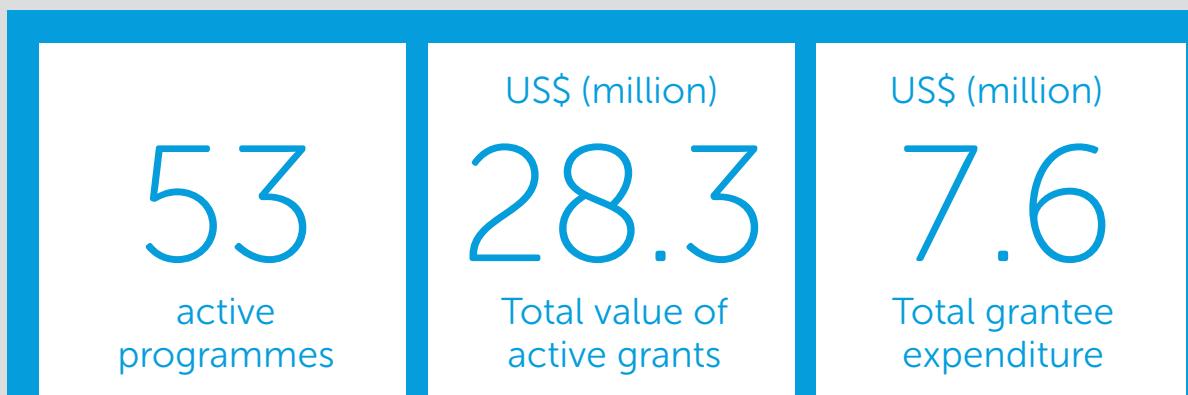
*This section captures the key results achieved by the active portfolio in 2015. Each thematic section introduces a framework for successful empowerment interventions and explores impact in different areas of economic and political empowerment, using key global aggregated data, and highlighting country-based examples and individual impact stories.*

## OVERALL PORTFOLIO 2009-2015

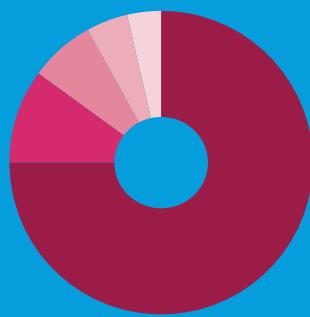


## 2015 ACTIVE PORTFOLIO

### PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW

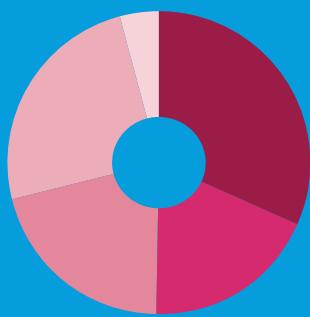


### DISTRIBUTION OF FGE EXPENDITURES



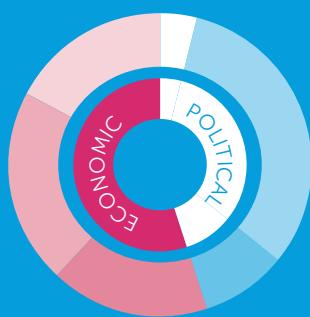
- Grants 75%
- Management 10%
- Technical assistance 7%
- RBM & Knowledge Management 4.5%
- Operational 3.5%

### PROGRAMME DISTRIBUTION BY REGION



- Africa 32%
- Americas and the Caribbean 19%
- Arab States 21%
- Asia and the Pacific 25%
- Europe and Central Asia 4%

### DISTRIBUTION BY SUB-THEME



- Legislative and policy change 4%
- Women's leadership 32%
- Engaging in electoral processes 9%
- Rural women's access to resources 17%
- Decent work and social protection 21%
- Entrepreneurship 17%

## 2015 THIRD ROUND OF GRANT-MAKING

**1,400**

concept notes received

**62**

semi-finalists technically assisted

**24**

grants awarded worth

**US\$ 7.3 M**

### CUMULATIVE GLOBAL RESULTS

**218,000**

direct beneficiaries

**185,000**

lives of women and girls improved

**628,000**

stakeholders sensitized about gender equality and women's rights

### POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS

**77,000**

women participated in public forums to influence policies

**228**

new national and local, laws and policies protecting women's rights adopted

**300**

women achieved leadership positions in institutions that affect their lives

### ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS

**13,000**

women with sustainable income

**17,000**

women accessed productive resources (land, natural resources and credit)

**7,100**

women benefitted from social protection measures and services

# WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

In 2015, FGE's active grants continued to make significant advances for women's rights.

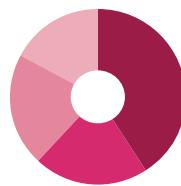
In the area of economic empowerment, FGE delivered **US\$ 16 million to 29 programmes**. In total, **83,000 direct beneficiaries in 26 countries** were impacted from activities to:

- Support rural women to access and control resources and assets
- Ensure decent work and social protection
- Foster sustainable entrepreneurship

While many programmes recognized the interconnection between economic and political empowerment, most active grants in 2015 focused on the former. These grants represented more than two-thirds of the regional portfolio in Africa, and over half in the Arab States.

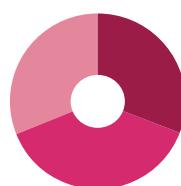
The use of **local women's economic groups** is the most common

## Programme Geographic Distribution



Africa	41%
Americas and the Caribbean	21%
Arab States	21%
Asia and the Pacific	17%

## Programme Distribution by Sub-theme



Rural women's access to resources	31%
Decent work and social protection	38%
Sustainable entrepreneurship	31%

**strategy**, particularly in rural areas. These facilitate access to productive resources and the acquisition of skills; they create solidarity networks; and they help women increase their income and enhance their socioeconomic status. Women see the groups as a source of collective identity, and an instrument to expand their rights and negotiate with decision-makers.

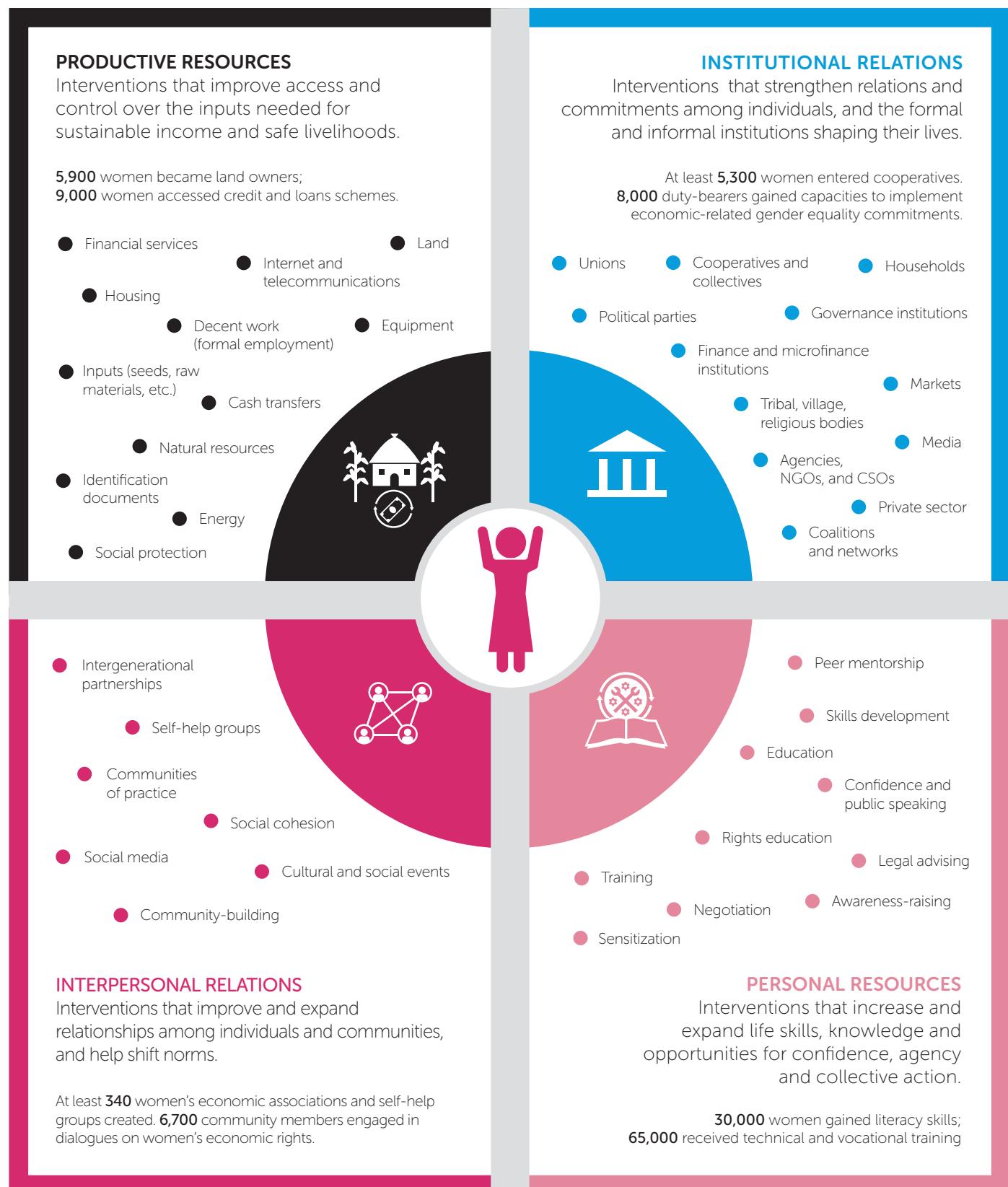
## Learning from evaluations: what works in women's economic empowerment?

The meta-analysis of 22 FGE programme evaluations found that successful strategies have aimed at:

- Increasing women's incomes while supporting greater control over earnings
- Increasing women's understanding and ability to exercise their rights
- Strengthening women's trade unions to advocate for political reforms
- Increasing awareness and promoting legislative changes for marginalized groups
- Connecting/creating networks for economically marginalized groups
- Engendering existing government employment schemes
- Closing gender gaps in technology

# Framework for successful economic empowerment interventions

Developed in 2015 based on grantee experiences, this framework considers women's needs beyond political and economic gains, and includes improved capabilities, opportunities and relationships as part of an engaged and empowered life.





10,300

rural women accessed sustainable income

9

programmes

EFFECTIVE STRATEGY:  
USE OF POSITIVE MALE  
ROLE MODELS

*In Côte d'Ivoire, the Organization Nationale pour l'Enfant, la Femme et la Famille identified, together with local populations, positive male role models to influence community attitudes and behaviours towards women's rights. Examples such as the head of a village who practices the equal right to inheritance, or the president of a youth group known for sending his daughters to school were used in sensitization sessions. By the end of the programme, 79 per cent of community members accepted women's right to inheritance compared to 28 per cent at the beginning, and at least 145 women were returned land from deceased parents or husbands.*

# SUPPORTING RURAL WOMEN TO ACCESS AND CONTROL RESOURCES AND ASSETS

Focusing primarily on communities, FGE grantees helped women develop literacy, technical and business skills while supporting access to financial and natural resources. Self-help or economic groups were a key empowerment strategy.

By 2015, at least 340 women's collective structures had been created as platforms for training, agricultural activities, distribution of goods and tools, and savings and loan systems. These also offered solidarity and safe spaces for women to develop their leadership skills, and to conduct advocacy for their rights, including access to public services.

Through programmes active in 2015, **7,700 women were able to access natural resources and gained ownership, inheritance or administrative control over land or property**, often leading them to increase their incomes, and in many cases, to invest or save. Access to productive resources also resulted in women being more respected in the community and adopting a more active role in public issues and decision-making.

FGE-supported programmes for rural women frequently operate in poor, remote communities where conservative values prevail. While women with more financial autonomy can face social rejection, grantees use strategies to counter it, such as by involving men. Research and baseline studies conducted in these contexts are shedding light on areas previously unexplored.



## ETHIOPIA

*In Ethiopia, the Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations helped 1,900 low-income household heads and pastoralist women organize in 42 self-help groups and 24 cooperatives. This engaged them in income-generating activities such as producing and selling tea, milk, bread, charcoal, vegetables and hand-made scarves. They have doubled their daily income from US\$ 0.61 to US\$ 1.19, and collectively saved US\$ 22,000. Women have invested in sending their children to school and improving their homes. Community attitudes have shifted towards more acceptance of gender equality and women's ability to make household decisions.*



## LEBANON

*The Amel Association has helped over 1,100 rural women from Lebanon and refugee and migrant women from Egypt, Iraq, Sudan and Syria to acquire new business management and vocational skills. More than 350 women are producing handicrafts, and organic and agro-food products. They have enhanced the marketability of their products through better production techniques, improved packaging and communication tools. The first economic network for women in Lebanon, Menna, was created, gathering 13 organizations, and a shop opened in Beirut allowing over 300 beneficiaries to make their products commercially available.*

## ANCIENT APPROACH TO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SUPPORTS RURAL WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS



Nahla Sukkari is one of the few traditional *fekha* carpet makers left in Lebanon, a profession she is passionate about. "The best is the weaving part. Especially when we are six weavers, it's really beautiful. When the piece is done and I look at it, I become very happy and wish that I make an even better one."

Demand for her carpets had dropped in recent years, putting her beloved livelihood under threat. But in 2012, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon arrived in her village, El-Fekha, offering hope for a revival of her craft. It started a programme in five protected biodiversity zones in eastern Lebanon. The aim was to improve women's economic status by reviving the concept of *Hima*, a 1,500-year-old traditional community-based approach to managing livelihoods alongside natural resources.

With training and new tools, 230 women developed *Hima*-related skills, such as to produce environmentally sensitive, hand-made products. Nahla herself trained more than 30 Syrian refugees and Lebanese rural women to weave and create carpets, ensuring the traditional technique is not lost. Six *Hima* stores have been set up, including in areas with intensive tourism, resulting in increased livelihoods for Nahla and dozens of trained women.

Applying the *Hima* principles also led to the establishment of local women's groups that collectively voice opinions on public issues and have brought more women into decision-making. Close engagement with local authorities has encouraged three municipalities to provide space, tools and equipment for women to learn and practice new techniques; all plan to continue doing so beyond the programme.



Nahla Sukkari is passionate about weaving carpets and now has more hope that she can sustain her livelihood.  
UN Women / Joe Saade and Ghinwa Daher



15,000

women accessed new or existing markets

9

programmes

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#### EFFECTIVE STRATEGY: CELL PHONES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

**Bolipara Nari Kalyan Somity** equipped 100 women's economic groups in **Bangladesh** with cell phones to support the income-generating activities of 1,500 ethnic minority women. More than 80 per cent of group members benefitted from improved communications among themselves, and with suppliers and customers. They saved time and travel, and were able to access information on available services, such as for health care, trading and emergency support.

# FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FGE grantees helped women start or improve businesses by providing microloans, distributing supplies, or creating savings and loans groups.

In 2015, at least 9,000 women benefited from credit or loans, largely channelled through women-led economic groups or cooperatives. These sustainable models for women's entrepreneurship allowed beneficiaries to start or improve small businesses, invest their earnings and save. Grantees also equipped women with vocational skills and basic business management capacities, helping improve women's socioeconomic status.

Another priority was to enhance the marketability of women's products and raise their profits. Strategies ranged from the processing of natural resources, such as drying fish or producing plant powders, to creating sophisticated branding and packaging to attract a wider clientele. Beneficiaries' own traditions, available local products and identities were always the starting points.

In order to address the critical challenge of access to markets, producers' networks and cooperatives helped improve information flow and reduce commercialization costs. Some grantees encouraged local authorities to provide space and other in-kind support to produce and sell goods. By 2015, grantees had enabled approximately **25,000 women to engage in income-generation activities, including by developing new or accessing existing markets.**



## GUINEA

**Partenariat Recherches—Environnement—Médias** created sustainable livelihoods for 230 women and their families on the Tristão Islands, Guinea. The grantee taught beneficiaries to use solar polytunnel dryers to preserve and sell agricultural and sea products, and promoted the cultivation of 25,000 moringa trees—both strategies help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 tons per year. The provision of a boat has further allowed 40 tons of women's products to reach new markets on the mainland. Four women's cooperatives have formed, becoming the first organizations from the Tristão Islands to receive official recognition.



## UGANDA

**Shelter and Settlement Alternatives—Uganda Human Settlements Network** has improved the housing conditions of poor urban women from the Kampala and Jinja districts in Uganda. Hands-on training and tools for basic construction provided to women's groups helped 200 members produce affordable and durable building materials with minimum environmental impacts. Three hundred women have gained financial management skills, and approximately 50 have secured loans from financial institutions. Five groups are forming housing cooperatives, a relatively new concept in Uganda. Another 150 women have learned paralegal skills and organized community watch-dog groups to help women solve violations of their property rights.

## INDIGENOUS FARMERS' CO-OPS BOOST LOCAL ECONOMIES AS THEY REVIVE BIODIVERSITY



Years ago in a remote town in Peru's Andean region of Ayacucho, 65-year-old Quechua native Cira Huancahuari learned to produce cheese and yogurt to provide for her 13 children. Today she heads a local dairy business. Through support from the Centre for Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHIRAPAQ), she has been able to grow her business from an artisan workshop to a larger industrial producer.

"We realized that by making cheese individually, each of us were not going to get too far," said Ms. Huancahuari, referring to the women involved in the dairy. "With joy and pride we have started positioning our cheeses and yogurt brand 'Sanqui'." In two years, a more competitive, high-quality product has allowed the all-women workforce to raise prices, reach new markets and gain renewed respect for their success.

"Now the people of Laramate and visitors do not seek any cheese or yogurt products other than those we make," Ms. Huancahuari explained proudly.

The women have also learned to plant traditional vegetables that were no longer cultivated, but are more nutritious and resilient to climate change. This has improved food security while bringing greater dietary diversity to local markets. The first harvest of newly produced potatoes was featured in a regional fair in Lima. "[Participating] was an experience that gave me the confidence to think bigger," said Ms. Huancahuari. "We've never had those kinds of revenues before."

The CHIRAPAQ programme also furthered the livelihoods of 400 indigenous women in Argentina, Brazil and Guatemala. "By providing greater support, and with the appropriate technical assistance and business advisory service, indigenous women can generate sustainable revenue, and not just a pittance," says Tarcila Rivera Zea, a Quechua leader and President of CHIRAPAQ. "The scope of this initiative should inspire significant investment for it to have a larger ripple effect."



65-year-old Quechua native Cira Huancahuari milking a cow to produce yogurt.  
Courtesy of CHIRAPAQ, Peru

## WOMEN'S SAVINGS GROUP SYSTEM IGNITES GROWTH AND EMPOWERMENT IN TANZANIA



Lusina riding her new motorbike.

Courtesy of KWIECO / Stuart Nathaniel Nkinda, Tanzania

Lusina Masawe is one of 25 successful and dynamic entrepreneurs in the Ushirikiano peer support group established by the Kilimanjaro Women Information Exchange and Consultancy Organization (KWIECO) in Rombo District, Tanzania. Group members learn about savings and loan systems, human rights, access to justice, local governance, business management, food processing and livestock rearing.

Lusina used her first loan of US\$ 27 to enlarge her kiosk, which sells basic consumable items. Once the loan was repaid, a second one allowed her to buy fertilizer, which increased the yields of her banana crop. A third loan meant she could extend her chicken coop from 20 to over 100 chickens.

Subsequent loans have been used to further expand the range of products in her shop, and she now has switched from retail to wholesale supplies. Her latest loan, for US\$ 500, bought a motorbike for hiring out as a *boda boda* (motorbike taxi). Since she joined the

group, her income has risen from US\$ 37 per month to more than US\$ 200. "The main impact for me has been the possibility to pay for the school fees for my four children on time and to transfer them into private schools," she explains.

In total, the Ushirikiano group has saved US\$ 5,000—far more than any similar association in the village. Ninety per cent of loans help enhance a business or increase productivity. Some loans now go to non-members from the local community at a higher interest rate, further boosting the group's resources. Due to the high demand for similar groups, new ones are now forming, independent from KWIECO.

In total, KWIECO has created 50 peer support groups across four districts in Tanzania. Nearly 1,200 women have saved more than US\$ 673,000 and provided over 3,500 loans worth US\$ 204,000. The groups have also opened bank accounts, becoming eligible for government support and grant schemes.



7,100

women accessed social protection services

11

programmes

EFFECTIVE STRATEGY:  
KEY ALLIES AND  
COMPELLING DATA

*Influencing gender equality policies requires combining strategic institutional alliances with engagement of individual champions from government and media who can influence change. In Peru, Movimiento Manuela Ramos took this approach in pushing for Law 29700, which includes non-paid work in the national accounting system. Having an initial estimated value of this work—between 15 per cent and 30 per cent of Peru's GDP—was pivotal in advocacy efforts, which have now also led to the establishment of the Satellite Account for Non-Remunerated Work.*

## ENSURING DECENT WORK AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

FGE grantees worked with some of the world's most marginalized women, helping them realize their equal rights, including in the labour market. Most programmes in 2015 engaged directly with local women combined with national advocacy.

A number of programmes strengthened the organized actions of women workers' coalitions and unions as they claimed minimum standards for decent work, and full enjoyment of social protection measures. Domestic workers, paid and unpaid care workers, and home-based workers are predominantly women, mostly in the informal sector and outside the realm of public social protection systems, with little recognition of their vital contribution to the economy. Grantees have advocated for the adoption of legal and policy reforms aligned with international labour standards, as well as the implementation of existing statutes.

By boosting women's skills in high-demand professions, grantees bridged gaps between marginalized women and the labour market. They challenged gender-based occupational segregation by encouraging women to enter non-traditional arenas such as construction and technology.



### BRAZIL

The *ELAS Fundo de Investimento Social and THEMIS Assessoria Jurídica e Estudos de Gênero* in Brazil worked with the National Federation of Domestic Workers and eight domestic workers' unions in successfully advocating for the adoption of the Complementary Law 150/2015. The law will expand labour rights to more than 7 million domestic workers and reduce their vulnerabilities. Successful programme strategies included improving communication among unions and workers, the provision of infrastructure and tools, enhanced negotiation skills, and the facilitation of union participation in key talks around shaping and adopting the law.



### MOROCCO

In Morocco, the *National Institution for Solidarity with Women* has challenged single mothers' social exclusion by easing their entry into the labour market. Over 160 single mothers have been trained and supported, with 115 finding jobs as a result. Over 90 women enrolled in the civil registry and gained an identity card, which led to the adjustment of their administrative and legal situation of those of their children, while facilitating employment. A study and a video documentary about their plight has broken longstanding silence on the issue, generating momentum among civil society and state representatives to act on the issues single mothers face.

## HANDS-ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING ENABLES WOMEN'S INTEGRATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET IN EGYPT



Faten Fayed and Hadeer Abu Zaid have been neighbours for many years in the Sharkeya Governorate in Egypt. But they were not close friends before they joined the Salheya Initiative. Led by the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower in collaboration with the American University in Cairo, it has piloted a practical model helping women and girls join the local labour market.

Faten, 26 years old, performed well at school, but could not complete her education because she married early and soon after gave birth to her first baby. Hadeer, 19 years old, is continuing her university education, majoring in social sciences. Despite their socioeconomic and educational differences, the two women decided to cooperate together in a business enterprise.

Their friendship began when they both took the Salheya Initiative's honey production course. After completing it, Faten and Hadeer decided to establish an apiary of

their own. Although their small business is still in its early stages, the positive impact of being entrepreneurs has been evident. Faten, whose family supported her during the course and the establishment of the apiary, now feels independent and self-confident. Hadeer has new hopes for a promising future, aspiring to be an active member of her family and participant in Egypt's economy.

More than 1,300 women have graduated from 80 hands-on training courses covering 13 professional fields. The Salheya Initiative has also helped the Ministry of Manpower to establish a specialized unit to oversee gender audits of private and public firms, and train more than 400 ministry employees on gender equity in the labour market. Other efforts include a successful private-public partnership model that administers on-the-job trainings and supports women entrepreneurs in establishing their own businesses; 500 women have gained employment through it.



Faten and Hadeer supervising their honey production.

Courtesy of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Egypt

## YOUNG WOMEN FROM RURAL AREAS TAKE TO TECHNOLOGY IN COSTA RICA



Pamela coding in her office.

Courtesy of Sulá Batsú, Costa Rica

When Pamela Araya was a young girl, she enjoyed taking computers apart. As she grew up, she realized she wanted to create computer programmes. Coming from an impoverished rural area, social pressure to pursue a 'more feminine' career was intense but she refused to back down. Today the 22-year-old has an internship in a software engineering company. "I feel powerful, like I am able to do a lot of things," she said proudly.

Pamela's path to empowerment in the male-dominated world of technology was eased by the Technological Café, an activity organized by the Cooperative Sulá Batsú. It drew together a host of dynamic business women and technology leaders to mentor young women like Pamela. "I first wondered: 'what are they going to do with so many women together?' But I decided to go," she recalled. "I met women entrepreneurs who had their own businesses. It was amazing. I thought it would be great if one day I could be the one telling about my experience to other girls."

Inspired to pursue her own dreams, she now participates in the cooperative's activities as a leader

and mentor, teaching computer skills to 11-14 year-old girls. "There is nothing a woman cannot do; those are myths from the past," she emphasized.

Sulá Batsú has engaged with key constituents to challenge stereotypes that prevent girls and women from pursuing technology-related studies or careers, particularly in rural areas. Its sponsorship of Central America's first female Hack-a-thon allowed nine groups of young women to test their skills in a 36-hour programming marathon aimed at devising software and apps to tackle real-life social issues. Several of them now occupy leadership roles in technology networks in Costa Rica.

National advocacy efforts spearheaded by the cooperative led the Ministry of Science and Technology to integrate gender equality-related actions in its 2016 work plan, and persuaded the national Chamber of Information Technologies and Communication to create a women and technology section.

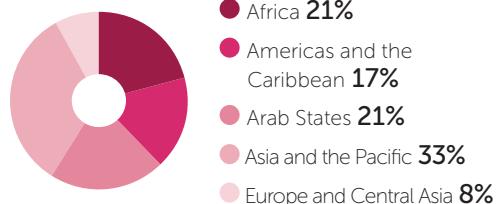
# WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

In 2015, the FGE funded **24 active programmes** with a primary focus on women's political empowerment, with a total value of **US\$ 12 million**. Grantees reached **135,000 direct beneficiaries in 25 countries** through activities to:

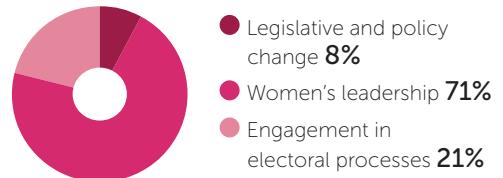
- **Catalyse legislative and policy change**
- **Expand and strengthen women's leadership**
- **Engage women in electoral processes**

Nearly two-thirds of programmes in the Asia and the Pacific region focused on enhancing women's political empowerment, with most prioritizing the development of women and girls' capacities to influence decision-making.

## Programme Geographic Distribution



## Programme Distribution by Sub-theme



The expansion and **strengthening of women's leadership** is a major area of focus in all regions. Influencing the legislative and policy framework is an objective of most grantees, but only two stated it as the main programme goal.

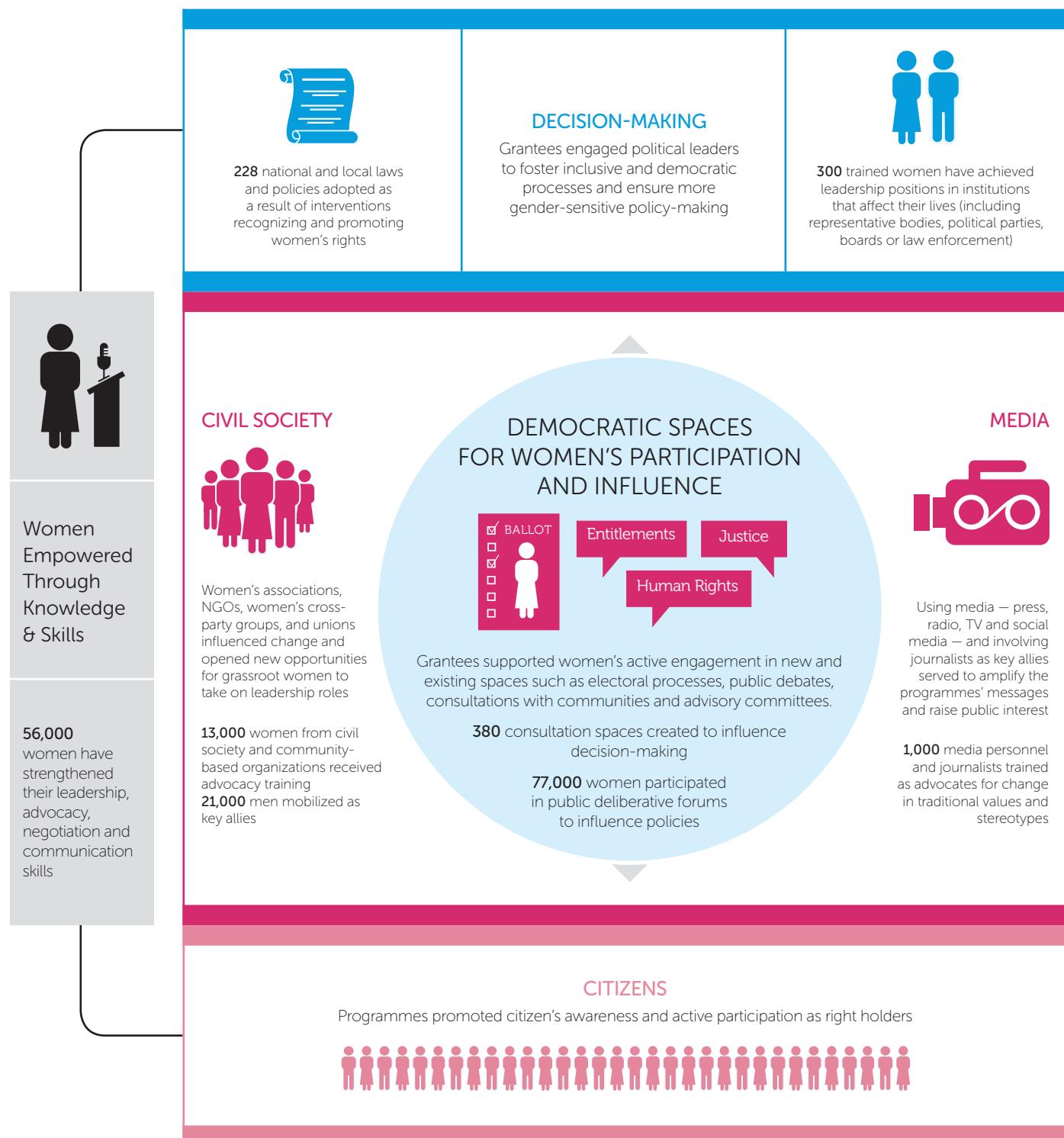
## Learning from evaluations: what works in women's political empowerment?

The analysis of 22 FGE programme evaluations has pinpointed the following successful strategies:

- Building women's self-confidence and awareness of their rights
- Leveraging economic empowerment to promote political participation
- Facilitating the access of marginalized women to electoral processes
- Building the capacity of women candidates and elected female representatives to be effective leaders
- Connecting decision-makers and elected women representatives with their constituencies
- Identifying male champions and using traditional and social media
- Maximizing the potential of coalitions to advocate for constitutional and legal reforms and fostering inclusive legislative and policy-making
- Engendering local government structures
- Timing interventions to capitalize on political opportunities and hold duty-bearers accountable to international commitments.

# Framework for successful political empowerment interventions

The following analytical framework to understand what makes a women's political empowerment intervention successful is based on the experiences of FGE grantees. The framework revolves around the creation and use of dialogue and participation spaces to connect women advocates with decision-makers; the engagement and capacity-building of civil society, women's networks and the media as key actors to influence change; and the development of women's skills for communication, negotiation and leadership.





77,000

women participated in public  
fora to influence policies

18

programmes

#### EFFECTIVE STRATEGY: INFO-CENTRES FOR WOMEN

*In India, after IT for Change and Kutch Mahila Vikas Sanghatan established a network of 13 ICT-enabled info-centres run by women, local governments stepped forward to create another nine. The centres constitute a major innovation in public information outreach and entitlement-tracking, allowing women to more readily understand their rights and secure services. The centres have empowered women 'infomediaries', volunteers who mediate the flow of information between the community and various tiers of government. Some infomediaries have developed political aspirations and decided to run for local elections.*

# EXPANDING AND STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

One in three active FGE programmes in 2015 sought primarily to strengthen women's leadership to influence political structures. Grantees worked to build a critical mass of women in local decision-making, and supported disadvantaged women to claim their rights.

Most programmes adopted a bottom-up approach, where beneficiaries learned about their rights, improved self-esteem, and acquired leadership, communication and advocacy skills. Successful community-based initiatives fostered consciousness on major issues such as access to water or health care, as areas for immediate application of new skills.

Beneficiaries in minority or marginalized groups, such as indigenous women, women with disabilities, rural women, poor women or youth, increased their political awareness and became active voters, activists and/or politicians. **88,000 women took steps to claim their legal entitlements.**

Grantees helped open spaces—from self-help groups to local councils' advisory bodies to national conferences—where women could progressively develop and exercise leadership, including by interacting with decision-makers. The construction of networks and alliances—among women, and with governmental bodies and the media—galvanizes change, while the inclusion of men as allies results in critical attitudinal and behavioural shifts that sustain it. Programmes have repeatedly demonstrated the importance of identifying and responding to formal and informal centres of power.



#### EGYPT, JORDAN AND THE STATE OF PALESTINE

A programme by the **Stars of Hope Society** in Egypt, Jordan and the State of Palestine advocated for key political actors to support the political participation of women with disabilities. Relevant measures are being integrated into local development policies, and women with disabilities included in party membership lists. The Palestinian Central Election Commission will now ensure that persons with disabilities have access to electoral information, and is building a training curriculum to teach employees about disability rights, gender and leadership.



#### NEPAL AND THE PHILIPPINES

In Nepal and the Philippines, over 800 indigenous rights advocates are better equipped with knowledge to consistently advocate for women's rights. With the support of **Tebtebba**, they have documented more than 270 cases of rights violations to support advocacy and provide evidence in legal processes. In the Philippines, this has led to the allocation of 5 per cent of local government budgets to Gender and Development Funds, and the inclusion of a shadow report on indigenous women's rights in the 2016 session on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

## CIVIC EDUCATION ENGAGES CITIZENS IN GENDER-SENSITIVE POLICY AND BUDGET PLANNING IN ZIMBABWE



"I am now able to budget and stretch the US\$ 300 that I take home at the end of every month," said Melody Gambiza, a business woman who owns a small fruit and vegetable shop in a crowded bus terminal in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe. She attributed the change to trainings conducted by the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN). "The facilitators taught us to budget for the different priorities of the different members of the household," she added. "As a result, I have a much happier household."

ZWRCN has pioneered civic education workshops with a strong emphasis on basic budgetary practices in households and communities. The workshops, operating in six districts, explore how budgets can be analysed to support gender equality, and the importance of participatory decision-making.

Participants are encouraged to see the links between what they do at home and what is possible in their

community—and, as a result, are more likely to participate in activities such as local government meetings. Melody is an example. "As a woman, I had been taught that at public gatherings it is not my place to speak. Now, I speak up at every opportunity I get," she explained.

The workshops have built a critical consciousness among community members, particularly those from groups experiencing marginalization, such as women, youth, people with disabilities and the elderly.

Rising confidence and determination drove Melody to become the Organizing Secretary of a Gender Budget Action Committee, one of six platforms with 30 members each. They meet local councils on service and budget issues, and women members regularly make significant contributions. "These meetings have uplifted my life and that of my community," Melody said with pride.



Melody selling goods at her stall in Kwekwe.

Courtesy of ZWRCN, Zimbabwe



Provision of literacy skills is critical for women to be more demanding of their rights. Above, newly literate women reading newspapers at a literacy centre in West Bengal.

Courtesy of PRADAN / Sourangshu Banerjee, India



## INDIA

**Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN)** and **Jagori** collaborated on an initiative to empower women in four regions of India with high poverty rates—Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha. Through structures for women's mutual support, such as self-help groups, federations and economic collectives, selected members became community service providers, resource persons, trainers and leaders. In Madhya Pradesh, over 600 women from three project districts stood for local elections in 2015 and 69 per cent won seats—both reserved and open seats. The proportion of women attending village assembly meetings in all four states increased almost threefold to 63 per cent in 2015. Almost 32,000 marginalized rural women called on local decision-makers in local assemblies to secure basic services and entitlements, and recommendations made by women were included in five livelihood and social protection schemes.



## STATE OF PALESTINE

In the State of Palestine, the community-based committee model established in 10 West Bank villages by the **Association of Women Committees for Social Work** has catalysed women's meaningful participation in local councils. Lobbying committees bringing together over 330 advocates have put women's and girls' priorities at the forefront of local programmes and budgets, including through seven action plans implemented through micro-grants and benefitting 17,000 community members with new services such as clinics, educational classrooms, or disability centers. The committees have requested formal government recognition so they can serve as a platform for continuous engagement in representing community needs, including women's, and having a voice in the decision-making processes of the local council.

## YOUNG ACTIVISTS CHALLENGE INTERGENERATIONAL RESISTANCE AND TAKE A STAND IN SOUTH-EAST ASIAN POLICY-MAKING



"I had never understood what the intergenerational problem in activism was prior to seeing it happen before my eyes," commented Jasmin Lim, a 26-year-old women's rights advocate from Malaysia. She was reflecting on her participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Civil Society Forum/ASEAN People's Forum 2015 as one of seven young women involved in a regional initiative by the International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAW).

The programme engaged 90 young women from Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam to become effective proponents of CEDAW, and in general assume their role as the next generation of equality and social justice advocates.

The ASEAN meeting was a chance for the young women to practice what they had learned in the trainings and interact with other activists. The young women ran their own workshop, which helped create awareness about young women's concerns among other civil society actors.

The experience was not seamless, however. The young women had to face the resistance of some more veteran activists to new voices and what they sometimes perceived as an unsafe environment. "Nerves were definitely struck when an older activist openly downgraded my role as moderator during the Q&A session of our workshop," said 25-year old Dhiyanah Hassan from Malaysia. Despite challenges, the young participants managed to find inspiration and achieve some of their goals. "The Forum was educational, tiring, frustrating. But getting the chance to work with intelligent, strong, and unapologetically enthusiastic women [...] is something I am truly grateful for," concluded Dhiyanah.

The young activists can also claim success at the national level, where they have also been actively involved in the 2015 CEDAW review processes. As a result, Viet Nam's CEDAW Committee recognized dating violence as a form of violence against women, while the CEDAW Committee in Timor-Leste recommended that the State address cases of young women dropping out of school due to pregnancy. Both milestones represent issues of special concern for young people.



Dhiyanah and team at the ASEAN People's Forum promoting rights awareness among their peers.  
Courtesy of IWRAW, Asia-Pacific



228

laws and policies adopted

2

programmes

## CATALYSING LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CHANGE

FGE grantees stand behind legislative and policy frameworks that protect, respect and promote gender equality and women's rights, in line with international standards. Towards these ends, they create networks and alliances, conduct analysis and negotiations, and advocate and raise awareness.

Programmes spearhead efforts to integrate gender perspectives across social, political and economic policies as well as to address women's specific needs, backed by necessary budget allocations. Some of the most frequent policy changes sought by FGE grantees include establishing temporary special measures for women in political processes, and taking steps to ensure women realize their full range of rights, such as to property, decent work, social protection and access to justice.

While only two programmes explicitly focused on this area of work in 2015, many grantees have been working to influence laws and policies at local, national and international levels, including **18 programmes where legislative and policy recommendations were proposed, and 22 that managed to influence policy changes**.



CHINA

Since 2010, the **All China Women's Federation** has worked to extend women's participation in politics in China, reaching out to 1,700 policy-makers, 900 administrative and party school students, and over 8,000 men and women. Government officials, women's groups and civil society organizations have gained capacities to monitor women's political participation. In three provinces, the adoption of temporary special measures combined with new election guidelines resulted in a higher share of women in elected offices, up to 32 per cent of the members of Villagers Autonomy Committees in Hunan Province, for example. In 2015, the Chinese Human Resources Authority issued a regulation stipulating the same retirement age for female and male staff, improving women's chances to rise to higher level management positions.

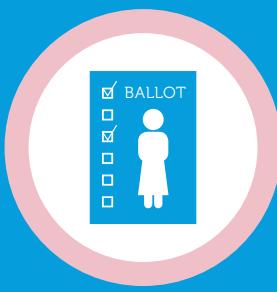


GEORGIA

**Fund Sukhumi** in Georgia encouraged approval of gender action plans in three municipalities, Kutaisi, Ozurgeti and Senaki, allowing for the allocation of over US\$440,000 to gender issues in 2016 municipal budgets—twice the amount spent in 2015. Through gender advisory councils comprising elected representatives, civil society advocates and journalists, the programme trained members on gender budgeting and policy, and promoted the use of sex-disaggregated data to define the needs and priorities of women. The councils have built broad consensus on the importance of systematic gender analysis and the integration of gender issues in policy-making and budget decisions. The Governor of the Guria region in Ozurgeti recently called for establishing the councils in another two municipalities.



Women's rights activists march in Tbilisi and other cities of Georgia to demand political quotas for women.  
UN Women / Maka Gogaladze



44

trained women elected  
to national or local  
representative bodies

5

programmes

.....

#### EFFECTIVE STRATEGY: CHAMPIONS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

In Kenya, GROOTS worked with 3,000 grass-roots women with proven leadership potential and other selected community members, including men and youth, to mentor, map issues and prioritize needs in their communities. Organized in groups, these champions played a role in the 2013 elections, for instance, in preventing gender-based violence against women candidates through men-led community awareness dialogues. The programme encouraged non-elected women champions to position themselves for placement in the new government structures; at least 230 gained roles in different social and political institutions where they are pushing forward the gender equality agenda.

## ENGAGING WOMEN IN ELECTORAL POLITICS

FGE grantees have contributed to an increase in the number of women in elected and appointed positions. Some tackled this issue by advocating for temporary special measures or quotas, or, where these exist, by calling for their effective implementation.

Strategies usually revolved around engaging political party leaders, identifying and mobilizing women aspirants for office, training women candidates, and conducting campaigns to galvanize public support. Grantees prioritized actions at the community level, where women are more likely to start gaining elected positions, especially when there is no legislated quota system.

Work with grass-roots women leaders and activists boosted their leadership and campaigning capacities, while engagement with decision-makers and communities as a whole broke stereotypes and fostered an enabling environment for more women to win elections. Most programmes encouraged young women to become active in their communities.

FGE-sponsored initiatives have strengthened the leadership and communication capacities of at least 56,000 women in diverse political contexts.



### URUGUAY

*Cotidiano Mujer* and its partner *Ciudadanías en Red* in Uruguay advocated for the implementation of the one-time Quota Law in the 2014 elections. While the overall gender gap in legislative bodies fell by six percentage points, the goal of 30 per cent female representation was not achieved due to the electoral system and political party practices. Analysing these factors, in 2015, the grantee launched a campaign and petition for a draft permanent Parity Law drawing over 5,500 signatures and endorsed by a cross-party group of women legislators. The latter will submit the draft for parliamentary adoption in 2016.



### MONGOLIA

In Mongolia, a new law passed in December 2015 specified that women must comprise at least 30 per cent of political party candidates, improving opportunities for women in the 2016 parliamentary elections. Collaboration among civil society organizations, including grantee *Liberal Emegteichuudiin Oyunii San*, helped propel consultations to draft the law and prevent regression—the previous 20 per cent quota resulted in 14.5 per cent women's representation in Parliament. Fifteen women candidates trained by the grantee have been selected as the Best Political Activists of the Year, based on a public poll conducted by 50 national websites.

## WOMEN LEADERS DETERMINED TO OCCUPY THEIR SPACE IN NIGERIAN LOCAL POLITICS



Political parties in Ekiti State, Nigeria, had never had a woman in the positions of state party chairperson or deputy chairperson. But after taking part in trainings by the Community Life Project (CLP), a group of five women politicians—Helen Idiowo, Bola Akinnadeju, Kemi Olaleye, Adesola Ojo and Mary Faje—decided the situation had to change.

They kicked off a campaign to lobby for a woman in a leadership position in the All Progressive Congress Party. "We decided that the time had truly come for us to take a stand and reposition women, politically," says Mary Faje.

Following what they learned in the trainings, they prepared a strategy and identified a key male party leader with influence and sympathy to women's rights. They formulated a clear demand: the party should have a women deputy chairperson. "(The leader) immediately told us that it was impossible," Faje recalls. "But we persisted."

The five women drew intensively on new lobbying and negotiation skills. "We cajoled and pleaded with [political leaders] and even threatened to mobilize our constituency to withdraw our support for party activities. Eventually, we won them over," Faje says.

Chief Kemi Olaleye became the first female State Deputy Chairperson. Among her first acts was to back an affirmative action petition.

CLP's combined strategy of capacity-building, advocacy and engagement of media partners has substantially increased the number of women in political parties in Nigeria. Their share has now risen from 4.5 per cent to 11 per cent in Ekiti State, and from 2 per cent to 8.5 per cent in Osun State. The three major political parties have committed to implementing strategic frameworks towards a 30 per cent share. Already, the number of women candidates for parliament from both states has increased 75 per cent.



Chief Olaleye (at the centre with a red scarf) at the presentation of an affirmative action petition.  
Courtesy of CLP Nigeria





## 03. DEEPENING THE KNOWLEDGE

*In 2015, the FGE learned more about its programmes and their impact, and about itself. This section presents key insights from the knowledge generated and dives deeper into some themes and initiatives in a diverse array of activities, including a research study, interviews and publications.*

*In 2015, the FGE conducted a meta-evaluation of grantee programme evaluations from 2011-2015 and a meta-analysis of the ones complying with UN quality standards (22 out of 24).*

## WHY OUR MODEL WORKS

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### Demand-driven

"The demand-driven and grantee-led approach of the FGE is a significant comparative advantage and ensured that projects were relevant, and responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and sustainable." FGE supports civil society's most pressing needs, in line with national strategies and priorities.



### Flexibility

"The flexibility of the FGE enabled grantees to achieve important results and respond to changing needs and realities on the ground." Projects are implemented organically, and grantees can re-direct strategies to respond to the emerging needs of beneficiaries and/or changing dynamics within countries.



### Partnerships

"Establishing the formation of networks and partnerships is a comparative advantage of FGE as an effective means of ensuring sustainability." Grantees work in partnership with other civil society organizations and stakeholders at local and national levels for greater sustainability of results.



### Capacity-building

"Increased FGE investment in building grantees' monitoring, reporting and evaluation capacities resulted in greater visibility of FGE effectiveness and impact." Continuous support and coaching of grantees throughout programme implementation resulted in positive assessments of grantee capacity.



### Strong programme design

"Ensuring a strong project design contributed to better management and evaluation of project results." High-quality programme design in most cases led to delivering intended results. The FGE has technically supported sound programme frameworks and provided guidance on results-based management.

The rich set of findings, conclusions and recommendations that resulted has generated insights about the Fund's approach and about what works best to empower women. The meta-analysis also provided

areas for improvement, including the need to put more efforts into generating larger, more structural change; invest in long-term capacity building; and reinforce the sustainability of interventions. The

Fund has already taken measures to address these with its new grantees. Below is a summary of the high-impact conclusions on FGE's grant-making model and key cross-cutting strategies.

## WHY OUR PROGRAMMES ARE EFFECTIVE

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### Cascading approach to training of CSOs

**"The cascading approach of training and capacitating a large number of CSOs [...] to effectively integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into the work of their organization will serve to further amplify and sustain results of FGE interventions to contribute to the SDG agenda."** An expanded number of actors, including community-based organizations, are now better equipped.



### Use of community empowerment models

**"The use of community empowering models has the potential for transformative impact."** Strategies that focused on empowering women and their communities enabled women to claim their rights and strengthened their agency.



### Understanding different levels of vulnerability

**"Understanding different levels of vulnerability and marginalization of beneficiaries and adapting project strategies to address these specificities has proven essential to advancing women's political and economic empowerment."** Programmes effectively engaged excluded and marginalized communities.



### Comprehensive partnerships and networks

**"Investing the time to develop comprehensive partnerships and networks with a variety of stakeholders increased the impact of FGE projects, more effectively addressed the needs of beneficiaries and fostered sustainability."** Partnerships positioned grantees as bridges between civil society and government.

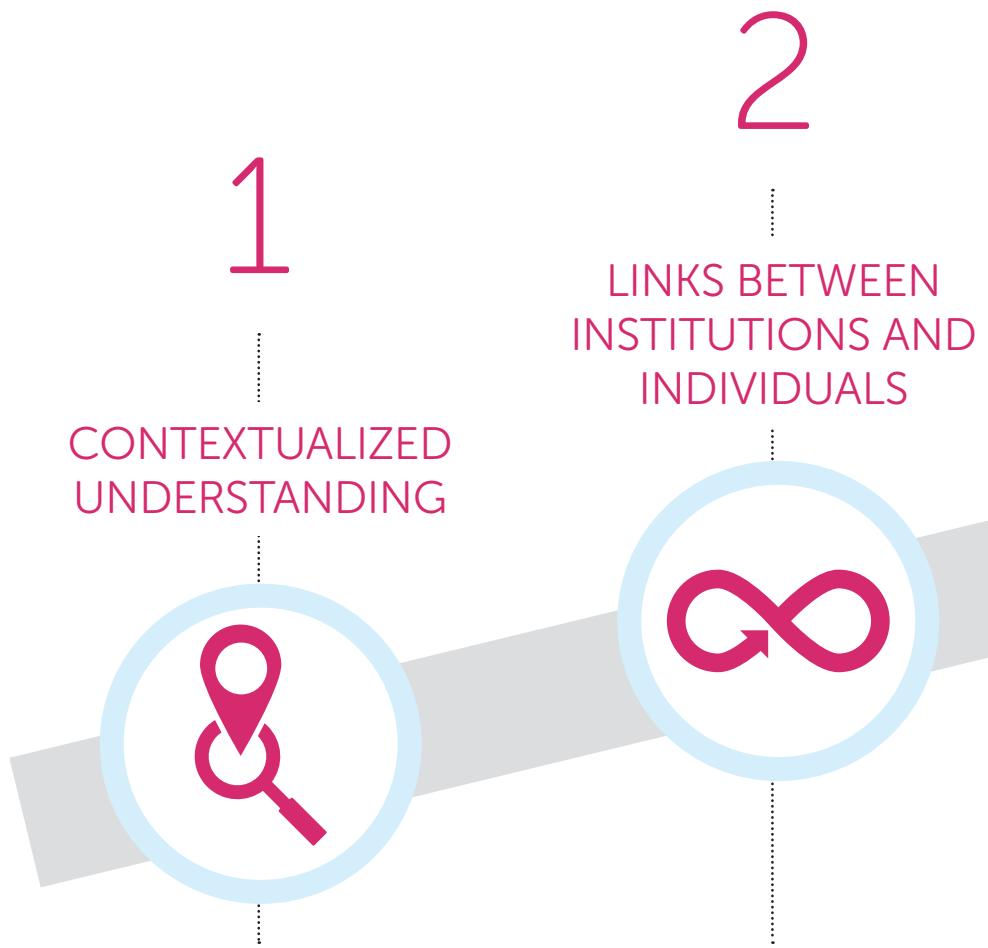


### Utilizing local capacities

**"Utilizing local capacities and building on partners' expertise and ongoing programmes enabled FGE to achieve impressive results in a short timeframe."** Using local capacities and resources has proved cost-effective, and ensured greater national ownership and sustainability of results.

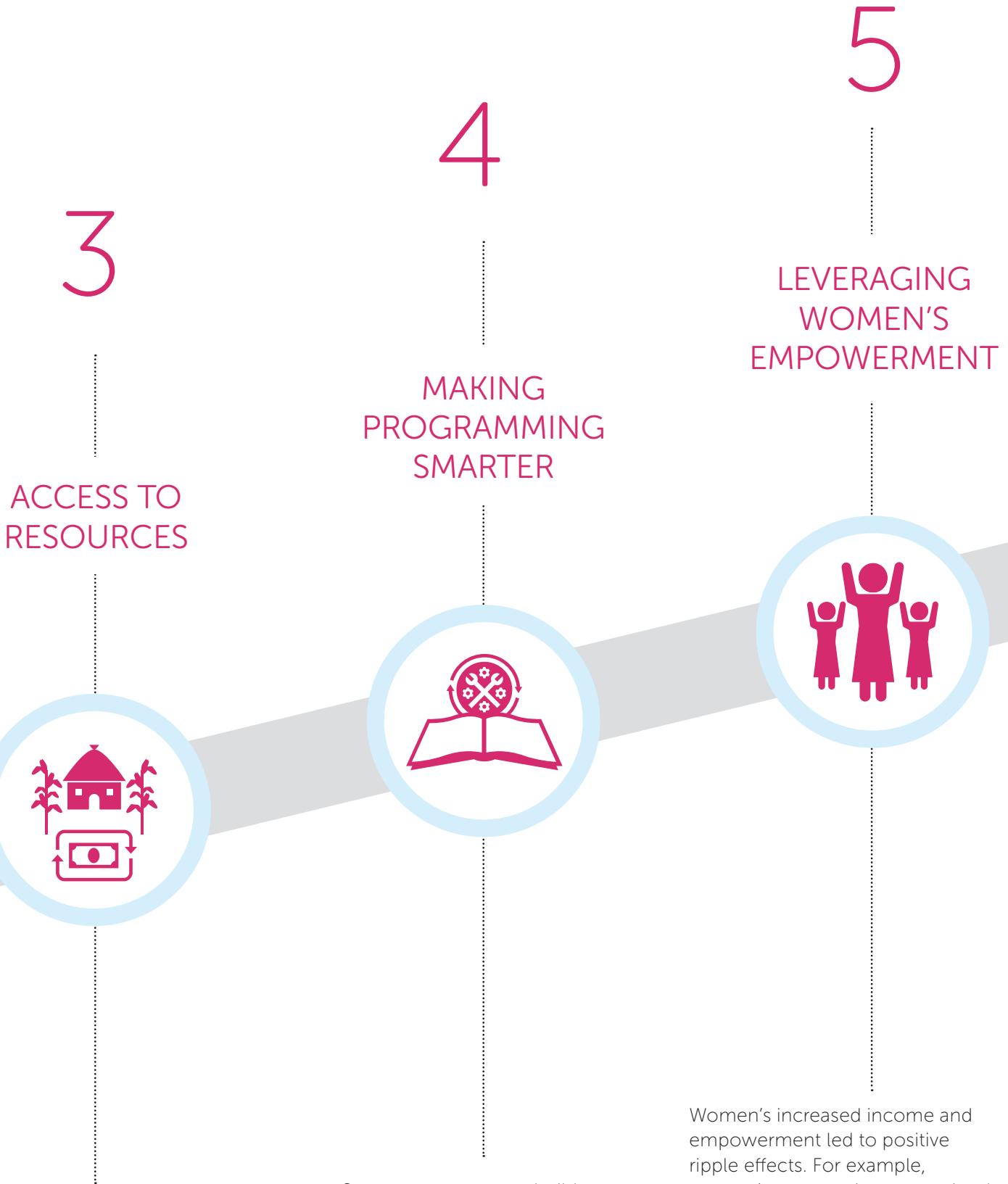
# SPOTLIGHT: BUILDING RESILIENCE IN FRAGILITY

*In partnership with the Government of Japan, the FGE explored women's economic empowerment in fragile settings, based on programmes in Guinea, Lebanon and Sudan, and a survey of over 1,200 rural, displaced and refugee women. Four research briefs captured women's perceptions of local economic barriers and opportunities, shared good practices for strengthening resilience and offered recommendations to improve programming. Key findings are summarized here; see the briefs in full at [unwoman.org/fge](http://unwomen.org/fge).*



Women's unpaid work represents a main obstacle to pursuing paid economic opportunities. Surveyed women spent an average of 60-85 hours a week on unpaid household activities, equivalent to two full-time paid jobs. This hinders long-term economic recovery.

Women felt their economic needs were not understood/met by local authorities. Increased cooperation is needed. Strengthened advocacy by women's groups can help shape local agendas.



Gaining better and more sustained access to quality productive inputs and resources was among the highest priorities for women.

Smarter programmes build on successes and lessons learned to achieve greater impact. Comprehensive training of women beneficiaries is an important feature.

Women's increased income and empowerment led to positive ripple effects. For example, women's cooperatives committed to using their earnings for services lacking in their communities (health, education and energy supply) as duty-bearers failed to provide them.

# INTERVIEWS WITH FORMER GRANTEES

## THE WOMEN AND MEMORY FORUM, EGYPT

Dalia Ebeid,  
Researcher

Dalia at the FGE headquarters in New York in 2016.

UN Women / Ryan Brown



### What were the key results of your programme?

The Women and Memory Forum has been documenting the testimonies of women engaged in the political and public sphere in Egypt for the past 20 years. The FGE-funded "Documentation as Empowerment Project" shed light on experiences in 2011 and beyond.

Over 90 interviews were processed. More than 800 partners from civil society, academia and politics were sensitized about the importance of women's involvement in political life and integrating gender in the interpretation of history and culture. The "Oral History in Times of Change" conference organized in Egypt in 2015 in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture was the first ever on the topic in Egypt. It helped to create networks and raise interest from the media and international actors.

### Why was this programme relevant?

This programme enabled us to cover new ground. A lot of the women we interviewed had never been interviewed before. There hadn't been an interest in their political work or private lives. The programme made sure they are not forgotten. With oral history, you get stories of people who don't make it to the history books, particularly if they are women. What makes history is not only the politicians and the leaders, it's also everyday people. There is no such thing like one truth, it is about experiences, about perspectives. It's amazing how you can get different versions of the same event.

### Why feminist oral history?

Feminist oral history is very different from traditional oral history. Even if you are talking about the public sphere, we want to highlight their personal experiences. We also want to highlight how being a woman affected them. Another thing is that we use semi-structured questions, so if the interviewee takes any direction, we do not guide them in another way, we let them guide us where they want to take the interview. You care about the individual more than the project.

### What happens next?

We are working on a new oral history project. We want to interview female parliamentarians. Not just the women who won, but also those who did not, with a focus on their campaigns. The ultimate dream for us would be to start an Oral History Museum in Egypt. Even the notion of travelling exhibitions would be amazing if we could tour in the Arab States, Europe, the United States and Latin America.

For more information, see [www.wmf.org.eg/en/](http://www.wmf.org.eg/en/).

# CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIÓN PARA LA ACCIÓN FEMENINA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

**Laura Bretón,**  
Project Coordinator

Laura (left) with Magaly Pineda, Founder and Director of the centre, after receiving the Gender Equality Mainstreaming Technology Award in 2014.

Courtesy of CIPAF



## **What were the key results of your programme?**

"Gender Equality and Equity in the e-Dominicana" sought to bring a gender perspective to the 2010-2014 Digital Agenda of the Dominican Republic, in collaboration with the Institute of Technology. It generated awareness, commitment and a baseline to close the gender gap in technology.

We started by conducting a study, because we needed to convince people that there is a gender gap in the information society. Then we did a number of pilot projects to test how to bridge the gap. We worked with computer centres whose users were predominantly men and young boys, for example, and asked them to encourage the participation of women and girls through specific spaces where they could feel safe.

The most successful pilot involved math, science and technology clubs for girls in seven public schools in the poorest area of the country. Girls learn math, science and technology far better if boys are not around, because of prevalent stereotypes around women and technology.

## **What happened after the programme ended?**

We secured new funding from the Embassy of the United Kingdom and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to continue the clubs. Now the Ministry of Education has taken on the initiative. We started with 300 girls in 7 schools. Today, there are 2,000 in 28 schools throughout the country. The Digital Agenda was not approved during the project due to the political situation in the country, so we could not engender it. However, the new Digital agenda 2016-2020 is now being discussed and it includes the Plan for Equality in the Information Society that was prepared with the support of the FGE in 2012.

## **What was the added value in working with the Fund?**

Not a lot of donors support work on technology. The FGE created the basis for us to get other funds later on. Its large grant allowed us to act on different sectors with a more integrated approach.

## **What would you say is a key innovation?**

The clubs. The government had never had something like clubs for girls only. The education system's decision to adopt them was a very big breakthrough. The Plan for Equality in the Information Society we developed based on engaging with over 1,000 women was the first of its kind in Latin America. Only three countries in the world have this kind of policy, all in Europe. But this is the first one done by consulting with women instead of just technical experts.

For more information, see [www.cipaf.org.do/](http://www.cipaf.org.do/)

# AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

FGE grantees regularly receive international recognition for their innovative work, illustrating their catalytic value. Below are some examples.

- AMEL Association from Lebanon was [nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2016](#) for its commitment to social justice and work with the most vulnerable populations, including marginalized Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian refugees and other migrants.
- CHIRAPAQ President Tarcila Rivera Zea was [elected to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) for 2017-2019.
- Partenariat Recherche Environnement Média from Guinea won the prestigious United Nations' [Momentum for Change Climate Change Award](#) for using solar energy and reforestation to protect the environment and create a sustainable source of income.
- The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon received the [Equator Finalist Certificate](#) in recognition of their work in promoting the ancient *Hima* approach to managing natural resources, where women enjoy prominent roles.
- Sulá Batsú from Costa Rica won a [national award for digital inclusion from the Chamber of Information Technology and Communications](#) for promoting rural women's and girls' access to technology.
- THEMIS Assessoria Jurídica e Estudos de Gênero was one of 10 finalists of the [Google Challenge for Social Impact Brazil](#) for an app providing at least 3 million domestic workers access to information about their rights.
- PRADAN and Jagori leveraged results in India to secure additional funding from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), with plans to scale up activities to an additional 3 states and 25 districts, reaching 250,000 women.
- The Badya Centre for Integrated Development Services received a [US\\$500,000 grant from the US Department of State](#) to ramp up its programme in Sudan.

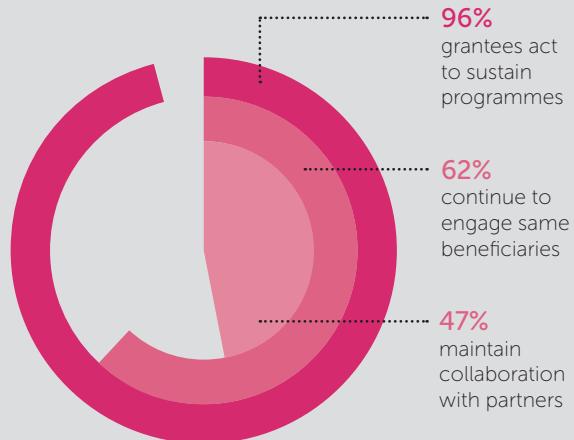
## FGE Grantees Share Technology Successes

UN Women facilitated the participation of two FGE grantees in the 2015 **Mobile Learning Week** co-organized by UNESCO and UN Women. Four programme beneficiaries from Costa Rican women's cooperative Sulá Batsú and the Indian NGO Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan led an interactive workshop showcasing their empowerment initiatives in rural areas, which apply mobile technologies. Participants in the workshop left excited by exposure to new ideas from around the world.

## Keeping the Momentum Going

**Programme sustainability** is a top priority for the FGE, and we support new grantees to integrate it from the beginning of their work. Based on the grantee survey, 96 per cent of respondents put in place tactics to sustain the programme after the end of the grant. Almost two out of three grantees continued to work with beneficiaries through follow-up activities. Half continue to implement one or several programme components, and to collaborate with programme partners.

Three out of four grantees incorporate elements of FGE-sponsored initiatives into core functions of their organizations. Between 20 and 25 per cent replicate their programme in other areas or scale them up at national or regional level. In most cases, grantees use their own resources, but a third secure international grants from government donors, and 25 per cent receive support from UN entities.



# LEARN MORE FROM FGE GRANTEES

Many FGE grantees document their programme models so others can learn from what they achieved and possibly replicate it. Below are examples of successful women's empowerment models from China, India, Lebanon and Mexico.



## Transforming Development Practice:

Taking a gender equality approach to support rural women in advancing their social, economic and political rights



## Iniciativa SUMA:

Democracia es Igualdad. Modelo para la participación política y el empoderamiento económico de las mujeres (Spanish)



## Promoting Women's Political Participation:

A Monitoring Guide



## Hima Women Guideline Manual

1

Implemented by PRADAN in partnership with Jagori, the programme "Facilitating Women in Four Endemic Poverty States of India to Access, Actualize and Sustain Provisions on Women's Empowerment" **organized over 75,000 marginalized rural women into self-help groups.** These helped transform gender relations, encouraging women to raise their voice against discrimination, and access their political and economic rights. Three reports **capture programme processes and insights for development practitioners, donors and wider audiences.** See: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/03/transforming-development-practice>.

2

Two publications jointly produced by UN Women, INMUJERES and the member organizations of the SUMA Initiative, an FGE grantee, depict the programme model developed for "SUMA Initiative: Democracy is Equality." The three-year initiative in 14 federative entities in Mexico facilitated dialogues on women's political and economic rights, and supported the leadership of women politicians and women's networks. The publications provide **theory and evidence-based guidance to civil and public actors interested in strengthening women's political leadership and participation.** See: [www.equidad.org.mx/index.php/es/noticias-equidad-de-genero/440-iniciativa-suma-democracia-es-igualdad](http://www.equidad.org.mx/index.php/es/noticias-equidad-de-genero/440-iniciativa-suma-democracia-es-igualdad).

3

After a short introduction to women's political participation in China, **this guide presents a four-stage model of political recruitment for women in elections** (eligible, aspirant, candidate, elected). It offers guidance on how the All China Women's Federation and other actors can monitor developments in women's political participation, outlining international best practices. See: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/12/promoting-women-s-political-participation>.

4

Since 2004, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon has been leading the revival of the *Hima* approach in close collaboration with municipalities. The *Hima* approach concentrates on empowering local communities, upgrading their livelihoods, and promoting sustainable use of natural resources. The *Hima Women Guideline Manual* describes **how to link diverse aspects of culture, nature, conservation, and social and economic empowerment, with a special focus on women's involvement to ensure sustainable development.** See: [www.spnl.org/hima-women-guideline-manual/](http://www.spnl.org/hima-women-guideline-manual/).





## 04. DONORS AND GRANTEES

*Two sides of the same coin, these are institutions and individuals equally committed to making women's empowerment a reality. Together, we make change happen.*



*“The need for support is pressing and resources are scarce. Now more than ever, we as donors need to make smart investment decisions and sustained commitments. UN Women’s Fund for Gender Equality is certainly an excellent example of addressing the complexity of gender inequalities with smart partnerships.”*

**Government of Switzerland**

Launched through a visionary contribution of US\$ 65 million by the Government of Spain in 2009, the FGE is supported by generous donations from:

**Governments:**

- Spain
- Switzerland
- Germany
- Norway
- The Netherlands
- Japan
- Mexico
- Israel

**Private sector:**

- The Angélica Fuentes Foundation
- Tupperware
- Chanel Foundation
- Fondation L'Occitane
- Esprit
- Net-A-Porter
- JP Morgan Chase
- Goldman Sachs Gives
- Halo Financial LTD

**UN Women National Committees:**

- Iceland
- Australia
- United Kingdom
- Germany
- United States
- France

**Individual donors**

The Fund aims to release a new global call for proposals in 2017 supporting women's organizations to further women's empowerment and gender equality commitments in the 2030 Agenda. Contributions are essential. **Play your part. Donate today!**

For further information and donations, contact:

Elisa Fernández, FGE's Chief, at [elisa.fernandez@unwomen.org](mailto:elisa.fernandez@unwomen.org), or Nancy Khweiss, Programme and Coordination Specialist, at [nancy.khweiss@unwomen.org](mailto:nancy.khweiss@unwomen.org).

# LIST OF 2015 ACTIVE PROGRAMMES

## Africa

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### Burundi

*Unissons-nous pour la Promotion des Batwa (UNIPROBA)*

Promotion of Gender Equality in the Indigenous Batwa Peoples of Burundi for the Participation of Indigenous Women in the Decision-Making Bodies at the Local Level

\$200,000

### Kenya

*GROOTS Kenya Association*

To Strengthen Governance and Accountability of Leadership in Kenya through Quality and Quantity of Women's Political Participation

\$302,000

### Liberia

*Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Market*

*Women's Fund (SMWF/US)*

Women's Economic Empowerment and Development: Market Women Take the Lead

\$3,000,000

### Nigeria

*Community Life Project (CLP)*

Empowering Grassroots Women Leaders for Participation in Local Governance in 2 States in South West, Nigeria

\$400,000

### South Africa

*Gender Links*

At the Coalface: Gender and Local Economic Development in South Africa

\$535,000

### South Africa

*Rural Women's Movement*

Sisonke Rural Women's Empowerment Programme

\$220,000

### Sudan

*Badya Centre for Integrated Development Services*

Women's Empowerment to Support Recovery and Transform Conflict in the Nuba Mountains

\$200,000

### Ethiopia

*Union of Ethiopian Women*

*Charitable Associations (UEWCA)*

Integrated Economic Empowerment of Marginalized Women and Girls in Ethiopia

\$550,000

### Ghana

*Women Peace and Security*

*Network-Africa (WIPSEN-Africa)*

Enhancing the Leadership Skills of Adolescent Girls and Young Women in Nkwanta North and South Districts

\$235,000

### Guinea

*Partenariat Recherches*

*Environnement Médias PREM*

Ecological Economics Training in Rural Areas: Introducing Women to Solar Drying of Agricultural Products in the Protected Marine Area of the Tristao Islands in Guinea

\$200,000

**Uganda**  
**Shelter and Settlements**  
**Alternatives: Uganda Human Settlements Network**  
Women Economic Empowerment  
**\$200,000**

**United Republic of Tanzania**  
**Kilimanjaro Women Information Exchange and Consultancy Organization (KWIECO)**  
Women Economic Empowerment for Justice in Tanzania  
**\$450,000**

**Zambia**  
**Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Educational Trust, Zambia Office**  
Bridging the Gap in Political Participation between Men and Women: A Sure Way to Improve Women's Development Sustainability  
**\$460,000**

**Zimbabwe**  
**Basilwizi Trust**  
Binga Women Economic Empowerment Project (BWEEP)  
**\$200,000**

**Zimbabwe**  
**Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN)**  
Gender Budgeting and Women's Empowerment Programme  
**\$1,680,939**

**Zimbabwe**  
**Ntengwe for Community Development**  
Promoting a Critical Mass and Light Houses for Women's Economic Empowerment in Binga District, Matabeleland North Province in Zimbabwe  
**\$410,000**

## ARAB STATES

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**Algeria**  
**Associacion of Solidarity and Fight Against Poverty and Exclusion, El Ghaith**  
Promotion of Equality between Men and Women in the Rural Area of Bordj Bou Arreridj for Human, Social and Economic Development  
**\$200,000**

**Egypt**  
**Ministry of Manpower and Emigration and Social Research Council, American University of Cairo**  
Salheya Initiative for Women's Economic Empowerment  
**\$2,400,000**

**Egypt**  
**Egyptian Center for Women's Rights**  
A Wave of Women's Voices – 1,000 and Counting...  
**\$545,000**

**Egypt**  
**Women and Memory Forum**  
Documentation and Empowerment: The Creation of an Archive of Women's Voices in Egypt  
**\$200,000**

**Lebanon**  
**Amel Association**  
Promoting Access of Rural and Refugee Women to the Labor Market and Livelihood Opportunities  
**\$325,000**

**Lebanon**  
**Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL)**  
Promoting Hima Women Empowerment for Conservation and Livelihood  
**\$280,000**

**Morocco**  
**Akhiam Association**  
Capacity Building of Women in the Eastern High Atlas, for Its Economic and Social Empowerment  
**\$260,000**

**Morocco**  
**National Institution for Solidarity with Women (INSAF)**  
Training, Personal Development and Socio-Professional Integration of Single Mothers  
**\$545,000**

**State of Palestine**  
**Association of Women Committees for Social Work (AWCSW)**  
Enhancing Palestinian Women's Participation in Public and Political Life  
**\$450,000**

**State of Palestine**  
**Dalia Association**  
Women Supporting Women  
\$200,000

**State of Palestine, Jordan, Egypt**  
**Stars of Hope Society**  
Our Voice Counts  
\$265,000

## ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

### Bangladesh

**Bolipara Nari Kalyan Somity (BNKS)**  
Promote an Enabling Environment  
for Ethnic Hilly Women of  
Bangladesh to Access and Control  
Over Economic Resources  
\$200,000

### Cambodia

**SILAKA Organization**  
Empowerment of Cambodian  
Women Leaders at Sub-National  
Level  
\$345,000

### China

**All-China Women's Federation  
(ACWF)**  
Enhancing Chinese Women's  
Political Participation  
\$2,456,934

### India

**IT for Change and Kutch Mahila  
Vikas Sangathan (KMVS)**  
Making Women's Voices and Votes  
Count - An ICT-based Strategy  
\$280,000

### India

**Jan Sahas Social Development  
Society**  
Dignity Campaign – Action for  
Liberation of Dalit Manual Scavenger  
Women in India  
\$220,000

### India

**Professional Assistance for  
Development Action (PRADAN)**  
Facilitating Women in Four Endemic  
Poverty States of India to Access,  
Actualize and Sustain Provisions on  
Women Empowerment  
\$2,549,974

**Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic, Viet Nam**  
**International Women's Rights  
Action Watch - Asia Pacific (IWRAW  
Asia Pacific)**

Strengthening the Voices of  
Young Women as Gender Equality  
Advocates in Southeast Asia  
\$545,000

### Mongolia

**Liberal Emegteichuudiin Oyunii San**  
Women's Political Leadership in  
National Development of Mongolia  
\$200,000

### Pakistan

**Thardeep Rural Development  
Programme**  
Economic Empowerment of Home  
Based Women Artisans in Tharparkar  
District in Pakistan  
\$405,000

### Philippines, Nepal

**Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples'  
International Centre for Policy  
Research and Education)**  
Indigenous Women's Global  
Leadership School: Capacity  
Building and Political  
Empowerment in Asia  
\$250,000

**Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia**  
**Association of Women for Action  
and Research (AWARE) and  
Solidaritas Perempuan (SP)**

Enabling CEDAW through  
Gender Equitable Interpretations  
and Expressions of Culture in  
Singapore, Indonesia and Beyond  
(ECGIEC)  
\$550,000

### Sri Lanka

**Centre for Women's Research  
(CENWOR)**  
Economic Empowerment of  
Women in Low Income Groups and  
the Realization of their Economic  
Rights and Gender Equality  
\$200,000

### Viet Nam

**Institute for Development and  
Community Health (LIGHT)**  
WE ARE WOMEN: A Rights-based  
Approach to Empowering Migrant  
Women  
\$200,000

## AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

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### Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay

#### *Fundación Fondo de Mujeres del Sur and Fondo Alquimia*

Constructing a Labour Rights Agenda for Women Working in Homes and Sewing Workshops in the Southern Cone

\$415,000

### Brazil

#### *Angela Borba Fundo de Recursos para Mulheres / Elas - Fundo de Investimento Social and THEMIS*

#### *Assessoria Jurídica e Estudos de Gênero*

Domestic Workers: Building Equality In Brazil

\$600,000

### Brazil

#### *Instituto Promundo*

Engaging Women and Men with Gender Transformative Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Programming: An Integrated Intervention and Impact Evaluation that Promotes Equitable, Non-Violent Attitudes and Behaviors in Support of Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality

\$445,000

### Costa Rica

#### *Cooperativa Autogestionaria de Servicios Profesionales*

#### *Multidisciplinarios de Responsabilidad Limitada Sulá Batsú R.L.*

ICTs- Creating Employment and Work Opportunities for Women in the Productive Sector of Information Technologies and Communication in Costa Rica

\$355,000

### Guatemala

#### *Asociación de Mujeres JUNAJIL and ASOPROGAL*

Political Empowerment of Women in Izabal

\$375,000

### Jamaica

#### *Women's Media Watch, Jamaica*

PowHERhouse!: Harnessing the Power of Media for Women's Political Empowerment

\$200,000

### Peru

#### *Movimiento Manuela Ramos*

Women's Unpaid Work in Peru: Making Gaps Visible, Offsetting Historical Disequalities

\$410,000

### Peru, Guatemala, Brazil, Argentina

#### *CHIRAPAQ, Centro de Culturas Indígenas del Perú*

Indigenous Women Defending Mother Earth: Economic Rights and Empowerment in Latin America

\$535,000

### Trinidad and Tobago

#### *Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women*

Women's Transformational Political Leadership at Local and National Levels in Trinidad and Tobago

\$330,000

### Uruguay

#### *Centro de Comunicación Virginia Woolf- Cotidiano Mujer*

More Women, Better Politics

\$355,000

## EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

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### Kyrgyzstan

#### *Public Association "Central Asian Alliance for Water"*

Empower Women's and Girls' Political and Economic Access to and Control of Drinking Water Management

\$225,000

### Georgia

#### *Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi"*

Gender Advisory Councils – Increasing Women's Role in Social Changes of Regions

\$305,000

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Coordination and text: Sara de la Peña Espín

Editing: Gretchen Luchsinger

Design: **it's B.** blossoming.it



220 East 42nd Street, 21st Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
T: +1 646 781 4809 / 4811  
[www.unwomen.org/fge](http://www.unwomen.org/fge)  
[fund.genderequality@unwomen.org](mailto:fund.genderequality@unwomen.org)