

# GIRLS, THE AGENTS OF CHANGE



**LESSONS FROM A COLLABORATIVE  
APPROACH TO FUNDING  
WITH AND FOR GIRLS**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**WITH  
AND  
FOR  
GIRLS**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Finally, a special mention goes to all the incredible grassroots organisations we have been honoured to meet and work with, the winners of the With and For Girls Award for their crucial contribution to girl-centred organising which continues to inspire us every day.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funding for adolescent girls has been gaining traction in recent years. While feminist funders have traditionally focused on women and young people, there has been a drive to put more flexible funding in the hands of girl-led and girl-centred organisations.

At the forefront of this movement has been the With and For Girls Collective, which in addition to committing to flexible funding, has created a decision-making process that lets adolescent girls have the final say on where that funding should go. The Collective is a unique group that is bringing together and engaging a growing community of participatory grantmakers. It is uniquely placed to leverage data and insights on this sector, foster cross-learning and collaboration and guide policy and advocacy work.

## PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation reviews and assesses the With and For Girls Collective, the With and For Girls Award and the awards journey with a view to drawing out lessons from the Collective's experience to help encourage funders to increase flexible funding and other resources to girl-led and girl-centred organisations globally.

The evaluation captures learning and reflections on how to improve the award structure, increase girls' engagement and boost the participation of partners as well as the wider donor community. The recommendations can be adapted and applied to a broad base of funders with a view to creating the conditions to fund girl-led organisations and help them flourish.

## TWELVE GIRLS CONDUCTED INTERVIEWS AND REVIEWED THE EVALUATION FINDINGS.

The report uses several methods including an extensive desk review of Collective materials, interviews with Collective staff, Strategic Partners, award winners and girl panellists as well as focus group discussions and a survey of Referral Partners. In keeping with the independent evaluation team's and the Collective's commitment to girls' engagement, a group of twelve girls conducted interviews and reviewed the evaluation findings.



## THE WITH AND FOR GIRLS COLLECTIVE

The With and For Girls Collective is a group of nine funders, convened by Purposeful that share the common belief that girls' voices matter, and that girls are best placed to lead and inform on issues that affect them.

## TOGETHER, THEY CHAMPION THE COLLECTIVE ACTION OF GIRLS AS VITAL AGENTS OF CHANGE.

The Collective is among the most relevant, effective and fast growing entities to bring resources and attention to grassroots girl-led and girl-centred groups by providing a robust award package to a wide range of global award winners. It has also launched new funds for winners aimed at providing longer-term core support and increasing visibility and collaboration for and between winners and other girl-led and girl-centred groups.





## THE WITH AND FOR GIRLS AWARD

The With and For Girls Award recognises work by grassroots, locally-led organisations with annual incomes of between US\$20,000 to US\$500,000 that work to improve the lives of girls (10-19 year olds) and foster leadership. The awards do not focus on a particular theme; instead, organisations must demonstrate strengths in engaging girls in governance, programme design and decision-making to ensure that their work is truly girl-led and/or girl-centred.

The award package includes funds and capacity building support, as well as networking opportunities and profile raising activities for winning organisations.

In order to ensure geographical diversity and reach the widest range of girl-led and girl-centred groups, the award process relies on an impressive global network of Referral Partners —from local grassroots groups to Funders, networks, bi-lateral and multi-lateral organisations and INGOs — to source and nominate candidates for the award in five regions.

A key feature of the award is the participation of girls throughout the process. Each year, judging panels composed entirely of adolescent girls aged 13 to 18 (girl-led panels) get to choose the 20 winning organisations.

**“ ORGANISATIONS MUST DEMONSTRATE STRENGTHS IN ENGAGING GIRLS IN GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DECISION-MAKING TO ENSURE THAT THEIR WORK IS TRULY GIRL-LED AND/OR GIRL-CENTRED. ”**

## FINDINGS AND REFLECTIONS



### GIRL LEADERSHIP

The Collective has continuously sought ways to meaningfully involve adolescent girls (award winners and panellists) wherever possible. Inviting previous award winners to facilitate the girl-led panels has allowed winners to remain engaged even beyond their award. Nonetheless, more can be done to strengthen the meaningful involvement of girls by incorporating them in its governance structures as a measure of embracing participatory grantmaking fully.

### GIRL CENTRED VS. GIRL-LED

The interchangeable use of the terms girl-led and girl-centred has resulted in many organisations defining themselves as girl-led but in reality, being only girl-centred. Among the members of the Collective, there is no consensus around what “girl-led” means. While some have advocated for a strict definition, others have pointed out that truly girl-led groups are rare and this is part of the larger challenge around building girl leadership.

### INTERNAL LEARNING AND REVIEW PROCESSES

The Collective has demonstrated a commitment to using evidence to inform practice through a consistent and regular internal learning and review process, with input from girls as well as from stakeholders. The aim is to integrate this feedback into meaningful change. The Collective has a repository of rich data that needs to be better analysed as part of its processes to draw out solid evidence on impact. This is imperative moving forward.

### OPENING UP THE PROCESS TO REACH A WIDER BASE

A survey conducted by the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID) of 740 women and girls' organisations in 2011 showed that their median annual incomes were only US\$20,000. This indicates that a large proportion of organisations don't meet the lowest threshold of the With and For Girls Award (currently US\$20,000). This criterion has contributed to underrepresentation in some regions. A review of the first year of the referral system showed that some partners had struggled to find applicants from the Middle East and North Africa as well as Europe and Central Asia because groups in these regions tended to have annual incomes below US\$20,000.

The application is available in four languages –English, French, Spanish and Russian, to ensure the inclusion of as many groups as possible. However, there are many other widely used languages such as Arabic, Portuguese or Hindi that are not included, which poses challenges when trying to reach truly grassroots organisations.

### ENGAGEMENT WITH RUNNERS-UP

The Collective provides tailored feedback to all applicants. This is rare, as many funders do not provide feedback to those that are not selected. This is highly commendable, however, it is important to engage runners-up beyond the award process itself.

### MAINTAINING A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE MODEL

The Collective is a unique group that is bringing together and engaging a growing community of participatory grantmakers, implementers and Referral Partners. It is well placed to leverage data and insights on this sector, foster cross-learning and collaboration and guide policy and advocacy work. As such, it should aim high at leading such work, and expanding its horizons. It should strive for a strong organisational structure, solid learning and flexibility to adapt to a changing environment. After three intense years of shaping its processes and work methods, it is a good time for the Collective to focus on its mandate of influencing and strengthening the global community towards this end.

### AMPLIFY GIRLS VOICES

The Collective is well placed to amplify emergent, notable trends on funding for girl-led and girl-centred work globally, and to take a leadership role in how larger institutions identify, discuss, and represent the movement of adolescent girls and young women in international spaces.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### INCREASING GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

We recommend the creation of a girls' participation advisory working group that would let girls advise on how best to meaningfully engage them in governance, decision-making and activities of the Collective.

### AGREEMENT ABOUT GIRL-LED AND GIRL-CENTRED

We recommend a discussion among the Collective partners, as well as with the greater community working in the field, to agree on aspects of building greater girl leadership. This could take the form of a working group bringing together members of the Collective and experts from the field to examine these points and come up with a tighter definition of the terms girl-led and girl-centred, and to identify pointers that will help the Collective and others assess whether organisations are moving towards being girl-led. We also recommend approaching this issue with some flexibility in contexts where legal or societal restrictions prevent girls from taking on positions of leadership.

### BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

Using data to catalyse new funding for girl-led and girl-centred groups: As a Collective that seeks to leverage and catalyse new and expanded support for advancing the growth of girl-led and girl-centred organisations globally, it is important that the Collective uses its vast trove of data to analyse emerging trends in each of the regions to inform decision-making on funding needs and priorities by the Collective, its membership and the broader philanthropic community. This will make available a data-driven path to increased equity in the distribution of resources, both within the Collective and in the field of global philanthropy.

The Collective (ideally with the support of other donors) should also consider conducting a mapping of the state of funding for girl-led and girl-centred organisations to complement the analysis on trends and resource needs already carried out by some of the Collective members.

The Collective should also use data findings to advocate for increased and better targeted funding for girl-led and girl-centred organisations. We also recommend that the Collective consider adding this as a Strategic Objective on building the evidence base.

### OPENING UP THE PROCESS TO REACH A WIDER BASE

We recommend lowering the income threshold to include organisations whose budgets are below US\$20,000. This will open up award eligibility to smaller organisations and help find applicants from underrepresented regions that traditionally receive less funding.

We believe more groups can be reached by adding more languages to the process including the application forms, the website and communication material. Without the utmost efforts in these steps, the smaller grassroots groups will be locked out of the process.

### BROADENING THE FIELD BY INCREASING ENGAGEMENT WITH RUNNERS-UP

Runners-up provide an ideal pool of future award winners, having gone through the process and passed all the eligibility criteria to make it to the shortlist. The Collective should therefore put in place a mechanism to ensure that runners-up from previous years are able and invited to re-apply for the award, even if a Referral Partner has not nominated them a second time.

Capitalising on a unique opportunity to strengthen a global community advancing the work of girl-led and girl-centred organisations: The coming years should be used to explore and share innovative and diverse funding models and experiments that have the potential to not only fund local activists and groups but also change the power relations when it comes to money. This is essential in tackling the root causes of poverty and discrimination and will contribute to lasting social change. It is the right time to conduct research on the effectiveness of participatory grantmaking and the possibilities for replicating and scaling existing models.



## SINCE 2014:

**103**

Referral Partners onboarded

**474**

nominations received

**137**

organisations shortlisted

**15**

girls panels, involving 78 girls across 9 countries (UK, Romania, Egypt, Lebanon, Tanzania, Kenya, India, Nepal, Mexico)

**60**

organisations awarded in 41 countries that work directly with over 153,067 people, and together reach 1,543,360 people indirectly

**\$1.95m**

distributed in flexible funding and over \$1.5m leveraged in additional funding to Award winners

### Contributing to philanthropy and development reports:

- ▶ Peace and Security Funders Index: <http://peaceandsecurityindex.org/issues/gender-equality/>
- ▶ State of Funding for Girls: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3L18L2mAGIPdzJiUm04QUiFdjg/view>
- ▶ Synergos: <http://www.syngs.info/files/capacity-building-across-borders.pdf> Page 31
- ▶ Spring Investor Toolkit: <http://www.springaccelerator.org/knowledge/toolkit> page 20 and 24
- ▶ Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors: <https://www.rockpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/10-20-RockPA-Scaling-Solutions-02-WEB-1.pdf>

### Presenting With and For Girls at sector events:

- ▶ OECD Marketplace for Coalitions, Paris
- ▶ UNGA Roundtable on New Coalitions for SDG, New York
- ▶ Asian Venture Philanthropy Network Annual meeting, Singapore
- ▶ Elevate Children Funders Group AGM, London and Brussels
- ▶ Human Rights Funders AGM, New York and Mexico City
- ▶ #MeToo and Philanthropy Event, London
- ▶ TedX Women, London
- ▶ Girls Not Brides Annual Meeting, Kuala Lumpur

### Amplifying girls' voices in the philanthropic space:

- ▶ Girls and representatives from FFAC, Cameroon; NIGEE, Kenya; PGI, Kenya; Feminist Approach to Technology, India; NFFCK, Kyrgyzstan; Girls United for Human Rights, Pakistan; and Katswe Sistahood, Zimbabwe attended and spoke at the Girls Not Brides annual meeting.
- ▶ A girl from Integrate UK spoke on a panel at the #MeToo and Philanthropy event and at the Elevate Children Funders Group AGM.
- ▶ Girls from Asociación AMA, Guatemala; NIGEE, Kenya; Women LEAD, Nepal; I Am A Girl Barbados, Barbados; Ponton Group of Sex Educators, Poland; Young Women's Freedom Centre, USA; AMOJO, Nicaragua; ALEG, Romania; Pastoralist Girls Initiative, Kenya; Shoruq Organisation, Palestine; Arab Women in Science and Engineering (AWSc), Israel attended and led the final closing plenary of the Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN) conference in Mexico City.

### Amplifying girls' voices in the press:

**The Guardian**

**\$1M AWARDED TO GROUPS WORKING TO EMPOWER GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN**

**STYLIST**

**THESE GIRL-LED GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS SERIOUSLY DESERVE YOUR ATTENTION**

**The Daily Telegraph**

**WE NEED TO GIVE PLATFORM TO THE MALALAS OF THE WORLD**

**DIVA**

**6 BADASS WOMEN'S GROUPS FIGHTING FOR GENDER EQUALITY TODAY**

**DIVA**

**IN THE FACE OF DISCRIMINATION**

**Alliance**

**INTERVIEW: TEENAGE PANELLISTS DECIDING ON \$1 MILLION FUNDING**

**REFINERY29**

**4 YOUNG MUSLIM WOMEN ON THE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTIONS PEOPLE HAVE OF THEM**

**V**

**WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING: GIRLS HOLD THE SOLUTION**

# AWARD WINNERS: 2015, 2016 AND 2017

## The Americas and Caribbean

- Barbados**  
I am a Girl Barbados
- Belize**  
POWA - Productive Organisation for Women in Action
- Bolivia**  
A Breeze of Hope
- El Salvador**  
Mujeres de Xochlit
- Guatemala**  
Asociación Coincidir  
Asociación AMA
- Mexico**  
Melel Xojobal
- Nicaragua**  
Asociación Movimiento de Mujeres por Nuestros Derechos Humanos (MOMUNDH)  
Asociación Movimiento de Jóvenes de la Isla de Ometepe (AMOJO)
- USA**  
A Long Walk Home  
Global Girls Media  
Young Women's Freedom Centre

## Europe and Central Asia

- United Kingdom**  
Integrate UK
- Romania**  
Asociatia pentru Libertatea si Egalitatea de Gen I (ALEG)
- Germany**  
Maedchentreff Bielefeld  
Junglesbenzentrum
- Ukraine**  
Youth NGO of the Zhytomyr Oblast "Parity" (NGO Parity)
- Serbia**  
NGO ATINA
- Kyrgyzstan**  
Girl Activists of Kyrgyzstan  
The National Federation of Women's Communities of Kyrgyzstan (NFFCK)
- Armenia**  
The Women's Resource Center
- Moldova**  
TEKEDU
- Russia**  
Doveriye
- Poland**  
Ponton Group of Sex Educators

## Sub-Saharan Africa

- Mali**  
Association de Défense des Droits des Aides Ménagères et Domestiques (ADDAD)
- Kenya**  
Nyanza Initiative for Girls' Education & Empowerment (NIGEE)  
Pastoralist Girls Initiative (PGI)  
BoxGirls Kenya  
Samburu Girls Foundation
- Nigeria**  
HACEY Health Initiative
- Rwanda**  
Organisation of Women in Sports (AKWOS)
- Zimbabwe**  
Katswe Sistahood  
The Girls Legacy
- South Africa**  
Rock Girl
- Burundi**  
Association des Mamans Célibataires pour la paix et le développement (AMC)
- Cameroon**  
Forum des Femmes  
Autochtones du Cameroun

## Middle East and North Africa

- Morocco**  
Fondation YTTO pour L'hébergement et la Réhabilitation des Femmes Victimes de Violence  
L'Association Errahma des Handicapées Azilal (Errahma)
- Israel**  
Al-Bir Cultivating Culture & Community Organisation
- Occupied Palestinian Territories**  
Stars of Hope  
Psycho Social Counselling Centre for Women (PSCCW)  
Shoruq Organisation  
Arab Women in Science and Engineering (AWSC)  
ADWAR Roles for Social Change Association
- Jordan**  
Try Center for Training & Education
- Lebanon**  
INSAN Association
- Syria**  
Syrian Women's League
- Egypt**  
Tawasol for developing Istabl Antar

## Asia and the Pacific

- Pakistan**  
Aware Girls  
Girls United for Human Rights
- Samoa**  
Samoa Victim Support Group
- Myanmar**  
Girl Determined
- Hong Kong**  
Teen's Key- Young Women Development Network
- Mongolia**  
The 'PRINCESS' Center  
Beautiful Hearts Against Sexual Violence (BHASV)
- Nepal**  
Her Turn  
Shakti Samuha  
Women LEAD Nepal
- India**  
Feminist Approach to Technology  
Philippines  
Roots of Health

# THEMES COVERED BY AWARD WINNERS IN 2015, 2016 AND 2017

Health and mental health

**Indigenous rights**

Human rights defenders

**Peace-building  
and security**

LGBTQ rights

Technology and  
innovation

**Media, arts, cultural  
representation**

Environment, climate  
change and sustainability

Humanitarian relief

# rights

Disability rights

# Gender-based violence

Economic

**empowerment**

Safe cities

# Trafficking

# Education

Political participation and  
leadership

**Domestic workers' rights**

Refugee and  
migrant rights

**Sexual and reproductive  
health and rights**

# WITH AND FOR GIRLS



*Nike Foundation*

NoVo Foundation  
create. change.



THE GLOBAL FUND FOR  
Children  
UK TRUST