A Movement View

By Awa Fall Diop
This study seeks to:
• understand how Black feminist movements are organised;
• understand the priority issues facing Black feminist movements;
• understand, from a movement perspective, the landscape and access to funding for Black feminist movements;
• understand the level of financial resources, sustainability and resilience of Black feminist movements;
• celebrate the contributions of Black feminist movements to social change.

Using a qualitative approach, this chapter and study on the funding for and to Black feminist movements used a literature review, interviews and an online survey in a cross-referenced manner. 388 Black feminist leaders and organizations working in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Europe responded to the survey and were interviewed. Both the interviews and the survey were held virtually, due to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several working languages were used for data collection: English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

The results of the study reveal the current landscape of the Black feminist movement based on data collected from leaders and structures. They show the priority issues on which these structures mobilize, their level of external or internal resource mobilization and their contribution to the advancement of women’s rights and feminism in a multifaceted and interconnected way. We also look at the funding realities for Black feminist organizations (BFOs), their perceptions of the funding landscape and their messages to donors.
The landscape of Black feminist movements

In order to describe the landscape of Black feminist movements, we have to clarify who and where Black feminist organizations are, how long they have existed, their status, their membership and geographic scope.

Black feminists are everywhere

Black feminist movements are made up of a multitude of organizations, associations, groups and individuals around the world, all committed to advancing feminist agendas.

Black feminists occupy multiple geographies and territories, hold multiple intersecting identities and experience several forms of oppression at once.

Africa

The Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) Network is an indigenous African feminist organization working along the Horn of Africa to defend women’s rights. SIHA was established in the mid-1990s by a group of women activists from Somaliland, Ethiopia, Sudan, and South Sudan.

Horn of Africa, Africa

I am Shayden, feminist, artist, songwriter, singer, and radio and TV show host in Côte d’Ivoire. As a semi-finalist in 2016 of “The Voice—Afrique Francophone,” during my participation, I realized that all women artists from all countries shared the same problems.

Ivory Coast, Africa
Federation of Deaf Women Empowerment Network Kenya (FEDWEN) an organization of people living with disabilities was established on 18 September 2008 to advance the rights of deaf women and girls and to lobby for their inclusion.

Kenya, Africa

Green Girls Platform was established in 2018 to address the violence girls face due to the impacts of climate change.

Malawi, Africa

The Regional Women’s Solidarity Committee for Peace in Casamance, (CRSFPC/USOFORAL), was created in 1999 in Senegal, with the aim of contributing to the emergence of an active female citizenship for peace and sustainable development in Casamance.

Senegal, Africa

The Caribbean

Intersect is a queeribbean feminist collective committed to gender justice that prioritizes the needs and experiences of the most marginalized women, including queer, trans and non-binary people and people living with disabilities who are Black, Indigenous, or identify and people of color.

Antigua, the Caribbean

Fanm Yo La—Les femmes sont là, Collectif Féminin Haïtien pour la Participation Politique de Femmes, has been in existence since 2002.

Haiti, the Caribbean

Founded in 2015, Négès Mawon is a feminist organization that fights for the emancipation of women and their liberation from all forms of violence and oppression. The organization was created thanks to the meeting of young socio-professionals and artists revolted by the condition of women in Haiti.

Haiti, the Caribbean
The EVE for Life organization supports teenage mothers living with HIV, 45% of whom were raped as girls.

**Jamaica, the Caribbean**

The Jamaica Domestic Workers’ Union (JHWU) was formed in 1990 as an association that has evolved into a union of domestic workers. It is a member of the Association of Women’s Organization in Jamaica (AWOJA).

**Jamaica, the Caribbean**

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**Europe**

We are three friends who founded the Susu collective in Belgium and the Netherlands. Three friends who have lived through stories of migration, following the political events in Congo in 1960. Coming from Africa and living in Europe, a whole series of obstacles arise: administrative, institutional, education, health, work, etc.

**Belgium and The Netherlands, Europe**

GLADT is an association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, and Intersex, (LGBTQI), racialized, and non-white people based in Berlin.

**Berlin, Europe**

WOOL is a film festival in France whose program features films by Afro-descendant women directors.

**France, Europe**
Latin America

Sex workers, in the state of Minas Gerais (Brazil), created Associação das Prostitutas de Minas Gerais (APROSMIG) in 2009. Since then, APROSMIG has been running a self-help group and projects for more than 2,000 sex workers in the city of Belo Horizonte and its surroundings.

Brazil, Latin America

Middle East

The Collective for Black Iranians strives to make the voices of Black and African Iranian women heard throughout the Iranian community.

Iran, Middle East

North America

Black Feminist Future (BFF) is a political hub working on the dynamics that galvanize social and political power of black women, girls and people towards liberation.

USA, North America

Kilomba, a collective of Black Brazilian women in the United States was created in 2019, birthed by five women born and raised in different regions of Brazil, who met in the United States. The name, Kilomba, resonates with the Quilombos, the self-supporting revolutionary communities that represent the resistance and liberation of Black people from enslavement and colonial power.

USA, North America
Since when have they been in existence?

Of the groups and organizations that provided their date of creation, \(\frac{1}{2}\) were created in the last 5 years, \(\frac{3}{4}\) in the last 10 years and just under \(\frac{3}{4}\) in the last 15 years. The youthfulness of Black feminist organizations may lead to the assumption that the membership is also youthful. Indeed, a scan of Black feminist organizations’ materials suggests that a generational renewal has given rise to many young feminist organizations that renew the commitment to a better future for Black women and gender expansive people and that contribute to the building of the movement.

Typology of Black feminist organizations

Black feminist organizations (BFOs) come in many forms and statuses: NGOs (53%), groups (13%), associations (9%), and networks (8%). But the movement also includes individuals: bloggers, journalists and artists.

79.5% of organizations that responded to the question of registration status are legally registered.

In relative terms, there are more organizations registered in Francophone countries compared to Anglophone or Lusophone countries. They focus more on compliance with the laws established in their countries.

I feel like a feminist and I wanted to mobilize online, through the media and social networks that allow me to express my positions online...

—Nesmon de Laure, Côte d’Ivoire.

Some arguments in favour of registration are economic. Indeed, some funding partners require that an organisation be formally registered before any funding is granted. In their own words, BFOs are registered:

- “At the request of the funding partners.”
  **Gender Lab—Ghana**

- “To give legitimacy to our organisation and make our operations legitimate. Some donors ask for a certificate of registration before engaging with an organisation.”
  **Haki Nawiri Afrika—Kenya**

- “So as to carry out actions in a credible way and to have access to donors.”
  **Voice of the Voiceless (VoVo)—Zimbabwe**

But, if access to financial resources is a motivation to register, lack of financial resources also emerges as a reason for not registering. Registration requires financial costs.

- “We are still looking for support to enable us to register,”
  **Pwani Feminist Futures Alliance—Kenya**

- “Because of lack funds,”
  **Blogueiras Negras—Brazil**

- “Because of financial difficulties,”
  **Coletiva de Mulheres Negras Abayomi—Brazil**

Without financial resources, you can’t register, without registration you can’t access funding. It’s a real vicious circle.

While registering is easy for organizations with educated, urban, more or less affluent members, it is not so for Black feminists with little formal education or living in disadvantaged or rural areas. Sometimes it is lack of knowledge or ostracism or the length of procedures that hinders registration.

- “We don’t know how to register.”
- “We are in the process of registration. The administrative procedures are long.”
  **Health and Equal Rights Organization (H.E.R.O.)—Rwanda**
The documents were submitted to the prefecture in July 2021, and due to administrative red tape, we have not yet received our registration certificate.”

Wake up Ladies—Cameroon

Younger organizations are the least compliant with registration, sometimes out of convenience, sometimes out of ostracism. Some have given up on registration, either because they do not find legal recognition necessary and/or their work is based on virtual spaces. In addition, incidents of sexual harassment and intimidation have led one organisation to stop the registration process.

“We do not consider it necessary to register.”

Junta de Prietas—República Dominicana

“Registration has not been a topic of interest so far,”

Akoben Colectiva Afrofeminista—Costa Rica

“We work with a fiscal sponsor.”

Our Body Politic—USA

“Working with communities is done online.”

Registration also has a political feature when it is used to confront the government using its own laws. This is done in anticipation of restrictions on citizens’ rights by taking into account the multiple political and social characteristics of our era and in view of the cyclical crises that manifest themselves in the different contexts of the lives of Black feminists.

“We are registered to protect the organisation from the dangers of shrinking civic space in the Horn of Africa region.”

SIHA Network—Sudan

“To face the challenge of shrinking citizen space, we are registering to use the state’s business provisions.”

“In order to be held accountable for all our actions in the Campaign instead of the ‘parent organisation’ that hosted us.”

One in Nine Campaign—South Africa

“Our registration is also a political statement as a queer feminist organisation.”

Voice of the Voiceless (VoVo)—Zimbabwe
On the other hand, political arguments are put forward to challenge these state institutions and to claim autonomy and freedom for organizations to register or not. The rejection of administrative formalities, an expression of great associative freedom, is part of the argument in favour of non-registration.

“We wanted to test our approach first without getting caught up in the bureaucracy of registration.”
Young Woman Thrive—South Africa

“It is easier to organise without the registration and bureaucratic requirements.”
#WeAre52pc—Kenya

Other equally political reasons are given against registration, such as in the case of undeclared work, in the case of a legal suit against those in power, which also raises questions about the security of organizations and members in this situation.

“Because we are working against anti-gender groups deeply rooted in the government. We prefer to remain anonymous to protect our identity.”
Strategic Issues & Research Council—Kenya

“For security reasons. Mainly because of the type of political work we do. We use a registered NGO as fiscal sponsor for our funding.”
Colectiva Feminista en Construcción—Costa Rica

Within this same political context, it is also necessary to include the fact that LBTQ organizations cannot register in many countries because of discriminatory laws, and are forced to operate as informal structures.

“The LBT concept is considered illegal by the government. We are fighting the evils of society without compromise, so the government and its policies do not make it easy for us.”
Filles en Action—Benin

This brief overview of organisational registration shows that it is not just a technical and administrative issue. Registration has a strong political connotation. The obligation to register is not only a means of control and repression on the part of the government and/or its agents, but it is also of influence, as it is a condition for donors. The literature review indicates that smaller and/or unregistered grassroots
organizations have less access to funding, particularly those that lack capacity in grant writing, data collection and financial management. But the refusal to register also offers Black feminist organizations a space to challenge the power of the government and the power of donors. If the government is essentially an instrument of domination, it is up to funders and Black feminist organizations working for freedom and social justice to rethink the legal environment for interventions and funding to be more flexible.

Membership

79% of the organizations have a total of 137,742 individual members.

73% of the organizations that mobilize individual members have fewer than 101 members out of a total of 2,474. 27% have more than 101 members and a total of 135,268.

Some structures are intertwined networks. Others are made up of networks of individuals, groups and associations. They are not in a position to count the number of members. Some do not operate on a formal membership basis; the membership system does not apply to them. These different aspects taken together show the overall immensity of Black feminist dynamics. There are many ways of identifying with Black feminist movements and of being an activist in Black feminist movements in physical and virtual spaces.

“With COVID-19, we lost many members. About thirty of our members left.”
Geographic scope

25% of the responses attest to a transnational level of intervention, covering 2 to 7 countries within the same continent, or across several continents (for example Africa and the Diaspora). 29% of the organizations work nationally, with their activities covering the whole country. 35% work in geographic proximity (locally) according to the administrative division in their context (province, district, region, department, community, village, etc.).

It is worth noting that there is no dichotomy between the different levels of intervention as some organizations who work at international level also cover countries in one or more continents, while those who work proximately (locally) also engage transnationally.

We work with organizations on the margins of mainstream movements and we find that even with deliberateness our feminist spaces often marginalise. That’s our zone of honey and happiness.

—Bella Matambanadzo, Zimbabwe
Priority Issues

Why were they created?

“We decided that we needed to get organised. So we invited women farmers’ associations and women’s groups from Southern Africa to come and discuss the issues we were all facing across the region—even though we have national boundaries, Southern Africa is one territory and we all have to co-exist. The HIV/AIDS pandemic was a regional crisis and Southern Africa is one of the poorest regions in Africa and the world. Therefore, we were looking at how we could build feminist solidarity, a way of sharing, thinking and acting together.

Mercia Andrews—Rural Women’s Assembly—Southern Africa

In the Great Horn of Africa, women are regularly portrayed and perceived as victims, but Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) challenges this notion of the status quo. SIHA recognises that almost all the challenges women face are based on socially constructed norms and that these norms actively subordinate women. We work and believe strongly in the collective power of African women. Defying assumptions about African women, SIHA has been supported by many African women’s rights activists and has been sustained by their unwavering commitment to their cause. SIHA approaches the struggle for women’s rights as a political struggle, and as such, we keep our goals of fundamental political transformation at the forefront.

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa—Horn of Africa

Minas Programam is an initiative created in 2015 by girls and young women to challenge the gender and racial stereotypes that influence our relationship with the fields of science, technology and computing. Minas Programam promotes learning opportunities for girls and women, prioritising those who are Black or Indigenous. A society marked by racism and machismo often determines who has the opportunity to learn, engage and work with technology. For instance, this context ends up being exclusionary: for Black women, Indigenous people and for LGBTI people.

Minas Programam—Brazil
I seek to serve as an international reference on dialogue on Brazil. As a worthy heir of the Quilombos, I build counter-narratives to those of anti-Black people and groups in order to show and value perspectives and realities of the Brazilian Black people.

**Kilomba Collective—USA**

Eldoret Women for Development (ELWOFOD) is a women’s organisation in Kenya founded by two ex-prisoners in the Eldoret-Langas slum who had been convicted and imprisoned for six years of a crime they did not commit. ELWOFOD seeks to improve the reintegration of ex-prisoners into their communities through skills development, economic security and justice.

**Eldoret Women for Development—Kenya**

**Rights issues targeted by Black feminist organizations (BFOs)**

Gender-based violence tops the list in terms of issues that BFOs work on, along with women’s leadership and power, women’s economic empowerment, and women’s health, sexual health (including HIV and AIDS), sexual and reproductive rights, and rights to control their bodies.

**Azanian Women Remember**

We are a group of Black feminists engaged in the political project of Black Conscious Pan Afrikanism. We use memory as a site of revolution and creation site…. Until the last one of us falls.

We work against state-sponsored violence, against violence against women and LBTQ people in conflict/post-conflict contexts, for anti-militarism, the abolition of the police and the abolition of borders. We stand for self-determination, anti-colonialism, anti-neo-colonialism.
## Rights issues targeted by Black feminist organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
<td>10.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and power of women</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic empowerment of women</td>
<td>8.68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV AIDS sexual and reproductive rights: right to one's body</td>
<td>8.02%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education and training</td>
<td>6.03%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political participation, participation in trade unions, civil disobedience, shrinking of civic space</td>
<td>6.03%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social and cultural rights</td>
<td>6.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation of peace and violence against women and LGBTQ people in conflict/post-conflict situations</td>
<td>6.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-racism</td>
<td>5.95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental justice, climate change, natural resources, stop extractivism</td>
<td>5.87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art and culture</td>
<td>5.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace and security, state-sponsored violence, anti-militarism, abolition of the police</td>
<td>5.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-determination, anti-colonialism, anti-neocolonialism</td>
<td>5.70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment, work, sex work</td>
<td>5.62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic rights, anti-capitalism, anti-consumerism, economic justice, trade</td>
<td>5.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>5.62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>5.62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigration, refugees, internally displaced persons, people on the move, abolition of borders</td>
<td>5.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and agroecology</td>
<td>5.45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>5.37%</td>
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These 20 issues are not mutually exclusive, Black feminist organizations operate at the intersection of multi-faceted, interlocking and interdependent oppressions, exercised in the family and societal sphere, perpetuated by the government and/or stemming from life trajectories marked by enslavement, colonisation, neo-colonisation, neo-liberalism and militarism as well as various forms of fundamentalisms, patriarchy and cis hetero-normativity. It is this multifaceted environment and these interrelationships between oppressions that Awa Thiam described in her 1978 book La parole aux Négresses, the first of its kind to provide a cross-cutting sociological analysis of the suffering endured by African women, a historiography of the cross-cutting, interlocking, interdependent persecution in which African women are entangled and which are shared by other Black women outside the African continent. This finding was later conceptualised as intersectionality by Kimberley Crenshaw in her book, Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. The concept of intersectionality describes the ways in which "systems of power and oppression co-construct to create complex and unique forms of systemic harm and injustice.” Greater visibility of some forms of oppression hides other, more insidious, more devastating forms. Armed with this clear understanding of intersectionality, the struggles of Black feminist organizations intersect with the issues and activities that they work on.

- Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa’s (SIHA) work covers 5 strategic areas: reducing violence against women and girls, strengthening women’s access to justice and transforming negative and harmful religious and cultural dogmas, empowering women economically towards the realisation of their economic, social and cultural rights, mixed migration of women and girls from the Greater Horn of Africa and building inclusive women’s movements

- In 2010, in Colombia, the International Meeting of Women and Peoples of the Americas spoke out against militarisation and the installation of US military bases.

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2 Giraud, I. (2012). Radicalisation and youth presence in the World March of Women: a process of construction of new forms of contemporary feminist radicalities. Lien social et Politiques, (68), 63-78. [https://doi.org/10.7202/1014805ar](https://doi.org/10.7202/1014805ar)
Launched in December 2014 by the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) and the Centre for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies (CISPS), the #SayHerName campaign raises awareness of the often-invisible names and stories of Black women and girls who are victims of racist police violence and provides support to their families. Black women and girls as young as 7 and as old as 93 years have been killed by police. We rarely hear their names. Knowing their names is a necessary but not sufficient condition for preserving their stories, which, in turn, provides a much clearer picture of the wide-ranging circumstances that make Black women’s bodies disproportionately subject to police violence. In order to tell their stories and highlight police violence against Black women, we need to know who they are, how they lived and why they suffered at the hands of the police.

For the Rural Women’s Assembly, the struggle for land rights is a struggle against patriarchy and customary laws which are enforced by men and give them authority and prevent women from owning land. “It is a system that is very dominant in Africa and strongly linked to religion—be it Islam or Christianity—and patriarchy. Our work starts with the land, but it doesn’t stop there.”

Black Girls Glow (Ghana) brings together women artists to create content that is not defined or limited to the outer boundaries imposed by the male-dominated structure of the art scene. They bring together women who showcase their own issues and styles and their own vocal patterns and creativity through art.

Our feminism is anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, anti-patriarchal and anti-capitalist. Our politics are multifaceted. ‘Wadadli,’ formerly known as ‘Wa’ladli,’ and ’Wa’Omoni’ are indigenous names for the islands of Antigua and Barbuda. We have adopted ‘Wadadli feminism’ to demonstrate our rejection of colonial and neo-colonial definitions of personhood, nation and development.

FEMNET (African Women’s Development and Communication Network) has positioned itself on critical issues, including women’s participation in governance and leadership, promoting women’s economic justice, defending women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights, ending gender-based violence and

3 News preview 6 Nov 2019: Rural women’s assembly: land is their livelihood, but who owns it https://www.mamacash.org/fr/nouvelles
harmful practices, (such as female genital mutilation and child marriage), and strengthening the women’s movement in Africa.

Achievements

My cultural production, NO! a documentary on rape, which is subtitled in Spanish, French, Portuguese and German, is being used as a resource in movements to end sexual violence—throughout the United States and in several countries in Europe, the Caribbean, South America, Asia and Africa.

Aishah Shahidah Simmons—Founder/Cultural Worker—AfroLez® Productions

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) in Sudan mobilized and supported a cross-section of women from across Sudan to develop the Sudanese Women’s Manifesto—a policy document and public statement of key demands that must be met for Sudan to adopt a discourse and action plan that focuses on women’s rights and critical issues during and after the transition period.

The documentary “Women in the Revolution” traces involvement and women leadership during political mobilisations and resistance activities. Women were at the forefront of the [2018-2019] popular uprising, making up between 60% and 70% of the protesters. SIHA led an anti-rape campaign called #Justice4Hamdi to raise awareness and draw attention to the prevalence of sexual violence against women and girls in Somalia. The campaign, triggered by the horrific rape and murder of Hamdi, garnered support from national, regional and international actors, highlighting the urgency of challenging the trend of gender-based killings.

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA)—Horn of Africa

In 2020, with Mulheres Ao Vento, we organized a workshop on Black feminism and favelas. This initiative was meant to deconstruct retrograde and pejorative discourses on the body, memory, culture, race, favelas and gender. We criticized the poetic and artistic components that form the so-called Brazilian culture and politically affirmed it as an Afro-American culture. Based on a bibliography composed mainly of Black women’s writings, we reconstructed histories and memories of Black women and slums and experimented with forms of knowledge production from
corporeal and poetic stimuli.

Every second Tuesday of the month via Zoom, or every Monday on Clubhouse, online community events provide a safe and informative space for Black Brazilian immigrant women and opportunities to discuss a variety of topics related to their livelihoods.

With volunteers, we organized free professional development workshops for Black Brazilian women, how to write a CV and how to succeed in a job interview in the US.

One year after the first case of COVID-19 in Brazil, the country surpassed the over 400,000 mark of lives lost. More than 4,000 people have lost their lives in a 24 hour-period... Therefore, in collaboration with other organizations, we raised R$11,000 in funds and identified 22,895 families in vulnerable situations throughout the country, mainly in Brazilian favelas, riverside communities and Quilombos. These families received support, based on the number of people in their household, for three months during the COVID-19 pandemic.

KILOMBA COLLECTIVE—USA

The Rural Women’s Assembly (RWA) has been raising awareness among rural women through programmes such as the ‘annual feminist school’ which provides an understanding of patriarchy and the intersections between patriarchy, capitalism and climate change. It is an intergenerational space, with equal participation of older and younger women. “The future is in the hands of young women, and the sustainability of this movement depends on intergenerational relationships and practices: we need to incorporate new knowledge, but also learn from the past experiences of others.

What we are most proud of is the fact that ten years on, RWA has remained a grassroots organisation... The fact that it is a movement for women farmers, led by women farmers themselves, is something to be proud of.  

MERCIA ANDREWS AND LUNGISA HUNA—RURAL WOMEN’S ASSEMBLY—SOUTHERN AFRICA

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4 News preview 6 Nov 2019: Rural women’s assembly: land is their livelihood, but who owns it https://www.mamacash.org/fr/nouvelles
In Casamance (Senegal) by using a subversive culture with songs, dances, drama, we deconstructed the myths that prevented women from owning land, improved women’s access to land, education, civil status, registration of marriages, etc. Women gained more power.

When Idrissa Sagna, a schoolboy, was killed by the police during a strike, women stood up and put an end to the unrest, both on the side of the people and on the side of the government forces so as to give chance to justice.

While maintaining our initial focus on fighting a subversive culture, involvement of women in conflict resolution and the strengthening of their income generating activities was becoming increasingly important...

Women set up organisational federations, then networks of federations, which today include more than 11,000 women in the Ziguinchor region alone.

We formalised our group and created the Comité Régional de Solidarité des Femmes pour la Paix en Casamance [Regional Committee for Women’s Solidarity for Peace] (CRSFPC/USOFORAL) in 1999, with the aim of contributing to the emergence of an active female citizenship initiative for peace and sustainable development in Casamance, Senegal.

Many researchers also deepened the knowledge on the processes of transformation of women’s status, analysing the changes we have generated within traditional societies.

USOFORAL—Senegal

With COVID-19 we lost our jobs because our welfare files had not been processed, unlike those of white women who were in the same situation as us. And we ended up on the street. We knew we were living in a context of institutionalised racism, we were involved in anti-racism and equality work, but in a sporadic, unstructured way (distributing meals during winter, organizing workshops for young people, etc.). What happened to us with our social welfare files was the trigger for us to get involved in a structured way.

After settling our cases and being reinstated, we investigated and found out that there was a fund for the support of illegal immigrants and that it targeted single mothers. But they did not benefit from it because of the
language barrier, ignorance of the procedures and racism.

So, we created Susu, which is the name of an ethnic group in the Sahelian region in Africa, to consolidate our attachment to our roots, as a sign of recognition for the African community.

We obtained free support from Belgian lawyers for information on asylum procedures and regularisation procedures. The Belgian government, on the other hand, encourages undocumented immigrants to return to Africa. For these procedures, criminals made the women pay in exchange for false information.

In partnership with other organizations, we help them to find decent housing in unoccupied but habitable buildings because many of these women have little schooling, are undocumented and work illegally... We also do a lot of awareness-raising on racism, equality and the oppression of women because many come from backgrounds where this oppression seems to be taken for granted. We set up a system of endogenous mutual aid such as school support, solving problems of indebtedness, medical care resulting from injuries suffered from police violence attacks on immigrants.

Collectif Susu—France

We are running a ‘Beddings, Mattress and Food’ campaign to help provide shelter for homeless trans women members of our organisation. The funds help to brighten the lives of the recipients and create a better home for a soul who faces stigma and discrimination and is vulnerable because of being outside of hetero-normativity. The situation has further deteriorated during this time of global pandemic.

Pride 4 Youth Initiative—Uganda
Black feminist organizations are:

- led by women and gender expansive people of various identities and statuses
- intergenerational
- positioned on all continents of the globe
- in general they are registered or for reasons of political choice, lack of resources and distance from administration choose not to be registered
- mobilizing collective power at the intersections of many forms of oppression
- profoundly and positively transforming the lives of Black women/girls, gender expansive people, communities and the world
Funding Black feminist movements

Funding is a critical issue for the development of Black feminist organizations, the strengthening of their initiatives and the sustainability of the changes they bring about that eliminate the multiple oppressions faced by Black women and gender expansive people. The short-sightedness of philanthropic interventions regarding intersectionality leads to the systematic erasure of strategic themes and leads to the funding of single-issue projects that do not always respond to the nuanced, intertwined issues of Black feminist movements. Despite threats, dangers, risks and repression, often with few resources, Black feminist organizations are reinventing a better world and daily contributing to building a society of social justice. On the other hand, the united and networked forces and dynamics of oppression, have at their disposal huge monetary and non-monetary resources (see chapter In Opposition to Black Feminist Agendas). Therefore, it is vital to understand, from the perspective of the Black feminist movement, the landscape and access to funding that they experience and how they would like it to be.

The short-sightedness of philanthropic interventions regarding intersectionality leads to the systematic erasure of strategic themes and leads to the funding of single-issue projects that do not always respond to the nuanced, intertwined issues of Black feminist movements.
Financial resources, sustainability and resilience

- With €25,000, Trans Empowerment Initiative (TEI—Kenya) addresses the fundamental right of trans people to health, wellbeing and housing to mitigate the challenges that make them vulnerable to systemic oppression. The organisation provides safe houses for homeless transgender people, educates them on sources of income that can support them, provides those who have undergone harsh and abusive experiences with mentors to guide them through the process of self-confidence, self-awareness and self-love, as well as a safe space for trans people to be free, without fear of prejudice or discrimination. TEI also advises them on the

81% of Black feminist organizations feel the funding they receive is slightly or not at all sufficient to achieve their goals.

61% of Black feminist organizations have annual budgets of less than $50,000 per year.

Assessment of Black feminist organizations on their level of funding to achieve the objectives for Black women, girls, trans, intersex and non-binary people

- 50% Barely Sufficient
- 31% Not Sufficient
- 17% Average
- 2% Sufficient
safe use of hormones and on the best doctors to consult.

- In Malawi, Green Girls Platform is addressing violence girls face due to the impact of climate change. It works on capacity building, promoting climate justice, raising awareness of sexual and reproductive health rights and providing leadership skills. It also teaches public speaking skills and organises dialogues and debates with other girls, as well as with decision makers. It organises tree-planting activities and advocates for the use of solar energy. All this with a budget of $30,000.

- With a budget of $5,000, Her Choice aims to build communities free of child marriage and strengthen the leadership, power and voice of young girls.

That is to say, Black feminist organizations are crushed by the weight of survival strategies which, in the end, risk limiting their mobilisation and annihilating the changes achieved.

While the ability of Black feminists to innovate in the face of historical underfunding and insufficient budgets is a testament to their resilience, much remains to be done to change the culture that normalises this struggle for survival. Black feminists and their movements deserve the resources and support they need to thrive.
Black feminists and their movements deserve the resources and support they need to thrive.
How much do Black feminist organizations dream of?

Black feminist organizations are not asking for the impossible, they are simply asking for what is necessary to consolidate the gains they have contributed to women, gender expansive people, communities and the world.

- Because of the position of the French language in the world, we have difficulty in applying for international funding, thus we have not yet received any funding. While this situation cannot be directly linked to the pandemic, it probably, once again, hijacked energy that could have been mobilized around fundraising.
  
  **W XOOL—France**

- We have only obtained funding for short-term projects lasting between 2 and 3 months.
  
  **Haki Nawiri Afrika—Kenya**

- Donors do not trust us because we are a young organization even though we are represented in Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.
  
  **Development Agenda for Girls and Women in Africa Network—Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe**

- Approximately $60,000 would be required to achieve the goals of the organization.
  
  **Mano Amiga de la Costa Chica—Mexico**
$275,000 per year for 5 years would also allow us to build the team and resources needed to collaborate more broadly at the national and continental levels and with the Black diaspora.

**Strictly Silk—Kenya**

The annual dream budget is one million dollars to do everything we need to do.

**Rede Nacional de Mulheres Negras no Combate à Violência—Brazil**

~$525,170

is the median dream budget of Black feminist organizations
Types and duration of grants

The response time to requests does not seem to be a problem: the longest is 3 to 6 months, in general, although some requests have waited a year to receive a response.

While the anti-women’s, anti-LGBTQI, and anti-gender rights movements have significant access to money, the feminist movement, and specifically Black feminist organizations, are crumbling under the weight of destitution, standing firm thanks to a strong, unfailing commitment.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Our direct services have stopped due to the pandemic, lack of funding to meet the needs of the single parent program, and the access to justice program.
  
  Liberia Association of Female Sociologists—Liberia

- Team members lost family to COVID-19, another was hospitalized, and this had a significant impact on our regular flow of operations. The pandemic has resulted in more demands on our time and efforts and less emotional and mental capacity to deliver services to beneficiaries.

  Intersect—Antigua
The organization was formed during COVID-19 as a result of what was happening and getting funding was not easy.

Smart Transitions

Uganda, like many other African countries, remains a heteronormative society with deep-rooted hostility towards its transgender community. In 2021, President Museveni issued a detailed directive on preventive measures to combat the COVID-19 virus that resulted in the arrest of many transgender women.

In late March 2020, 20 members of Uganda’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex community were arrested, detained, and spent more than 50 days in pre-trial detention after allegedly disobeying the country’s COVID-19 containment rules.

On May 31, 2021, another 44 members of the trans women’s community were arrested and remanded in Kitalya prison.

In late October 2021, another group of 40 members of the Wave of Legacy shelter were threatened with arrest if they did not move to another location.

These incidents and events have raised various safety issues regarding transgender women’s shelters in Uganda, which has made us realize that our safety needs to be updated.

Pride For Youth Initiative—Uganda

Initially, the community-based part of our work was limited by mandatory government lockdowns and curfews. We also had to address and fight gender-based violence, anti-racism, and increasing migration inequalities as part of the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Initially, we primarily served our members at in-person events. We shifted to digital outreach and digital community building in 2020, and as a result, we have built an extensive network across Ohio of activists and community builders who lead civic engagement campaigns and community care efforts.

Ohio Women’s Alliance—USA
Our organization is an organization of people living with disabilities and therefore we cannot keep social distance because of the nature of our movement, communication becomes a challenge with the mask because some of us rely on lip-reading for communication. Most of our core funding comes from our income generating activities which have been severely affected and therefore office maintenance and staff remuneration is now a big challenge.

Kisumu Disabled Self-help Group—Kenya

We have laid off some employees.

Malian Association for the Promotion of Young Girls and Women—Mali

With COVID-19, field activities came to a halt. But we continued to work online, and there was need to spend money on phone calls to follow up with survivors of rape and sexual harassment, as well as transphobia for regular, personal follow-up. These expenses were unexpected.

Girls in Action—Benin

Restrictions and protocols during artistic performances have decreased participation and project management has suffered. Also, the priorities of the funders have shifted to other things like health.

Kalalu Danza centro de investigacion cultural y accion creativa afro caribeña—Dominican Republic

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly changed the way Black feminist organizations (BFOs) work. Government and anti-rights actions most affected the ways in which BFOs work but there was also increased scarcity and redirection of financial resources towards health, unforeseen circumstances that have caused Black feminists to lose their jobs, organizations to drastically reduce their expenses and slow down their activities. On a human level, activists have been personally affected by the pandemic (hospitalization, loss of loved ones), and this has also contributed to slowing down their activities. They have consistently been able to find answers, either by changing the modalities of the interventions, or working virtually, or reviewing their priorities, without disconnecting from the things they live for. Some Black feminists have lost their lives, leaving their colleagues distraught, others have lost loved ones and have been emotionally devastated, while some have been affected by the virus themselves. But in the face of COVID-19, interventions for the psychological and emotional care of the feminists themselves was not mentioned.
by respondents. This lack of attention of self, while laudable and generous, is still a risk to the movement. COVID-19 has made even more evident the need and necessity for Black feminists to take care of themselves as one of the conditions for the sustainability of the movement. To fail to provide for these moments of individual and collective care, to fail to take into account these periods of regeneration of energies and consolidation of sisterhood, to fail to integrate individual and collective care into personal life and activism, is to diminish the capacity for resilience, it means putting the movement in danger. Thus, the well-being of Black feminists is critically important for movement-building purposes, and funding must support it accordingly.

In spite of the pandemic, we had a small number of donors who continued to support our organization.

**CALL.ACTIVIT—PALESTINE**

Although we still have very little funding, our funder has supported us during COVID-19.

**PATINAAI OSIM—KENYA**

While most of our funders are flexible with the use of funding for COVID-19 related work, some funders have restructured future funding or grant proposals, thus primarily reducing our funding for the next fiscal year.

**COLECTIVA FEMINISTA EN CONSTRUCCIÓN—PUERTO RICO**

We had to change our thematic areas and target groups in order to raise funds.

**WOMANDLA FOUNDATION—ZIMBABWE**
Donors were generous and understanding with us and willing to shift priorities to provide additional support.
Fund for Congolese Women—Democratic Republic of the Congo

There has been greater flexibility on the part of donors.
Observatorio VigiaAfro—Colombia

In some ways, COVID-19 has increased our funding and strengthened our relationships with our partners.
Leap Girl Africa—Cameroon

Funding for YWA has been cut in half.
Young Women in Action (YWA)—Zambia

Most of our funding goes to specific activities and not to general support, we used to take a lot of time to convince the donor of the importance of online workshops, how much money they cost, why salaries are paid from the project and other details such as psychological support and its importance, and we are still engaged in these discussions even during the time of COVID-19.
Ganoubia Hora—Egypt

Donors have favored COVID-19’s health, prevention and care-oriented actions.
Red de mujeres afrolatinoamericana afrocaribeña y de la Diaspora Colombia—Colombia

Yes, because there was a decrease in public competitive funding, which affected our work.
Colectiva de Mujeres afrodescendientes Luanda—Chile

Funding was suspended because donors found monitoring difficult or impossible due to border closures and confinement.
Alternatives Ménages, Nature et Marchés—Democratic Republic of the Congo

We are experiencing a 45% reduction in funding.
Association Malienne pour la Promotion de la Jeune Fille et de la Femme—Mali
The impact is that we do not have enough funding to work and to extend our actions to other beneficiaries in other regions who are in need or who are needy.

**ENVOL—Association Action Santé Trans—Benin**

Yes, the way to acquire them has been difficult because it is difficult to execute projects during pandemics due to our rural context, working virtually does not help much for the implementation of our projects.

**MANO AMIGA DE LA COSTA CHICA—Mexico**

We are left with fewer funding opportunities for our rights-based work.

**VOICE OF THE VOICELESS—Zimbabwe**

There has been a significant impact on the funding of our organization in terms of membership fees.

**ACTION FEMME ET ECO JUSTICE—Democratic Republic of the Congo**

COVID-19 has had no impact on our financing because our actions are self-financed since the creation of our association.

**WAKE UP LADIES—Cameroon**

COVID-19 has had an impact on the funding of Black feminist organizations (BFOs) and their relationships with donors. Some foundations have been flexible and have had an open conversation among partners about what to do and what the collective responses to this unpredictable disaster should be. Other donors have reduced or withdrawn their funding and redirected their efforts to health and the fight against this pandemic. Even self-financing BFOs, with no donors, felt the impact of COVID-19 because of the decline in income of members who contributed or led income-generating activities.
Autonomous resourcing

“The resources that fuel feminist social change come in many forms—financial, political as well as in everyday acts of resistance, care, survival, and in the construction of new feminist realities...”

The Black feminist organizations (BFOs), although largely dependent on funding foundations, are developing strategies to generate their own resources. BFOs report having between 0.2 and 100% of their income generated through autonomous resourcing. The median percentage of income generated autonomously by Black feminist organizations is 10%.

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Pendeza Weaving Project (Kenya), empowers rural women and youth through self-employment in cotton growing, processing and value-adding. It has self-generated $20,000 this year.

At the time of the first Lelai Festival, I had saved money because I started working when I was 18 and I am not a spender. I financed the first festivals with $10,000. It was a total success. It is at this moment that parents, family, friends, acquaintances and art lovers have accepted to give this 'love money' with nothing in return. We have collected $7,000, which is 70% of the expenses of the previous festivals. Then cultural centers lent us rooms, which reduced the costs.

SHAYDEN—FEMINIST, ARTIST—IvORY COAST

Towards a Feminist Funding Ecosystem by Kellea Miller and Rochelle Jones. October 2019. awid.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organization</th>
<th>Actions to Generate Financial Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre Africain pour l'Education aux Droits Humains</td>
<td>Sale of games developed by the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILDAF</td>
<td>Provision of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rede de Mulheres Negras do Estado do Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>Artistic training, performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Feminist Future</td>
<td>Online sales of goods and collection of training fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call.Activit</td>
<td>Magazine sales and conference services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federation of Women Lawyers</td>
<td>Processing of files for access to justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her Choice</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pendeza Weaving Project</td>
<td>Sale of hand-spun yarns and hand-woven products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanyu Center for Arts and Rights</td>
<td>Consultations, dance classes, book sales</td>
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<tr>
<td>UbyLulu</td>
<td>Consultancy fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voice of the Voiceless</td>
<td>Rental of sound equipment and space for events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Action Group</td>
<td>Consultancies, rentals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With our own means, our salaries, our motorcycles, our commitment, we first developed the aspect of ‘new culture’ which is a subversive culture with songs, dances and theater that showed that women could, and should, occupy another place than the one that society reserves for them.

**USOFORAL—Fan kundé ma silóó: On the way to empowerment—Senegal**

With or without funding, from small grants or with our own modest funds, BFOs try to carry out promising initiatives, to reduce the dependence on foundations and donors. They demonstrate their deep determination to confront problems head on and to offer appropriate solutions to the situations of women and gender expansive people. They also demonstrate, whatever the field of intervention, their proven capacities for innovation that can be strengthened and consolidated to allow BFOs to build their financial autonomy little by little, but surely. There are many other initiatives by BFOs to raise non-monetary resources, because it is not only money that counts.

**Nous Sommes la Solution/We are the Solution** is a pan-African rural women’s movement: from 2000 to 2009, lengthy consultations between peasant organizations on strategies to fight against the agricultural policies imposed by the agro-industrial multinationals did not yield any results. So, we, rural women, decided to launch a campaign to fight against this conventional agriculture and for the preservation of our environment. In each country, we identified resource persons and organizations with expertise in agroecology. We have set up networks of rural women’s organizations and they are supported by these resources persons who make their expertise available to them. With demonstrations on model plots graciously provided by families, agricultural practices have improved. The role and place of women in the family farm has improved as they become the holders of knowledge and techniques useful for agricultural production. After 3 years of this campaign that started in 2014, the organization moved from 12 associations at the beginning, to 500 bringing together 175,000 members in 2017. From there, the campaign became a movement, despite the lack of support from the authorities of our countries because our objectives are contradictory to theirs which are linked to conventional, chemical, destructive agriculture.

**Nous Sommes la Solution/We Are the Solution—Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mali, Guinea**
We created content on gender and sexuality in the African context and, in recent years, we have published and translated books for Portuguese speakers (with appropriate recognition of the authors) that are sold at a symbolic price and we give back the money for the upkeep of the organization.

_Arquivo de Identidade Angolano—Angola_

We organize bingos, bazaars, raffles and collect individual donations.

_Coletiva de Mulheres Negras Abayomi—Brazil_

BFOs use non-monetary resources for their interventions, but they also offer them to other associations and groups.

Our intervention has grown because of solidarity between feminists. A sister organization like L’Association pour la Promotion de la Femme Sénégalaise (APROFES), in Kaolack (Senegal) which was invited to an international conference on women’s involvement in conflicts, passed its invitation on to us because it was not its area of intervention, and that opened the first doors for us. APROFES also put us in touch with donors by telling them about our work.

_USOFORAL—(Fan kundé ma silóo! On the road to empowerment)—Senegal_

We recently sent young women farmers from Zambia and Zimbabwe to Mauritius, for an ‘ecology school’ that we’re involved in, and they said, ‘We brought our seeds and made a presentation because we want them to see what African seeds look like—this is our biodiversity.’ This spiritual resistance is something they believe in very strongly. Multinational companies are crowding out small-scale farmers’ seeds and indigenous seeds so they can sell their own. If multinational seed companies can send their seeds all over the world, why can’t we promote local seeds?

_Rural Women’s Assembly—Southern Africa_
Barriers to Funding

Black feminist organizations name the following as barriers to accessing funding:

• Competition between youth organizations or youth organizations and organizations that have been established for years.

• Donor requirements (registration, bank account, audit report).

• The amount—the size of the funding does not allow for large scale interventions while the needs of the struggle for social justice are enormous and the anti-rights movements are comfortably funded.

• The lack of necessary support for the functioning of Black feminist organizations and therefore the lack of support staff and the risk of burnout among leaders and activists.

• Neglected categories of rights such as the rights of trans people, girl children, non-binary and intersex people, people living with disabilities and people living in rural areas. Those who identify with more than one of these identities are further marginalized.

• The risk of organizations changing course to conform to the scope defined by donors, rather than pursuing their own momentum and the needs of their beneficiaries.

• Insufficient attention to themes such as sports, arts and culture which are powerful channels of social transformation.

• Shorter term funding when it takes a longer time frame to produce change that can be sustainable.
The promise to fund feminist collective action has certainly materialized in recent years, but still, the tragic underfunding of Black feminist movements persists. The commitment, the knowledge, the organizations and the technologies to develop and consolidate Black feminist movements, to change the world, exist. Extraordinary initiatives are carried out every day, sometimes with limited resources and a lot of commitment and creativity, which is exhausting in the long run. It is high time to make important choices to increase Black feminists’ access to monetary and non-monetary resources. They need unprecedented levels of funding—in terms of duration, scope and quality—from all sources, at all levels. They need targeted and coherent resources, flexible resourcing of programs, and also resources in terms of investments in order to construct and build their autonomy step by step so as to be in a position to empower. The resources to support Black feminist organizations must be as meaningful and transformative, as purposeful as the immense leadership, commitment, and capacity of Black feminist movement organizations themselves.
Conclusion

This chapter reveals the strength and power of Black feminist movements. The findings also highlight the deep precarity of Black feminist organizations in relation to funding and gives voice to Black feminist leaders and organizations’ demands of philanthropy.

The message to donors does not only address application procedures and criteria but also the amount of funding. Black feminist organizations call for more justice, equity and trust, which constitute the basis for a real, fruitful and productive partnership.

1. Ensure sufficient time for the application period to make funding more accessible.

2. Simplify the process of application and disbursement of funds.

3. Include examples of information to be entered to help applicants understand what is required.

4. Understand that building trust will take time, as these problems are systemic and therefore deeply rooted.

5. Engage marginalized groups in discussions, negotiations and decision-making concerning funding decisions and the determination of eligibility criteria.

6. Take a proactive stand on equity, diversity and inclusion.

Given the multiple crises facing the world and the transformative potential of Black feminist movements, Black feminist organizations in all their diversities deserve significant resourcing.
Black feminists deserve a chance. Trust Black feminists!

I recommend that funders make their funds more flexible for groups or organizations that have unique ideas and innovations to access funds. In addition, I recommend capacity building and networking opportunities for organizations that are just starting out or even establishing themselves for the first time.

Funders should abolish inaccessible eligibility requirements. Funders should largely shift to core funding and allow organizations to use grants to address the direct needs of their communities. This is because different communities have different problems. Funders should trust young women-led organizations and fund them properly with grants that are not limited to 50% of their last budget.

Think about the future you want to experience and invest in the groups that are already working to make it a reality.

Increase funding percentages for women’s organizations in a strategic and deliberate manner.

Black women’s organizations must be adequately funded. In Brazil, more than half of Black women are not gainfully employed. We are exhausted and we need support for effective day to day struggle against structural racism.

They need to work on their unconscious biases.

Do not base processes on suspicion but on trust. Leave room to learn from your mistakes. Leave room for innovation, which means taking risks.

Compare organizations with similar status rather than comparing international organizations with local civil society organizations.