TRAJECTORIES OF HOPE

Resourcing for Gender Based Violence Prevention

A Changing Funding Landscape

Through research, advocacy, and global coalition building, Equality Institute (EQI) and The Accelerator for GBV Prevention (the Accelerator) are creating the momentum and shared strategy needed to secure long-term, large-scale investment in GBV prevention and to put evidence-based, feminist-informed solutions at the centre of global action.

In 2023, EQI and the Accelerator published *What Counts? The state of funding for the prevention of gender-based violence against women and girls*, establishing a baseline for investment in evidence-based GBV prevention in low and lower-middle-income countries (LMICs). Since then, the funding landscape has changed dramatically.

A series of profound funding shocks have threatened efforts to prevent violence against women and girls, with significant consequences for the women's rights organisations (WROs) and feminist movements at the forefront of this work. In 2025, global Official Development Assistance (ODA) fell by 23.1%, or USD 174.3 billion, alongside significant cuts from major philanthropic foundations.

Against this backdrop of funding cuts, there is an urgent need to understand not only what is being lost, but where resources, influence and opportunities may be emerging - and how WROs and their allies can shape what comes next.

Trajectories of Hope

A trajectory describes movement over time, but its course can shift, accelerate, stall or change direction. In this sense, 'Trajectories of Hope', invites us to understand the forces shaping the current funding landscape for GBV prevention, particularly for WROs and feminist movements in LMICs, and to recognise the agency we have to influence its direction - and to identify the opportunities, choices and collective action that can move us towards more hopeful futures.

The title *'Trajectories of Hope'* reflects the spirit in which the research approaches the current moment. It is shaped by political choices, economic systems, relationships, movements and decisions about where resources and power sit.

The trajectories ahead are not predetermined. Our research offers evidence, perspectives and possibilities to help WROs and their allies navigate - and shape - where they lead. This summary document presents the key findings and insights from qualitative interviews with 21 key informants, written contributions from global leaders in GBV prevention and feminist funding, and feedback throughout the project from our four peer-reviewers:

- Natsnet Ghebrebrhan (Raising Voices)
- Kate Bishop (Social Development Direct)
- Yeliz Osman (UN Women)
- Marisa Viana Da Silva (Ford Foundation)

Key Insights

There is no single pathway to sustainable financing

Resourcing GBV prevention will require a mix of public, development, philanthropic, private and alternative resources. Rather than seeking a single replacement for declining funding, different pathways can complement and reinforce one another.

Public financing remains fundamental

Diversification should not diminish governments' central responsibility to resource GBV prevention. Domestic financing, supported by catalytic ODA and multilateral finance, remains fundamental, while private and philanthropic resources should complement -not replace - public investment.

The wider financial system matters for GBV prevention

Debt, taxation, corporate social responsibility, banking and investment practices shape how resources are generated, distributed and reach WROs and feminist movements. Connecting GBV prevention with wider economic and financing debates can help mobilise resources and influence the systems that shape them.

Funding systems need to change – not only WROs

A changing financing landscape requires funders and financial institutions to adapt too. Funding systems need to become more accessible, transparent and responsive, with fewer barriers, flexible financing and meaningful WRO participation in funding decisions.

Financing innovation must remain grounded in feminist principles

New financing approaches bring opportunities, tensions and trade-offs. WROs and feminist movements should shape the principles, mechanisms and accountability frameworks that govern them, ensuring innovation supports feminist priorities, autonomy and collective power.

Alternative and autonomous resourcing is a growing source of resilience

Autonomous resourcing, mutual aid and income-generating models are gaining strategic importance for many movements and can help to cushion against external funding shocks. This is not a substitute for sustained public and philanthropic investment and is often part of a power-building strategy. Over-reliance on alternative resourcing risks shifting responsibility for systemic underfunding onto WROs.

Connection can unlock resources and influence – but access must be equitable

Relationships and networks can connect WROs to new actors, resources and spaces for influence across climate, democracy, technology and finance. Those with influence should actively open doors to less-connected WROs and organisations representing communities facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

WRO leadership and expertise should shape the future of funding

WROs should not simply be supported to navigate a changing funding architecture; their existing leadership, expertise and priorities should help shape it. This requires meaningful roles in funding decisions, alongside greater transparency and accountability over where resources flow.

Our research identified five significant resourcing avenues, explored in terms of their potential, limitations and relevance for WROs in LMICs:

Resourcing Avenues for GBV Prevention

Domestic Resource Mobilisation

The process by which a country generates and uses its own domestic revenue (rather than debt or foreign aid) to fund public services, infrastructure and long-term development, including GBV prevention.

Philanthropy

The act of giving money, information, goods and services, influence and voice to improving the wellbeing of humanity and the community. Funding typically flows through a trust or foundation directly to WROs, via intermediaries such as women's funds, or as in-kind or pro-bono support — a modality increasingly practised by companies.

Alternative Resourcing

Monetary and non-monetary approaches feminist and gender justice organisations use to resource their work beyond external grants, including mutual aid and income-generating models such as social enterprise. Within this, autonomous resourcing is distinct — a political and power-building strategy that increases movements' control over the resources sustaining their work, not simply another income stream.

Official Development Assistance

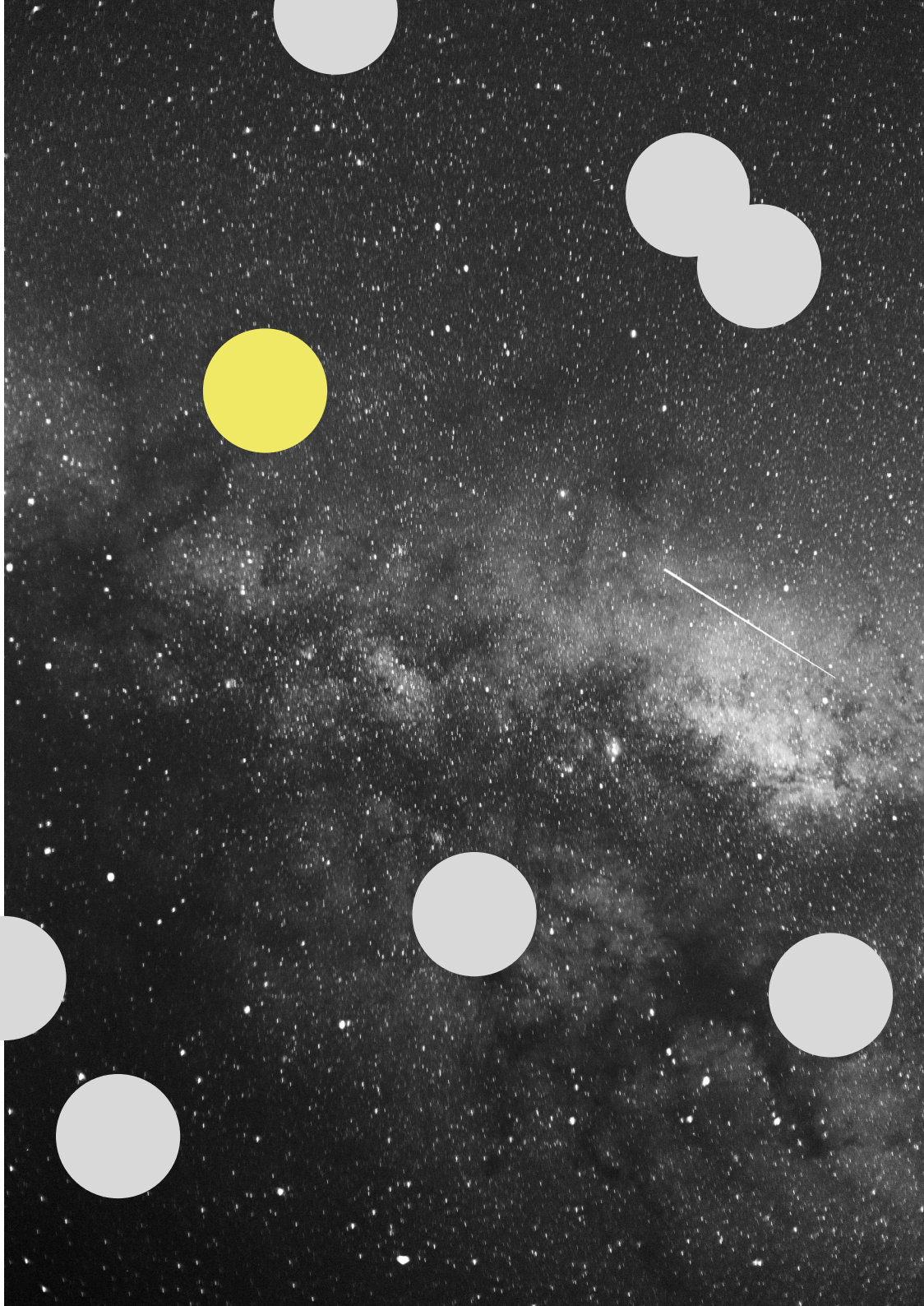
Funding and resources provided by governments and agencies to promote social, economic, and political development in LMICs.

Innovative Financing

The use of established financial tools and strategies (such as blended finance, impact investing, social bonds and public-private partnerships) to encourage private investors to push for development and social impact while more fairly sharing risks and rewards between public and private sectors.

Shaping Future Trajectories

Responding to a funding landscape in transition requires more than identifying where the next source of funding might come from. There is a need to shift the thinking about how change happens: who the GBV prevention sector engages with, where it builds influence, how it communicates, and how different actors, strategies and forms of finance can work together.



Communicating for change and new narratives

- Building two-way dialogue with funders: WROs can gain important insights from understanding the challenges funders face in making the case internally for investment in GBV prevention, but this must be a two-way process. Funders also have a responsibility to deepen their understanding of GBV prevention, listen to the priorities and analysis of WROs, and strengthen their own capacity to advocate for sustained investment within their institutions.
- Harnessing narrative change and popular culture: Narrative change, storytelling, popular culture and sport can create opportunities to reach new audiences, shift public narratives and mobilise resources.
- Broadening the conversation without narrowing the agenda: Tailoring communications should help different audiences understand the evidence, value and urgency of prevention - not require WROs and feminist movements to continually adapt their priorities to changing funding agendas.

Building a more connected ecosystem

- Building alliances across new actors and spaces: Connecting new actors and spaces does not require abandoning feminist principles. It requires clarity about the purpose of engagement, potential leverage points and the 'red lines' that should not be crossed.
- Strengthening coordination and open access across the ecosystem; Collective organising has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to generate political pressure, strengthen funding infrastructure and influence philanthropic commitments.
- Building alliances across intersecting agendas: Connecting GBV prevention with other social and political agendas - including health, democracy, economic participation, climate and technology - can also create new opportunities for advocacy, influence and alliance-building.
- Connecting different strategies and roles: Building a stronger funding ecosystem is therefore not only about increasing coordination, but about connecting movement power, evidence, narratives, policy influence and different forms of finance in ways that collectively create more favourable conditions for sustained investment in GBV prevention.

Embedding GBV prevention across policy and financing

- Translating commitments into sustained public financing: Whole-of-government national action plans to prevent GBV can provide an important mechanism for translating political commitments into sustained domestic financing. When they coordinate action across government and are supported by dedicated budget lines integrated into ministry budgets, they can strengthen accountability and embed responsibility for resourcing prevention across sectors.
- Embedding GBV prevention across wider policy and financing agendas: There are opportunities to translate these connections into wider policy and financing frameworks - including climate, health, democracy, economic policy and technology governance. Doing so could enable GBV prevention to access larger and more diverse financing streams while supporting more intersectional approaches.
- Influencing systems, not only funding flows: Embedding GBV prevention across wider policy and financing systems is also an opportunity to influence the policies, investment decisions, regulations and business practices that shape the conditions in which GBV occurs.

Imagining and preparing for possible futures

- Using feminist foresight to explore possible futures: A strategic foresight lens encourages us to look beyond the immediate crisis and pay attention to signals of change: where new ideas, relationships, sources of influence and approaches to resourcing are already emerging, and what they might tell us about possible futures for GBV prevention.
- Paying attention to signals of change: New relationships between GBV advocates and technology regulators; growing connections between GBV prevention and democracy; the use of sport and popular culture to shift narratives and mobilise resources; experimentation with innovative finance; and autonomous and collective resourcing by feminist movements can all be understood as signals of change. They can help us ask where the funding ecosystem may be moving, which emerging opportunities warrant further exploration, and where action now could influence future trajectories.
- Creating space to experiment and learn: Preparing for uncertainty requires space to test, learn and adapt. Exploring unfamiliar financing models, partnerships, narratives or advocacy spaces takes time, expertise and resources, and not every experiment will succeed.

These opportunities are closely connected: shifts in narratives can build new constituencies and alliances, stronger connections can open new spaces for influence, and changes in policy and financing can create new possibilities for resourcing.

Together, they can help to shape a more sustainable funding ecosystem for GBV prevention.

The Accelerator for Gender-Based Violence Prevention is a catalyst to mobilize more and better resourcing and action for the GBV prevention field; it was co-created by a group of dedicated feminists, researchers, and GBV prevention experts from civil society, UN agencies, donors, and governments.

Equality Institute (EQI) is a global feminist agency working to advance gender equality and end violence against women and girls (VAWG). We conduct research, provide guidance on policies and programmes, and build creative ways to incite social change.

Register here to receive more information about the upcoming launch of the *full report* in mid-November.

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