

# Building Financial Sustainability for Women's Rights

## The Role of Women's Funds

A presentation to the Fifth Meeting  
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# Key Facts & Characteristics of Women's Funds

- > New development over the last 25 years
- > Numbers are growing
- > Ability to mobilise and multiply resources to sustain women's movements growing too
- > Overall grantmaking is small, yet most commonly mentioned source of income for women's groups globally



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## What are they?

- > Autonomous and independent public foundations run by women
- > Exclusively support women's organisations or women's rights initiatives
- > Grantmaking addresses root causes of social and economic inequalities
- > Proponents of social change grantmaking
- > Aspire to build local philanthropy and mobilise resources at the local level for women's rights

## Their scope (1)

- > **Mama Cash** (the Netherlands) and the **Global Fund for Women** (USA) are the two largest funds working globally
- > In 2006, combined direct grantmaking was over 13 million USD
- > Exist now some 20 funds around the world
  - > continent-wide
  - > regional
  - > country

## Their scope (2)

In 2005, women's funds:

- > held approx. 27 million USD in net assets
- > earned 28 million USD in revenue
- > gave away 15 million USD in grants

For women's organisations with annual budgets under 50,000 USD (over 60%), women's funds can often be a main source of income

## Their grantmaking (1)

- > Focus on broad base of women's rights issues
- > Supports both grassroots and policy organisations
- > Especially target marginalized and disenfranchised sectors that have particular difficulty accessing resources
- > Core institutional support as well as travel grants to attend strategic conferences
- > Multi-year support

## Their grantmaking (2)

Annual grant size:

- > Average of 15,000 USD for larger funds
- > Average of 1,000 and 8,000 USD for smaller funds
- > Some funds making larger awards of up to 50,000 USD
- > Increasingly building capacity building into grantmaking especially to enhance fundraising and evaluation

## Their approach

- > Rely on advisors who are part of the women's movements to:
  - assess groups' eligibility for funding
  - assist with strategy development
  - provide feedback on context and priorities
- > Seek to be less bureaucratic and more accessible to groups
- > Run by innovative, professional women's rights leaders
- > More than just regrantors: giving grants and raising money

## Funding Landscape for Women's Movements (1)

Women's organisations are:

- > in a state of survival
  - 31% report having less funding in 2005 than in 2000
- > have very small budgets
  - 31% have annual budgets of <10,000 USD
  - 32% have annual budgets of 10,000 to 50,000 USD
- > having to invest far more time into fundraising



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## Funding Landscape for Women's Movements (2)

The largest funding sources for women's groups (1995 to 2005) were:

1. Bilateral and multilateral agencies
  2. Large private foundations
  3. International NGOs
- > Most commonly mentioned source of funding was women's funds



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# Aid effectiveness (1)

## Risks:

- > In past ten years, gender mainstreaming has had limited results and the focus on women's empowerment has become deprioritised
- > The aid effectiveness agenda and process make it difficult for women's organisations to participate

# Aid effectiveness (2)

## Needs:

- > Strong and independent civil society is a condition for good governance -- new aid modalities need to include support to civil society organisations
- > Key element for promotion of gender equality in the new aid environment should be support to independent women's organisations and movements

## Aid effectiveness (3)

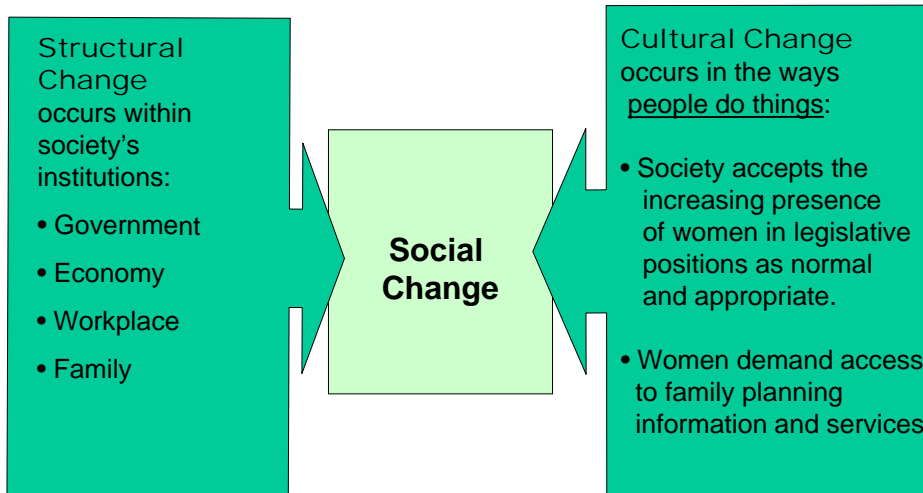
### Opportunities:

- > Women's funds are uniquely positioned to play a key role in reaching women's organisations and initiatives
- > Women's funds can be scaled up

## Making the Case<sup>©</sup> A Learning and Measurement Tool for Social Change

- > Developed by the Women's Funding Network and presently being tested by women's funds all over the world
- > Women's funds taking the lead in testing a tool that can measure social change

## Social Change is Structural & Cultural



## Because social change is...

- The result of many actions...
- Both structural and cultural...
- Rarely an immediate or direct result of an effort to create it...
- Difficult to link a set of actions...
- Difficult to define...

Women's funds are taking the lead in looking for a way to understand what **indicates** social change has happened...

So we can measure what has changed as a result of our work

## Goal of Making the Case<sup>©</sup>

- > To measure the social change outcomes of grantmaking investments.

Making the Case<sup>©</sup> asks:

**What has changed  
as a result of your work?**



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## Components of Making the Case<sup>©</sup>

- > **Looks at five (5) possible indicators for social change**
- > **Provide evidence** for the results of the work
- > **Identify what accelerated** the efforts
- > **Identify what inhibited** the efforts
- > **Makes the Case** for the social change impact by including concrete results



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## 5 possible indicators for social change

- > shifts in **definition/ reframing**
- > shifts in **individual/ community behaviour**
- > shifts in **critical mass/ engagement**
- > shifts in **institutions/ policy**
- > **maintaining current position/ holding the line**



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