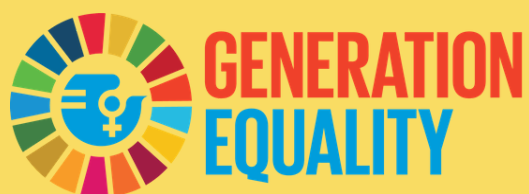


JUNE 2021



Asia-Pacific Generation Equality Dialogue

# FEMINIST MOVEMENTS & LEADERSHIP

Breakout Room  
Insights



## **ACTION ROOM 1: FUND AND SUPPORT FEMINIST AND WOMEN- LED ORGANIZATIONS, FUNDS, ACTIVISTS AND MOVEMENTS**

### **Facilitator:**

**Nikita Patodia**

Programme Officer -  
Strategic Partnerships  
Women's Fund Asia

### **Discussant 1:**

**Sivananthi Thanenthiran**

Executive Director  
Asian-Pacific Research and  
Resource Centre for Women  
(ARROW)

### **Discussant 2:**

**Wangshu Lian**

Co-Director  
Common Language

WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO  
THEN COLLECTIVELY DISCUSS  
AND IDENTIFY:

(i) 2-3- Priority actions for this region for the next 5 years (based on the area of discussion) - and we can link these recommendations to other concerns for women and girls

(ii) Up to 2 recommendations of:  
(a) strategies and/or  
(b) opportunities for strengthening multi-stakeholder intra-regional collaboration and collective action. It would be good to be clear on which kinds of collaboration will be key

## **KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:**

### **INSIGHT 1**

Deprioritisation of the Asia-Pacific as a region over the past two decades for funding as we are seen as a region that has made economic progress (a success story esp. in China), but this is not substantive and representative. There are also regionally unique gender inequalities due to patriarchal and feudal systems that reflect in political and economic systems. Graduation from LDCs to MICs also informs funding from certain channels (limited interrogation of the quality of this 'success') but this is inaccurate often

### **INSIGHT 2**

Much of funding that came to the region also came mainly through INGOs and this funding now needs to come with a decolonizing approach- and is appropriated largely by INGOs or organizations defined as 'international', a term that excludes organizations headquartered in the global south (self-led and movement-based)

### **INSIGHT 3**

There is also less funding so on 'rights' work e.g. Comprehensive Sexuality Education, LGBTQI protections and rights etc. including investments to advance legal frameworks to advance these rights

## INSIGHT 4

This has implications on funding to institutions that should be receiving funding to administer/draw accountabilities on Human Rights (and the strengthening of their infrastructure)

## INSIGHT 5

Need to strengthen accountability of governments at the regional level (to counter the 'slow and uneven' nature of progress) e.g. through the APR-CEM and we can consider this for the GEF in Asia-Pacific

## INSIGHT 6

Traditional funding is through global north intermediaries channelling funding to the global south, and we need alternatives to the current linear, less inclusive, less participatory approaches to grant-making

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:

### RECOMMENDATION 1

Funding community needs to look at gaps in A-P region and increase the quality and quantity of funding in the region, especially principally dedicated to gender equality, that is directly going to self-led feminist groups rooted in the Asia Pacific region, including to women's funds who fund grassroots groups, particularly for rights-based issues.

### RECOMMENDATION 2

Increased funding firmly rooted in feminist principles i.e. redistributing power to those who are marginalised and discriminated against (in mainstream discourses, access to resources).

### RECOMMENDATION 3

Donor community needs to learn about participatory grant-making (PGM) and other inclusive modalities and develop these in consultation with local activists, groups, and women's funds/feminist funds in the region who are already practicing participatory programming - learn from feminist activists and groups while also moving money to them.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Feminist and human rights values -based funding with an intersectional approach is the only way forward. With a decolonial lens towards money and shifting power dynamics between 'grant-makers' and 'grant receivers', moving towards why marginalised groups continue to be persecuted economically.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

Funders need to work with communities and leaders to understand what they are doing wrong and course-correct by shift their internal and external strategies - and change the linear and non-participatory traditional approaches (recognising diversity in operating contexts; we can work with national representative offices of these grantors)

#### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

Build the leadership of young activists - as part of overall efforts to redistribute power dynamics, promote meaningful participation and strengthened accountabilities.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

With these above recommendations, can consider using key UN bodies/mechanisms to serve shifting power and continue collaboration, with an aim to strengthen state accountability to their Human Rights commitments.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 8**

Donor community and IN bodies need to take their role much more seriously and substantively in strengthening accountability of governments at the regional level, consider mechanisms to use at different levels e.g. regional mechanism (a good example - APR-CEM initiated by APWLD) for the GEF in Asia-Pacific, or alternatives (where these dialogues can continue to take place).

## **ACTION ROOM 2: CREATE, EXPAND AND PROTECT CIVIC SPACE FOR FEMINIST ACTION AND ORGANIZING**

### **Facilitator:**

**Cynthia Veliko**

Regional Representative  
OHCHR Regional Office for  
South-East Asia

### **Discussant 1:**

**Rachana Bunn**

Director and Co-Founder  
Klahaan

### **Discussant 2:**

**Sharanya Sekaram**

Program Manager  
The Grassrooted Trust and  
Co-Founder of Everystory Sri Lanka

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## **KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:**

### **INSIGHT 1**

Women and non-binary people face significant challenges in participating in political, economic and social life, as equal partners with men. Restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, inequality and gender-based violence are increasing in the region. The ability of WHRD and feminist organizations to reverse these trends is challenged by conservative funding modalities that limits women's opportunities to mobilize.

### **INSIGHT 2**

Sociocultural norms are hampering gender equality and meaningful participation, and there is insufficient discussion on intersectional feminism. Attitudinal and behavioural change that combats harmful social norms and to break taboos is needed for greater gender equality and more participation of women and no-binary people in all areas of life.

### **INSIGHT 3**

As a movement we are sometimes less inclusive than we think and it is important that we ensure spaces are truly inclusive and that we always talk to those we claim to represent.

## INSIGHT 4

Women living in poverty and in rural areas face particular challenges in participating in public life and in the feminist movements due to lack access to technology in an increasingly digital environment.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:

#### RECOMMENDATION 1

We need to think about the long term sustainability of the movement and think of future generations of women, girls and non-binary people. We need to address formal and informal structural barriers to participation.

#### RECOMMENDATION 2

Feminist movements must talk to the women and girls that we represent. We also need to be mindful of the diversity of women and girls when we claim to represent others.

#### RECOMMENDATION 3

Governments must be held accountable for the hostile environment they are creating.

#### RECOMMENDATION 4

We must find spaces for women to strategize safely in the global south and we need more digital feminist security. Women human rights defenders and feminist movements must improve their digital security. We must also ensure that women, girls and non-binary people without access to digital technology can meaningfully participate in the feminist movement and in public life.

#### RECOMMENDATION 5

Governments must create safe spaces for women and girls to participate in and women human rights defenders must be protected and supported when under threat.

#### RECOMMENDATION 6

Civil society needs to engage more with academia and the education sector, as this can play a role in building a rights-based culture.

## **ACTION ROOM 3: ADVANCE AND INCREASE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION, LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING POWER OF WOMEN, GIRLS AND NONBINARY PEOPLE IN ALL THEIR DIVERSITY**

### **Facilitator:**

**Joy Chia**

Team Manager

Women's Rights Program,  
Open Society Foundations

### **Discussant 1:**

**Nalini Singh**

Executive Director

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

### **Discussant 2:**

**Bandana Rana**

Member

UN CEDAW Committee

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## **KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:**

### **INSIGHT 1**

Patriarchal culture in societies are not allowing women to take leadership roles; but they also limit our imaginations about who can be a leader and what leadership looks like.

### **INSIGHT 2**

Coalition solidarity is very important for advocacy and awareness. Networking and linking amongst the different networks. Build environments that include all for participation

### **INSIGHT 3**

Some proposed priorities for targeted actions:

1. Continuous capacity building and training
2. Media to amplify women leadership- visibility
3. Resource- funding of feminist movement

## INSIGHT 4

Need for better connection among CSW, CEDAW and other treaty bodies - because these connections will help to strengthen normative and regulatory frameworks.

## INSIGHT 5

Temporary Special Measures can be very useful in changing the laws and policies that are barriers to women's political participation.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:

### RECOMMENDATION 1

Documentation of feminist leadership, especially to impact evidence-based discussions at all level and different forum. Research is also important as it informs feminist movements on existing gaps and will allow them to better build the strategies.

### RECOMMENDATION 2

Increase the availability of high quality financing in support of women's participation in public life.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

Reaffirm existing commitments to strengthen normative and regulatory frameworks; and especially focus on combatting violence against women in public life.

### RECOMMENDATION 4

Building up leadership that is from communities and that are accountable from constituency.

### RECOMMENDATION 5

Local, national and global level- connecting all the levels transversally - local leaders connecting to their counterparts and stakeholders.

### RECOMMENDATION 6

Leadership in life cycle- from young to aging leaders.

### RECOMMENDATION 7

Continue to advocate for temporary special measures to change laws and policies about women's participation in politics.



## **ACTION ROOM 4: STRENGTHEN ADOLESCENT GIRL-LED, YOUTH-LED AND YOUTH- SERVING MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Facilitator:**

**Reylynne Dela Paz**

Senior Officer for Regional  
Girls' Rights Policy and Advocacy,  
Plan International Asia Pacific

### **Discussant 1:**

**Yasmine Bjornum**

Executive Director, Sista

### **Discussant 2:**

**Satoko Yamaguchi**

YWCA of Japan and Generation  
Equality Global Youth Task Force

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## **KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:**

### **INSIGHT 1**

One size does not fit all for all feminist and youth led organisations, needs to be contextualised to the country context.

### **INSIGHT 2**

The issues of the Pacific to be separated from Asia -the issues are not the same as Asia and how we approach the Pacific women's movement needs to be a bit more targeted.

### **INSIGHT 3**

The importance of language in pushing for change or changing narratives towards empowerment.

### **INSIGHT 4**

There needs to be a nuanced way of approaching youth issues. intersectional linkages need to be developed : Youth can be an umbrella but how different groups under that bracket get affected. especially focusing on specific Sexual and Reproductive Health rights comprehensive sexuality education for young as well as stakeholders, recognising that a digital divide exists too. who can access technology and how safe is technology.

## RECOMMENDATION 1

Transforming power inequalities to effectively counter power imbalances and for a fairer distribution of power.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

Ask young people and give them a seat at the table and forgo tokenism. Youth want co-ownership and co-leadership.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

Young activists need to be allocated a budget, and strengthen their capacity.

## RECOMMENDATION 4

Involving youth in co-designing accountability mechanisms and involve them in progress monitoring. There should be a space where they can contest decisions.

## RECOMMENDATION 5

Focus more on power within communities and not power over youth (bottom up approach) to make young voices heard.

## RECOMMENDATION 6

The Importance of mentors in smaller, context specific countries.

## RECOMMENDATION 7

Intergenerational dialogues to be strengthened. Convene intergenerational forums to generate ideas and learn from other feminists across different spectrums of life.

## RECOMMENDATION 8

Creating a safe space for young people to reflect and challenge the structural power that limit youth to explore their potential.

## RECOMMENDATION 9

Creating core, flexible funding that responds to the needs identified by young feminists themselves.

## RECOMMENDATION 10

“Non-youth” needs to be sensitised on how to work with young people especially young feminists.

## RECOMMENDATION 11

Review relevant existing policies to make them more responsive to the needs of young people and young women.