



BRAVE CREATIVE RESILIENT

THE GLOBAL STATE OF
YOUNG FEMINIST ORGANIZING



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ACRONYMS

AWID: Association for Women's Rights in Development

CANZUS: Canada, North America, New Zealand and Australia

CEE/CIS: Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation

FRIDA: Flexibility, Resources, Inclusivity, Diversity, Action

INGOs: International Non-Governmental Organizations

LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean

LGBTQI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex

MENA: Middle East and North Africa

SGBV: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SRHR: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

SSA: Sub-Saharan Africa

WHR: Women's Human Rights

WHRDs: Women Human Rights Defenders

WITM: 'Where is the Money for Women's Rights?' annual survey done by AWID

YFOs: Young Feminist Organizations

YFA-AWID: Association for Women's Rights in Development's Young Feminist Activism Program

Note: We have chosen the term Young Feminist Organizations (YFOs) to refer to the diversity of collectives, groups, and organizations led by young feminists surveyed in this research.





EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY:
TOP FINDINGS &
A CALL TO ACTION

Over the past decade especially, young feminist-led organizations have garnered a reputation as outspoken, courageous, and creative movement-builders, pushing transformative change and social justice around the world. Until now, however, no comprehensive global study has been done to map key characteristics of young feminist organizing, including their current financial status. In 2014, FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund and AWID's Young Feminist Activism Program embarked on a research effort to answer these very questions, and this report outlines key findings from this joint effort.

1.1 Top Findings

This report's main findings indicate that despite the fact that young feminist organizations are using innovative strategies to tackle some of the most pressing issues of our time, with some of the most vulnerable populations, they are strikingly under-resourced and their sustainability is in jeopardy. The summary below provides a 'snapshot' of who young feminist organizations are, the issues and strategies they work on, and the financial and political realities that shape their work.

1. Young Feminists are Diverse and Organize Intersectionally

Young feminists are organizing across movements in an intersectional way, locally, nationally and regionally. Young feminist organizations (YFOs) represent diverse social movements and expressions of feminism and include movements such as: youth, climate justice, sex workers, LGBTQI, indigenous, sexual reproductive rights, grassroots women, human rights defenders, health and disability rights.

2. Many YFOs are 'Emerging' and Relatively New

Half of participant groups can be described as emerging or nascent, as they were created since 2010 with only one sixth in existence for more than ten years. These findings likely reflect a significant increase in young feminist organizing since 2010 or alternately may reflect a dynamic sector that re-forms and re-organizes frequently.

3. YFOs are Charting their Own Patterns of Development

YFOs fall into three distinct groups or 'stages of development': 1) 'Small emerging' (under two years, less than 15 staff); 2) 'Established fast growing' (two or more years, more than 15 staff), and 3) 'Established slow growing' (five years or more with staff size remaining about the same). With 25% of survey respondents fitting into this last 'Established slow growing' category, we learn something important about YFOs—they do not necessarily pursue growth as a goal; small organizations are deemed valuable in and of themselves.

4. YFOs are Well-Integrated into Larger Movements and Work Intergenerationally

YFOs are collaborating with activists from other social movements and generations, strongly suggesting that young feminist groups are integrated into wider movements. Two thirds (67%) of survey respondents strongly agree that they collaborate with activists in other movements, and a majority (63%) collaborate with a range of generations of activists.

HALF OF PARTICIPANT
GROUPS WERE CREATED
SINCE 2010.

5. A Significant Proportion of YFOs are Unregistered

A small majority of YFOs are registered (63%) but many are not, by choice or necessity, often resulting in increased difficulty in accessing resources and heightened insecurity, a trend that differs dramatically by region. A majority of groups in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia-Pacific are legally registered (84% and 71% respectively), with the highest numbers of unregistered groups coming from LAC (51%) and MENA (43%). The main reasons YFOs give for not opting to register their organizations include: the process is too expensive (35%); not being registered is a political choice / decision (33%); and they face a series of legal, fiscal, and administrative burdens that hinder the registration process (30%).

6. YFOs are Working Within a Broad Variety of Organizational Structures

YFOs represent a diversity of life stages and organizing models, which vary according to context, location and political identification. Many young feminist groups forgo registration in favor of informal or collective structures, sometimes using host organizations or umbrella structures to receive funding or capacity development. When it comes to how YFOs conduct their work, many YFOs depend on a mix of virtual and actual workspaces. A degree of informality is confirmed by the fact that 40% coalesce around specific issues or campaigns and are relatively dormant at other times.

7. YFOs are Leading Through Participation and Consensus-Building

YFOs are using a variety of decision-making models, but primarily employ participatory majority rule and consensus models. One quarter of survey respondents report using three or more kinds of decision-making models. Decision-making for Sub-Saharan African groups is more reliant on boards of directors and membership bodies than in any other region. When it comes to age, most organizations include leaders in age groups from 18 to 35. While leadership participation is lower in older age groups, 39% of organizations nonetheless include people in the leadership aged over 35.

8. Top Challenges and Priority Areas of Support

Lack of financial resources is by far the most widely shared challenge in the survey, with 91% of respondents ranking lack of financial resources as their top challenge. A significant number of groups are challenged by lack of capacity, backlash and fundamentalism, and threats to safety and security. Young feminist groups place widespread value on training in project management, financial management, and resource mobilization, which speaks to their heavy interest in promoting their own financial sustainability and organizational development to continue the collective struggle.

91% OF RESPONDENTS RANKED
LACK OF FINANCIAL
RESOURCES AS THEIR TOP CHALLENGE.

MORE THAN HALF OF RESPONDENTS REGULARLY FEEL

UNSAFE

BECAUSE OF THE WORK THEY DO.

9. Threats to the Security and Safety of YFOs

More than half of survey respondents regularly feel unsafe or threatened because of the work they do. This includes about one in eight who feel this way **all the time**. YFOs surveyed are challenged by backlash and fundamentalism, threats to safety and security, and political instability, as well as shrinking democratic spaces. YFOs feel threatened by a wide range of perpetrators, comprising both state and non-state actors. Religious fundamentalism is reported across all regions, with YFOs from Asia-Pacific and MENA being the most affected by threats and violent attacks perpetrated by members of extremist or fundamentalist religious groups. A regional analysis of identified perpetrators shows the following:

- In contrast to other regions, MENA and Asia-Pacific based organizations identify extremist or fundamentalist groups as threats much more prominently.
- Organizations in the sample from LAC and SSA are more commonly unsafe and threatened by state, departmental and provincial authorities.
- Over half of the organizations from SSA feel unsafe because of threats and attacks perpetrated by traditional authorities.
- With the exception MENA and the Global North, one quarter of respondents across regions contend with issues of insecurity as a result of threats by members of organized crime (e.g. gangs, cartels).

10. YFOs Work on the Most Pressing Issues of our Time

Top priority issues for YFOs are **gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and rights, and political and economic empowerment for women**. Regionally speaking, women's empowerment, gender-based violence, and women's leadership are priorities for MENA, whereas Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is predominantly reported in LAC and CEE/CIS regions. HIV and AIDS are almost exclusively mentioned in Africa, with economic empowerment being a key issue area of work in Sub-Saharan Africa. LGBTQI issues are prioritized primarily by MENA, LAC, and CANZUS, and registering comparatively low for Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia-Pacific regions. Finally, gender-based violence is a key priority area across all regions, with the highest prioritization in MENA and LAC.

11. YFOs use Innovative and Creative Strategies for Effecting Change

YFOs' strategies are heavily focused on information sharing and knowledge building, including: advocacy, campaigning, education, capacity building and awareness-raising. A secondary focus is on organizing and leadership and movement building, while direct action and service provision are not a primary focus for most. FRIDA applicant analysis shows that many young feminist groups also make use of innovative and creative strategies to effect change through 'activism', including mediums such as painting, music, theatre, communication and technology. Direct action and street mobilization are also employed to raise awareness and bring about change.

12. YFOs have Expansive Reach and Coverage

While YFOs work with multiple communities, four populations of chief concern are grassroots women (46%), Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) at risk (38%), students (38%) and LGBTQI people (33%). WHRDs at risk were prioritized highest by MENA (47%) and of high significance to all other regions except CANZUS. Over half of the respondents from Asia-Pacific and 46% of the organizations from SSA prioritize grassroots women the most, while in the CANZUS and CEE/CIS respondents work primarily with LGBTQI communities. Compared to other regions, CANZUS and Western Europe prioritize minority ethnic communities the most but hardly work with rural people, whereas SSA organizations prioritize people living with HIV/AIDS.

13. YFOs are Staffed Primarily from the Populations They Work With

YFOs are led by young women and trans* youth aged under 35 years old, and they are fighting for change through direct action mostly at local and national levels in all corners of the world. **75% of respondents report that their organizations are made up of staff who represent the populations they are serving.** YFOs therefore possess unique awareness and understanding of the support needs of young people in their communities. This is substantiated by the FRIDA applicant findings which revealed that young feminist activists are driven to form their own organizations as a result of personal experiences of discrimination and rights violations, and an associated lack of human rights knowledge.

14. The Under-Resourcing of YFOs

YFOs in the sample have incomes that are strikingly low, especially when compared to more mainstream women's rights organizations. They also rely upon a diversity of income sources to sustain their work, **with the notable exception or absence of** multilateral or bilateral agencies and national governments. Key findings include:

- **Self-generated income sources and membership fees** are a primary source of funding for YFOs, especially for groups working in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific and North America. This is an indication that many YFOs are less reliant on traditional sources of funding, opting instead to leverage resources independently.
- **Half of survey respondents report 2014 incomes under \$5,000** and one quarter are working with incomes of under \$500 per year.
- About one third of surveyed organizations (30%) rely on a single source of income or none at all (14%).
- **Women's Funds, INGOs and Foundations are a much more common source** of revenue than domestic or foreign governments, and larger organizations benefitted from these channels of funding most. Funding from local and national governments is notably rare.
- While YFOs receive a significant portion of core funding (34% of their 2014 annual budgets), respondents across all regions report their **top funding challenge as being securing long-term multi-year support**, as well as lack of knowledge of grant opportunities (especially in LAC and SSA) and difficulty in meeting the required criteria.

15. The Financial Precariousness of YFOs

Projected 2015-2016 incomes by YFOs surveyed showed that only a handful of organizations (6%) had secured 90% or more of their 2015 funding in May 2015. In contrast, **57% had secured only one quarter or less of the funds they needed for the year.** At that time, 75% had secured less than one quarter of their funding for 2016. Additional findings below highlight the precarious financial status of YFOs.

- **Volunteer Efforts Fuel Young Feminist Organizing:** A majority of young feminist-led organizations operate on small annual budgets and their work predominantly relies upon volunteer efforts. **46% of the organizations surveyed have no paid staff**, and only a minor group (14%) had most of their members in paid positions.
- **Low savings and reserves compromise the financial resilience of YFOs in the sample.** The majority of organizations (56%) believe they could operate for less than six months at most if they did not secure any additional sources of funding. Only 10% could last more than one year.
- **One quarter of groups (27%) have been in jeopardy of closing at some point**, a significant percentage given the relative youth of the YFOs surveyed. Funding, political instability and insecurity are the primary issues threatening the sustainability of YFOs.
- It is important to note some YFOs are not seeking long-term sustainability and instead are evolving in response to a strategic moment.



1.2 Recommendations: A Call to Action

Based on the report's main findings, funders and YFOs are faced with an important opportunity to build meaningful and long-lasting collaborations. Funders in all of their diversity should consider the following recommendations as an evidence-based guide to supporting different types of young feminist-led organizing ... a call to action!

1. Recognize the value and diversity of young feminist organizing.

Girls, young women, and trans* youth are leading sustainable, holistic and transformational changes in their communities and are not merely beneficiaries of projects managed by adults or large non youth-led organizations. Through their work, young feminists are challenging and addressing crucial issues of equality, sexuality, security and human rights. Recognizing the value of young feminist organizing means understanding the importance of their diverse forms and structures, as well as their cultures and the environments within which they work.

2. Prioritize supporting girls, young women, and collective efforts led by young people.

Proactive work is needed to understand and rectify the shortage of funding for young feminist organizing. Funders should develop strategies for reaching out to, engaging with, and supporting these diverse groups, recognizing that current models are not accessible to many YFOs. Investment is needed in creating leadership opportunities, participation at national and international levels, and capacity building projects.

3. Fund intersectional, intergenerational agenda-setting projects.

Most YFOs work on a range of different issues and with diverse beneficiaries. Funders must recognize that many groups do not

have a single issue focus, or even single identity or group focus either, and therefore reduce funding calls which require applicants to identify themselves with a narrow set of themes or activities. Instead, there need to be greater opportunities for groups working at intersectional and intergenerational levels to submit proposals which are cross-cutting and reflect the complex and diverse reality of young feminist organizing.

4. Support creative and unconventional strategies to achieve change.

YFOs focus on changing cultural and social attitudes and practices. Moving beyond traditional advocacy, education and awareness-raising tactics, it is key to understand the value of art, theatre, film, graffiti, social media, blogging, radio, TV, street mobilizations, school occupations, and street blockings in achieving groups' aims. Recognizing the value of these strategies in achieving widespread social and cultural change is key to supporting the vibrancy, creativity and impact of young feminist organizing.

5. Engage with the strengths of participatory decision-making models.

Participatory models take advantage of the different strengths and expertise of those involved and can lead to greater collective understanding and ownership of projects, which should be seen as strength by funders. These models can also appear cumbersome and slow to outsiders. Funders can

work with young feminist applicants to ensure that their grant-making processes take into account how groups work, communicate and make decisions.

6. Offer multi-year and flexible grants to reduce fundraising burdens and allow for strategic responses to context shifts.

Funders should aim to provide flexible and multi-year funding which allow groups to pursue and react to unforeseen opportunities and challenges, to adjust programmatic priorities and to respond to changing environments. Multi-year grants take into consideration the long-term commitment needed to create social and cultural change and demonstrate impact. They give young feminist organizers the space to focus on action, engagement and reflection as opposed to constantly searching for new funding.

7. Make funds accessible to smaller and volunteer-led organizations.

YFOs operate with very limited financial resources and much of their core work relies on volunteers. Reflecting this reality, funders should reduce the administrative burden of applying and reporting for grants. Allowing groups to choose their own proposal format, reducing cumbersome financial requirements, and engaging and communicating directly with grantees can simplify and expedite fundraising processes for all involved.

8. Help channel resources to unregistered groups.

Over a third of YFOs surveyed are unregistered either by choice or necessity, situating them as less financially secure and vulnerable to heightened insecurity. Funders from all sectors can be trailblazers by employing alternative mechanisms for channeling funds

to (mostly small) YFOs who need it most. Donors should consider partnering with a host organization, umbrella structures, or women's funds who are experienced in resourcing unregistered groups and overcoming technical, context-specific obstacles.

9. Invest in integrated protection, well-being and self-care.

YFOs are working in contexts of significant violence and insecurity; however, because of limited capacities they are heavily focused on promoting their own financial sustainability and organizational development to continue the collective struggle. There is therefore a critical role funders can play in both increasing awareness around issues of self-care and security, and investing resources in programs that can support the resilience and long-term sustainability of young feminist human rights defenders and their organizations.

10. Go beyond funding.

Money alone will not ensure the success of young feminist organizing. The young feminist movement needs holistic support including opportunities for movement building, training and capacity building, and integrated protection strategies. The funding community can support this by providing opportunities for young feminists to take on leadership roles and participate in grant-making decisions, to attend events and conferences, to network with wider movements, and to access capacity and knowledge building trainings and resources. Support can also take the form of partnering with YFOs and other committed YFO donors and engaging in joint advocacy initiatives to expand available resources, influence the amount and quality of allocated funding, and diversify ways of grant-making.



BACKGROUND
&
RATIONALE

“**YOUNG PEOPLE** &
 PARTICULARLY YOUNG WOMEN, YOUNG PEOPLE
 OF COLOR, & YOUNG LGBTQI PEOPLE ARE AT A
 HUGE **DISADVANTAGE**
 WHEN IT COMES TO ACCESSING ECONOMIC FREEDOM,
 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, & CLAIMING THEIR
 SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS.
 THEY CONTINUE TO FACE LEGAL, SOCIAL, &
 CULTURAL BARRIERS TO ACCESS &
 ARE THE **EXPERTS** ON THEIR
OWN EXPERIENCES
 —THEY KNOW HOW TO ADDRESS THESE BARRIERS.
 ALL THEY **NEED** IS THE **SUPPORT**
 (BOTH TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL, IN SOME CASES) TO DO SO.”

2.1 The Organizing Context

Throughout history, young feminist activists have been a crucial part of feminist and social justice struggles at the local, regional and global levels. Young women, girls and trans* youth activists are part of diverse groups, movements, organizations, coalitions and networks, and play a vital role in the strengthening, rejuvenation and sustainability of feminist activism.

YFOs are catalyzing change, working on issues such as sexual and gender-based violence, early and forced marriage, LGBTQI rights, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Ruby Johnson, co-Director of FRIDA, described the mobilization work and role of young feminists 20 years after the Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing as powerfully distinct:

Commonly, groups are led by young women who have directly experienced rights violations themselves, whether survivors of violence, child brides, or living multiple forms of discrimination. It is their lived experience that gives them a unique perspective on how to positively affect their situation and to devise strategies appropriate to their local context.¹

Young feminist groups are utilizing creative strategies to effect the change they want to see in the world—be it through art, theatre, poetry, dance, sport, or through communi-

cations and technology such as social media, radio, TV or printed visuals. Through use of these strategies, YFOs are taking on direct action in an effort to create change at the most difficult level of all—shifts in cultural and social attitudes, beliefs and practices.² Young feminist activists are accomplished agents of change, playing leadership roles in the waves of uprisings around the world. From Hong Kong, to Cambodia, to Chile, and of course sweeping the Middle East and North Africa in 2011, we have borne witness to the adaptability of YFOs who, among others, take on roles as social media revolutionaries, as activists, as UN advocates and lobbyists, as campaigners organizing for transgender equality, and as warriors for climate justice demanding protection for land, territory, and environment.

Despite the collective strength and power of YFOs and movements, impunity and violations of women’s rights and gender inequality persist. Patriarchal, heteronormative, and cisnormative ideologies and backlash in varied contexts continually drive the need for advocacy work by young feminist groups and their communities. The dominant neoliberal economic paradigm, with a focus on market-driven development, deepens inequalities and poverty. Militarization, increased repression and the rise of fundamentalisms across regions also shape the current contexts within which YFOs work.

1) Johnson, Ruby. “20 Years of Mobilization: The Role of Young Feminists.” United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNISRD). March 16, 2015. [http://www.unrisd.org/UNRISD/website/news-view.nsf/\(httpNews\)/5D485609486C5335C1257E-0A0057E31C?OpenDocument](http://www.unrisd.org/UNRISD/website/news-view.nsf/(httpNews)/5D485609486C5335C1257E-0A0057E31C?OpenDocument)

2) See Gender at Work’s framework for social change: <http://www.gendematwork.org/OurWork/OurApproach/GWFramework.aspx>

YOUNG WOMEN, GIRLS, & TRANS* YOUTH ACTIVISTS

AROUND THE GLOBE EXPERIENCE A

RANGE OF CHALLENGES

THAT AFFECT THEIR DAILY LIVES & THREATEN THEIR WORK.

Immersed in these insecure and oppressive contexts, young women, girls, and trans* youth activists around the globe experience a range of challenges that affect their daily lives and threaten their work. Over the last decade there has been increased violence against women human rights defenders (WHRD), with attempts to silence their voices. More specifically, in addition to enduring attacks from state and non-state actors, very often young WHRDs are also subjected to greater oppression, stigma, and aggression at home. Family members and community members can contribute to constant pressure on young WHRDs, and employ different methods and tactics to restrict their activism and shame them. In one of the webinars on security and self-care that FRIDA recently delivered, several young feminist activists stated that they were pointed out, isolated, and discriminated by their own family members because of the existing prejudices towards the work they do. WHRDs work to overcome double stigma and discrimination, not only outside but also from within their own families.

Furthermore, how WHRDs experience violence is also affected by other factors, such as class, religion, age, language, sexual orientation, location, race or ethnicity. As Virisila Buadromo, from Fiji explained, age together with gender can be used as a factor to attack WHRDs:

WHRDs who are older are able to express themselves with fewer repercussions than someone younger. Younger activists may get boxed into the category of 'a young angry woman who doesn't know her place.' In a patriarchal cultural context, this means that 'you don't know your place traditionally and you are stepping out of line and you're just trouble.' Moreover, one can be accused of representing new western ideas, overtaking old cultural ideas.³

Young WHRDs often face health problems derived from stress and exhaustion of their daily work, and are constantly bearing witness to human rights violations and violence. A holistic approach to security that takes into consideration the concept of the well-being of young WHRDs, encompassing a range of support to protect their physical and psychological well-being and safety as needed.

Despite their critical contributions, there remains a general lack of awareness of the importance and impact of YFOs in defending human rights, in addition to a widespread lack of understanding of the repressive and often insecure contexts within which they work. This manifests in lack of trust and space for power in decision-making, often from within social movements, organizations at the local and international level, governments, and funders. Consequently, their contribution is often uncharted and their activism unrecognized.

³) Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition. "Our Right to Safety: Women Human Rights Defenders' Holistic Approach to Protection." Toronto: March, 2014, page 11 (quotation from Virisila Buadromo, Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Fiji; personal interviews.).

2.2 Rationale and Objectives

After witnessing the complex daily realities faced by young feminist groups, in 2014 FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund and YFA-AWID embarked on a collaborative action research initiative to map the current state of global young feminist organizing. This idea for the project came about through the realization that FRIDA was sitting on a wealth of data collected through the Young Feminist Fund grant-making process. FRIDA applicants and grantees represent a diverse range of organizations led by young women and trans* youth under 30 who work on inclusive organizing, collective action, movement building, and who most often employ feminist and human rights approaches to their work on a diverse range of issues. With a few years of grant-making under its belt, an anecdotal picture began to form of the FRIDA applicant pool: young feminist groups are often seeking funding for the first time, they are working in both traditional and experimental ways, many are newly founded, and they

represent an amazing geographic breadth (facilitated in part because FRIDA accept applications in seven languages).

The research project was therefore designed to move beyond the anecdotal, to map the work of YFOs around the world and achieve **the following objectives:**

- Increase knowledge, visibility, and recognition for young feminist organizing around the world, including the most pressing issues, priorities, strategies, and challenges they face;
- Contribute to movement building among YFOs and increase connections across regions, sectors and issues;
- Equip YFOs with data to access and advocate for better and higher quality funding to sustain their movements;
- Facilitate discussion and dialogue among and between young women, girls and trans* youth so as to identify leadership and development opportunities.



2.3 Methodology

Research findings and analysis in this report reflect an almost two year process of ongoing collaboration by a core group of young and older feminist researchers and activists. Three independent consultants were hired to conduct qualitative and quantitative analysis of two major datasets, described in more depth below. At the same time, the overarching vision, substantive engagement to the research and writing of the report was provided by FRIDA and AWID staff members located around the world. This feminist, multi-generational, geographically diverse and collaborative approach to research in many ways mirrors the nature of young feminist organizing: dynamic, experimental and diverse. This international mapping was conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies to document the trends, challenges and opportunities of young women, girl, and trans* youth-led organizations.

Challenges

To understand the profile and circumstances of young feminist groups, we rely on samples drawn from funder databases and from survey data. These research conclusions are subject to whatever biases may exist in those samples. In the case of applications, we only have information from organizations who are interested in seeking funding and able to do so despite obvious challenges related to access, capacity and language.

Surveys actively look beyond funding applicants to include any organization which self-identifies as a young feminist group. However, surveys are limited to those groups which the researchers are able to reach and those which are subsequently able to respond. Language and technology limitations to surveys are real and will disproportionately affect the response rates of smaller and less sophisticated groups.

Finally, we cannot verify the precise degree to which funder databases or surveys reflect the entire population. The regional distribution of the survey, for example, does not mir-

ror the global population distribution and is heavily weighted toward countries in Africa and Latin America. For this reason, the report uses percentages rather than counts to make comparisons between regions.

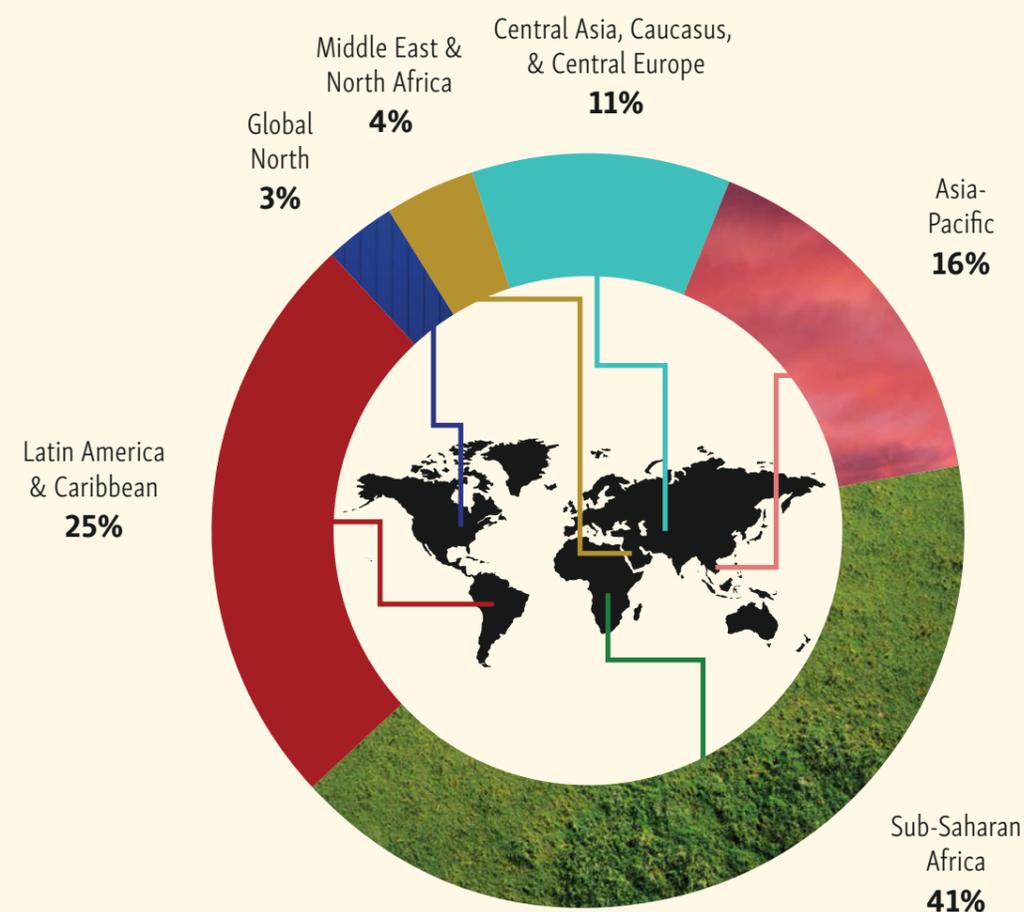
These challenges are by no means unique to this research and, indeed, are present to a greater or lesser degree in all ground-breaking research which seeks to understand diverse sectors across the globe. These challenges are balanced by a sincere attempt by the researchers to be as inclusive and far-reaching as possible and by an honest acknowledgement of biases which are likely to exist. This study benefits from the fact that it triangulates between two different data sources (a database and a survey) and the fact that the samples in both cases are significant in size.

These strengths, combined with an appropriate caution related to potential biases in the data, combine to produce findings which should significantly advance the common understanding of YFOs around the world.

Phase 1: Application Analysis of FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund

From 2012 to 2014, FRIDA received 1360 applications representing over 100 countries annually, and spanning diverse movements, contexts and thematic areas. The first phase of data collection and analysis took place between August and December 2014 and entailed coding and analysis of applications from three separate the grant-making cycles, all of which fit FRIDA's funding crite-

ria. Applications were clustered according to the following categories: challenges faced; funding experience and income sources; registration status; thematic areas of work; and strategies used by the young feminist groups. Below is a regional distribution breakdown of the 2012 to 2014 FRIDA applications that were analyzed.



REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF DATA COLLECTED

The bulk of applications came from Africa, LAC, and Asia-Pacific.

Base: 1,360 applications (SSA: 556, A-P: 216, MENA: 54, LAC: 338, CIS/CEE: 151, GN: 45)



It is important to note that all data from the FRIDA application sample is from YFOs who are looking for funding, thus it is not necessarily an objective demonstration of their work, and is a pitch for resources. Given that reality, we thought it essential to conduct an additional large-scale survey, digging deeper on a range of questions and criteria.

Phase 2: Global Survey

The survey questionnaire was designed to build on the analysis of FRIDA application data and expand the sample beyond FRIDA applicants to provide a deeper understanding of the key features of young feminist organizing. The survey aimed to advance the following three objectives:

1. Explore who young feminist activists and organizers are, the issues they work on, the strategies they use, and the challenges they face in their organizing;
2. Understand the structure and leadership of YFOs;
3. Gain insight into the resources currently available to young feminists and the top funding challenges they face.

YFA-AWID and FRIDA developed a questionnaire in three languages (English, French and Spanish) and disseminated it as broadly as possible to encourage young women and trans* youth-led organizations from all regions to participate. The survey questionnaire was circulated through social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), in newsletters and published on dedicated channels targeting young women and trans* youth activists such as the Young Feminist Wire. The survey was also sent out to all previous and current FRIDA grantee groups and applicants. The survey was launched in March 2015 and responses were accepted over one month.

For the purpose of the research, responses were accepted from autonomous and independent organizations led by young people aged under 35 years old, with a primary focus on promoting girls, young women and trans* rights, gender equality, social justice, and organizations that work on environmental issues or development. Those who did not meet the eligibility criteria were excluded from the dataset discussed in this report.

In total, 694 respondents from 118 different countries completed the survey questionnaire. The majority of respondents were from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with 235 out of 694 questionnaires completed, followed by 180 questionnaires completed by survey respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and 97 surveys submitted by YFOs from Asia-Pacific. The majority of the surveys (434) were completed in English, 92 were submitted in French and 168 in Spanish. Questionnaires were also received from Canada, North America, New Zealand and Australia (CANZUS) and Western Europe, although to a minor extent (10%). The lowest responses came from Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) (5%) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (4%) regions. Around 34 out of the 698 questionnaires submitted came from organizations that work in multiple regions.

Phase 3: Funding Scan

The third and final stage of this action research initiative aims to provide a broad picture of funding availability and alignment of priorities between funders and YFOs around the globe. Through desk research and consultations with funding institutions and YFOs, the funding scan provides much-needed analysis of the challenges and opportunities that exist across funding sectors. This research is set to be published in late 2016.



WHO ARE
YOUNG
FEMINIST
ORGANIZATIONS?

This research effort focuses on YFOs led by activists aged 35 or younger responsible for the design, implementation, management and evaluation of the organizing work. Our research exposes a first-of-its-kind profile of YFOs from around the world who share distinct characteristics: **Over half of YFOs are new; they are overwhelmingly feminist in their approach; they work collaboratively; a small majority are registered; and many rely on informal organizing structures.** In this chapter, we illustrate some of the foremost features of YFOs in more depth.

“WE BRING THE FEMINIST
REFLECTION AND
 INTERGENERATIONAL **DIALOGUE**
 FROM A HOLISTIC AND SYSTEMIC APPROACH
 THAT USES LUDIC, ART AND SPIRITUALITY AS
 PEDAGOGY AND METHODOLOGY WHICH ALLOW US
 TO **EXPRESS** OURSELVES,
 MULTIPLY **KNOWLEDGE**
 AND BUILD **COLLECTIVE**
 PROPOSALS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.”

—LÚDICA FEMINISTA

3.1 Diverse and Collaborative

Similar to more mainstream women's rights organizations, the scope of work for YFOs is largely focused at the **local and national levels**. With respect to **where the work is located**, the vast majority of YFOs are concentrated in three regions for both datasets: Sub-Saharan Africa (41% and 34%), Latin America and the Caribbean (25% and 26%) and Asia-Pacific (16% and 14%). As demonstrated in the figure below, a much smaller number of applications and survey respondents came from Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) region (11% and 5% respectively), and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (4% for both) and Global North (3% and 10%). 1% of the survey respondents considered themselves 'global' organizations and 5% described their work as being located within multiple regions.⁴

In addition to being located around the world, YFOs are also strikingly diverse, representing a range of social movements and identities. Of the almost forty identities coded within the FRIDA applicant datasets, groups

4) The disparity in the regional distribution of FRIDA applications received makes it difficult to assess global and regional tendencies. Consequently, we have been cautious in examining the findings, taking into account the misrepresentation of the Global North and MENA regions. We always refer to the outcomes of the dataset on the sample, without transferring those results to a global trend of YFOs worldwide. Also note that for both datasets, 'Global North' encompasses responses/applicants from the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Western Europe.

most strongly self-identify as feminists, as Human Rights Defenders, as students, and as LGBTQI activists with many identifying as young lesbian, trans* and queer among other identities. Below is an example of a FRIDA grantee whose program of work is driven and informed by an intersectional approach.

The global survey results point to another interesting feature of YFOs — a strong consistency between the populations they serve and the internal composition of the organizers leading the work. While we discuss top beneficiary groups in more depth in Section 3 of this report, we know that the vast majority of survey respondents (84%) self-identify as **"definitely feminist"** organizations, and they are also **run primarily by the populations they work with (75%)**.⁵ It's important to note here that organizers themselves are grassroots women, WHRDs at risk, students and/or LGBTQI people.

This aligns well with a finding uncovered through the qualitative analysis of FRIDA applications—that young feminist activists are driven to form their own organizations as a result of personal experiences of discrimination and rights violations, and an associated lack of human rights knowledge.

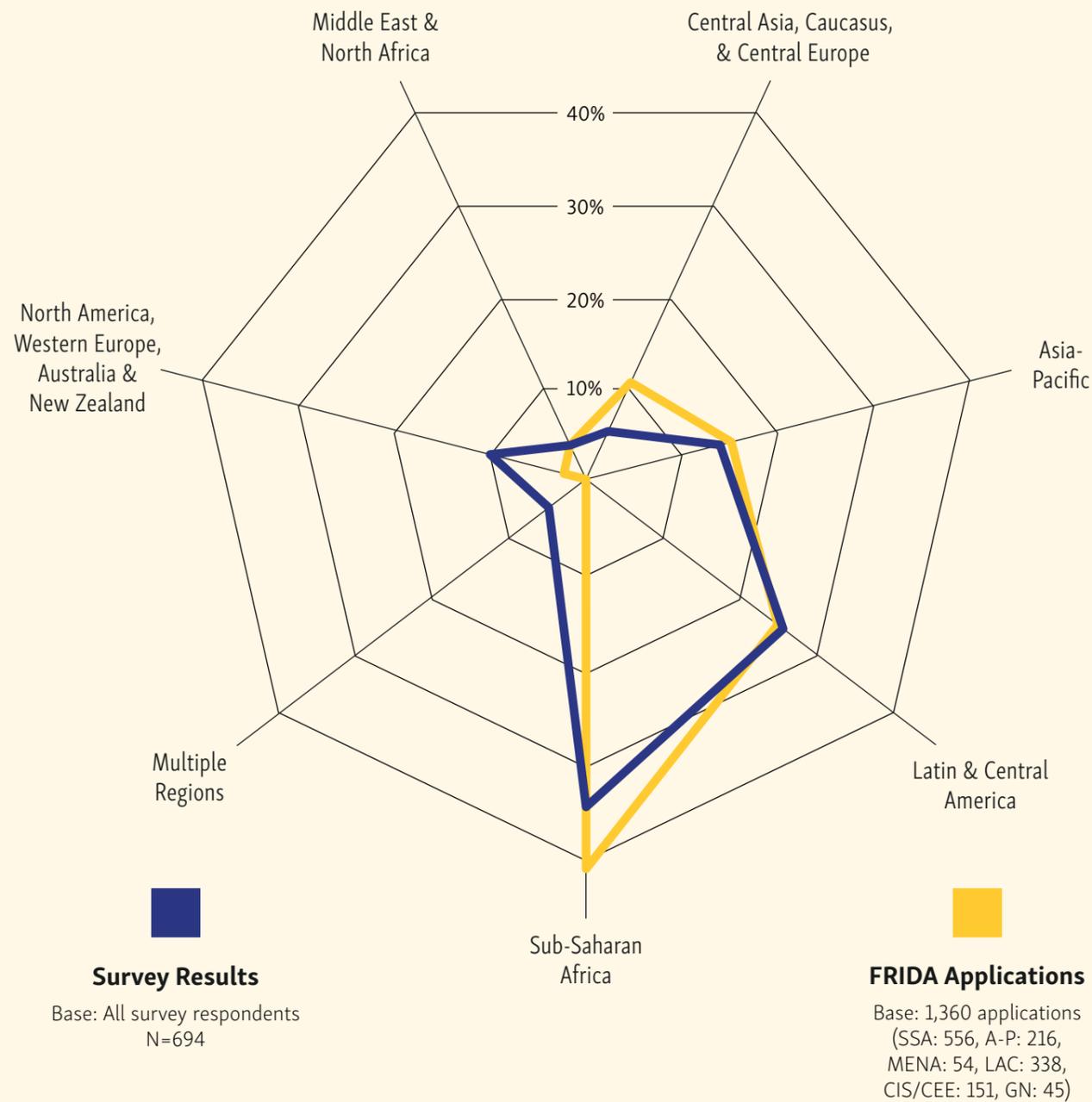
5) For the minority who do not identify fully as feminist, this is sometimes based on a view that the term is unhelpful to use publicly. Others view themselves as somewhat feminist based on the populations they serve.

HAUS OF KHAMELEON: INTERSECTIONALITY IN ACTION

Haus of Khameleon (HK) is a movement led by young transgender women under the age of 30 who are lobbying, campaigning, organizing, researching, training and advocating for transgender equality in the Pacific. The group considers that art is able to shape transformative insights and possibilities that literally redirect how people think and act: therefore, they use a wide variety of media, including painting, sculpture, installation, video, graphics, music, literature, photography and performance to create, celebrate, inform and inspire each other. Their work is grounded in principles of feminism and includes gender equality, inclusivity, respect, tolerance and understanding. Haus of Khameleon has developed an understanding of how their social identities—gender, race, sexuality, class—function, and how capitalism, racism, sexism, hetero-sexism work together to compound oppression. By using feminist, human rights based and evidence-based approaches, they address trans* issues but also other intersectional issues—ecological justice, gender-based violence, peace and security.



REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF YOUNG FEMINIST ORGANIZING



For so many, feminism is what drives and sustains YFOs who are fighting for human rights, climate justice, and gender equality. The excerpts below showcase the feminist ideologies of FRIDA applicants, and the beautiful ways in which feminism blooms across regions and contexts.



We believe feminism is a fight and drive for equality between all people. Because of oppressive traditions, and a history of patriarchy, women remain severely underrepresented in formal political and economic situations and in informal social situations as well. We believe affirmative action is necessary in most instances to enhance the status and well-being of women. We are aware that in many, many instances women have shown they are capable, strong, exceptional leaders, decision-makers, and agents of their own change, but we also think not enough people are aware of this fact. We are all feminists, and want to enhance what we believe is the first step in making change and creating progress. That step is education. We believe the more people know, the more they too are likely to become feminists and partake in our drive for equality.



Feminism, we believe, is all about helping women express their needs and aspiration that they break the social chains and find their way in life far from limiting themselves on old and worn-out traditional roles. It is about empowering women and giving them voice to speak out for themselves rather than letting others speak for them. This is exactly why we created this group. Because we believe that women can do it.



Feminism fights for equality between men and women as well as for the rights of women. Radical feminism and liberal feminism both state that patriarchy is the institution to fight against if equality is to be attained. Therefore, in our work we fight against patriarchy by seeking to break down gender stereotypes which were fostered by patriarchy. We train our young women and girls to be leaders and be their own heroes which is feminism. Patriarchy glorifies women who are mothers and wives and we defy this by saying women can be much more than mothers and wives.



Another key finding from the survey is how YFOs are collaborating with activists from other social movements and generations, strongly suggesting that **YFOs are integrated into wider movements**. Two thirds (67%) of survey respondents strongly agree that they collaborate with activists in other movements, and a majority (63%) collaborate with a range of generations of activists. Collaboration across movements was identified as taking hold most strongly in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America. Also noteworthy was that only 40% of the organizations from CANZUS and Western Europe say they definitely work or collaborate across generations, which is around 20% less compared to other regions who participated in the survey.

Below is a selection of responses to a question asking YFOs to unpack “what they bring to the table as youth organizers working with other social movements.” As some of the comments reflect below, many respondents across regions used the opportunity to underscore the intergenerational nature of their work.

“We bring an understanding of social change and social movement building as a holistic process. That means we work with our participants and groups on three levels. The first is the inner process of healing, strength and resiliency that we need as women, minorities and people of color to do our work. The second is supporting healthy relationships based on mutual respect and understanding across differences of gender, sexuality and race. The third is working together in alliances to build movements for social justice and transformation. We believe that our approach builds healthier, happier, and more sustainable organizers and social movements.”

“Our organization has organized forums and training on Gender Sensitivity, Climate Change, Adolescent Sexuality, Reproductive Rights Health and other issues affecting the young women and trans* youth. We provide a venue for sharing with the other social movements in our place where the young women and trans* youth are being prioritized.”

“WMW Jamaica has a wonderful intergenerational mix at its helm and on the ground. One of the things I admire most about us is our mix of wisdom from the more experienced members, and zeal from our youth base, which produces a blend of seasoned knowledge and energetic campaigns. Our emphasis on youth empowerment and leadership has created a group of focused, aware young women/men who are committed to the education of their peers through advocacy and training. We champion gender-equity, justice and violence-free social relations using gender-aware media analysis and transformative action.”

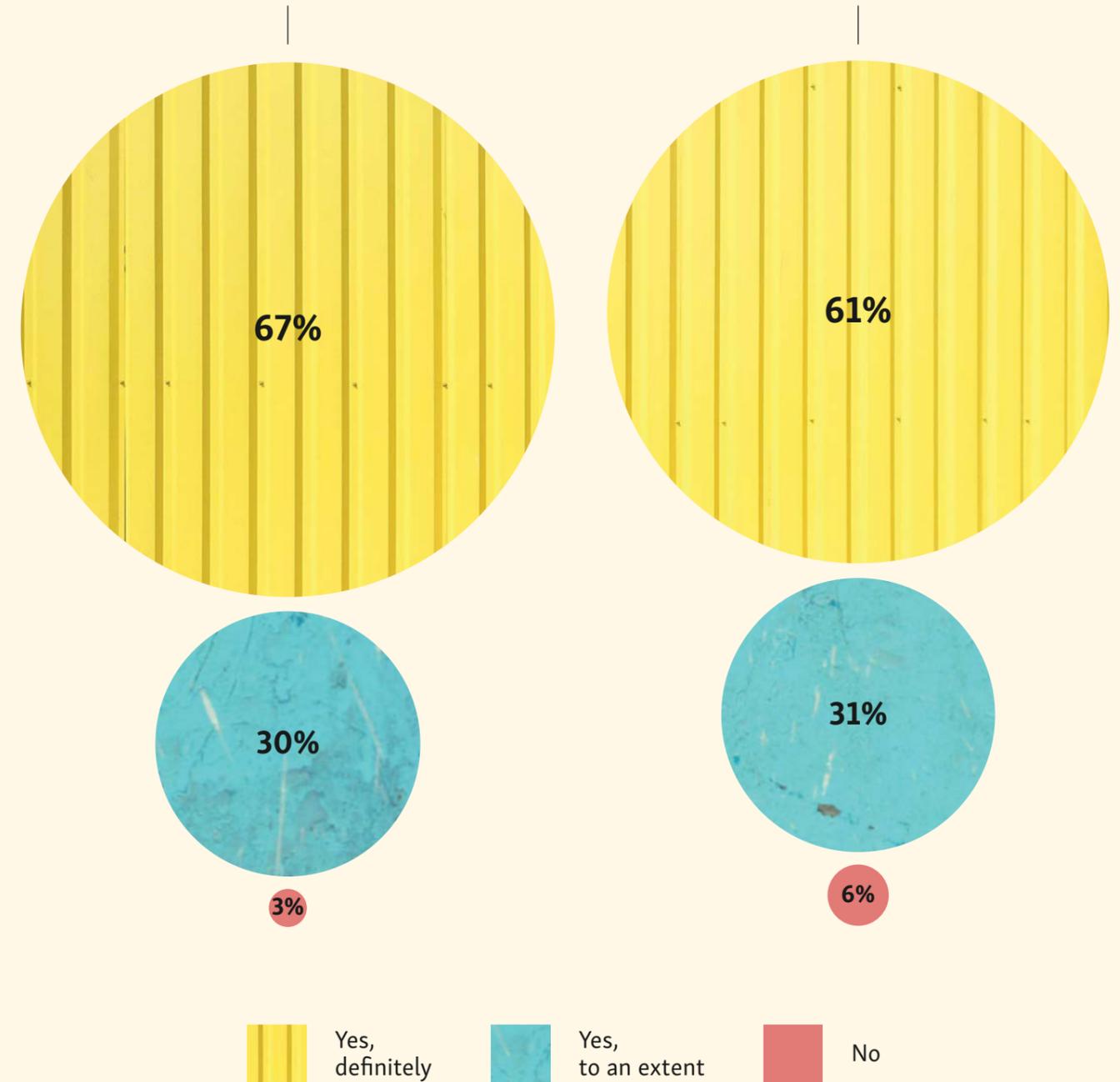
“When working with other social movements, [it] is very important to place the feminist approach since despite those organizations work for social justice, they reproduce unequal power relationships. We also assume the importance of intergenerational alliances, both with adult women and younger women than us. The age of those who make up ‘La Colectiva con Letra F’ is among 30 and 33 years old (only one colleague is 23 years old), but we consider that it is highly important to work with younger women.”

YFOs WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH ACTIVISTS

Does your work include collaboration with activists...

...from other social movements?

...from different generations?



Base: All survey respondents
N=691

RADIO UDAYAPUR: PERSONAL JOURNEYS

Radio Udayapur in Nepal is a community radio show run by young women. They live in the province with the highest rate of child and forced marriages in the country – 48% of Nepalese girls in the province are married before the age of 18. Radio Udayapur was started by Bandana who was married and had a son before she was 18. In 2009, Bandana started the radio show as a place for young women who were child brides to gain confidence and learn technical skills as radio anchors, and to support each other collectively as young mothers and friends. Through their radio storytelling, young mothers, parents, and community leaders come on to the show and share their experiences of child marriage. Through their work, they encourage families and communities not to support child marriage and to enable young women to go to college instead.



3.2 Charting Their Own Patterns of Growth

Looking deeper into age of organizations and staff size provides a lens for considering organizational development of young feminist groups who responded to our survey.

When compared to women's rights organizations, young feminist groups **have been in operation for much less time**. Half of participant groups can be described as **"emerging"** as they were created since 2010, with only one sixth in existence for more than ten years. These findings may reflect a significant increase in young feminist organizing since 2010 or alternately may reflect a dynamic sector that re-forms and re-organizes frequently.⁶

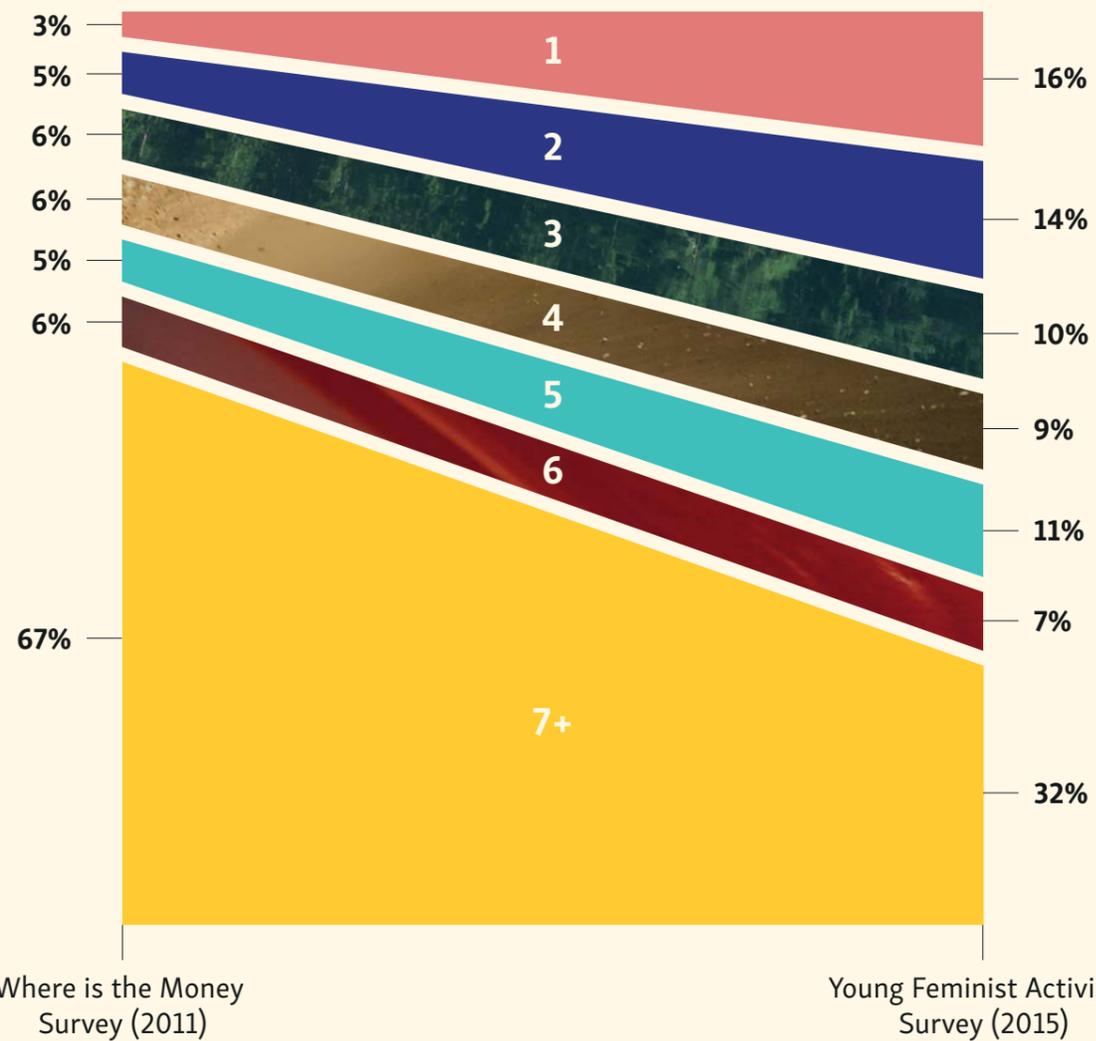
Much was also learned about the composition of YFOs through the research. For starters, they **are young women and/or trans* youth-led** with leaders most strongly representing age groups from 18 to 35, with most aged between 26 and 30. While leadership participation is lower in older age groups, 39% of organizations nonetheless include people in their leadership over 35. The vast majority of the organizations surveyed report having a staff of less than one hundred people with 75% of them having fewer than 30 staff members. Furthermore, merely half of organizations have paid staff and only one in 20 (4%) have all paid staff. The work of these organizations clearly involves a huge amount of volunteer effort.

Organizational development is not linear over time. While all organizations start out small, some grow big in a few years while others remain a more modest size. In our sample, we identified three clusters of organizations: 24 % were 'small emerging' groups (under two years old, less than 15 staff); 32% were 'established fast growing' (two or more years old, more than 15 staff); and 23% 'established slow growing' (five years or more with staff size remaining about the same). These clusters tell us something about how young feminist groups are defining their own pathways for development. In the case of our sample, we see how many organizations survive without necessarily growing in size, while others expand quickly. One can infer from these findings that young feminist groups do not necessarily pursue growth as a goal, and that growth should not serve as a proxy for success. These findings prompt us to consider the inherent value of smaller organizations, and the potential importance of networks of smaller organizations, as a key way to strengthen and connect young feminist movements.

⁶) Note that the age screening for the survey (<35) will also impact these results.

AGES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS vs YFOs

How many years old were the organizations surveyed?



Base: All survey respondents
 2011: N=1,119
 2015: N=694

3.3 Registered and Unregistered Groups

YFOs represent a diversity of life stages and organizing models, which vary according to context, location and political identification. For example, young feminists groups in the Pacific are at the forefront of struggles for climate justice, while others in Latin America are some of the foremost organizers fighting against violence and for protection of land and territories. South Asian YFOs are courageously organizing and speaking out against harmful traditional and cultural practices such as forced marriage, violence and sexual harassment. Others make up some of the world's leaders fighting for social justice, women's and girls' empowerment, and sustainable development through UN-related advocacy and processes.

AWID and FRIDA have observed a trend among their constituencies—that many young feminist groups forgo registration in

favor of informal or collective structures, sometimes using host organizations or umbrella structures to receive funding or capacity development. As detailed in the graph below, young feminists conduct their organizing in diverse ways. Many YFOs do not work conventionally but rather mix virtual and actual workspaces. A degree of informality is confirmed by the fact that 40% coalesce around specific issues or campaigns and are relatively dormant at other times.

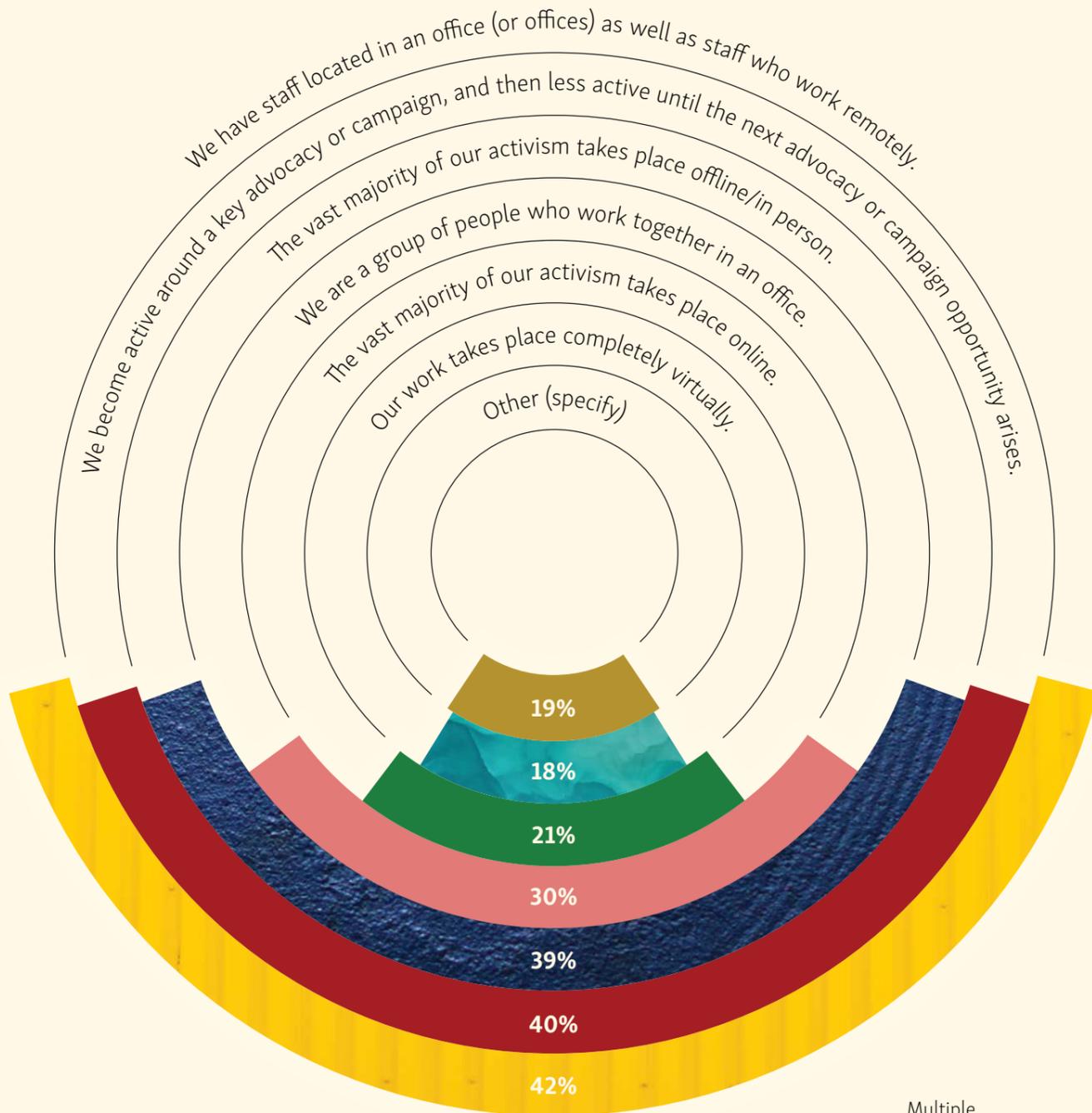


While we are happy to collaborate with others in our work, we prefer not to ask for money from 'regular funders' to avoid being politically controlled from the outside of the collective.



GROUP ORGANIZATION

How groups organize or deliver work:



Multiple responses accepted
 Base: All survey respondents
 N=694

BEYOND BORDERS: ORGANIZING AND LEADING THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND CONSENSUS

Beyond Borders is a group made up of young women whose mission is to empower the feminist movement in Armenia by using art and creativity as a tool for social change to make gender equality feasible. They aim to promote creative methods, space and opportunities for young women within art and activism to share feminist ideology, raise awareness of gender issues, challenge oppression, and use the power of creative expression for social change. The organizational structure of the group is horizontal and it functions based on a participatory ideology. They try to make all information and decision-making processes as transparent as possible by informing everyone before and during each decision. Everyone involved in the group is invited to participate in decision-making; nonetheless, those participants who are more engaged and active than others in certain topics or areas tend to lead the activities and main decisions. They also have online platforms for those members who cannot attend a meeting, so that they can get involved in online discussions, providing the group with suggestions and comments, and having the possibility to participate in the decision-making process. It is a consensus based decision-making process, where every opinion counts.

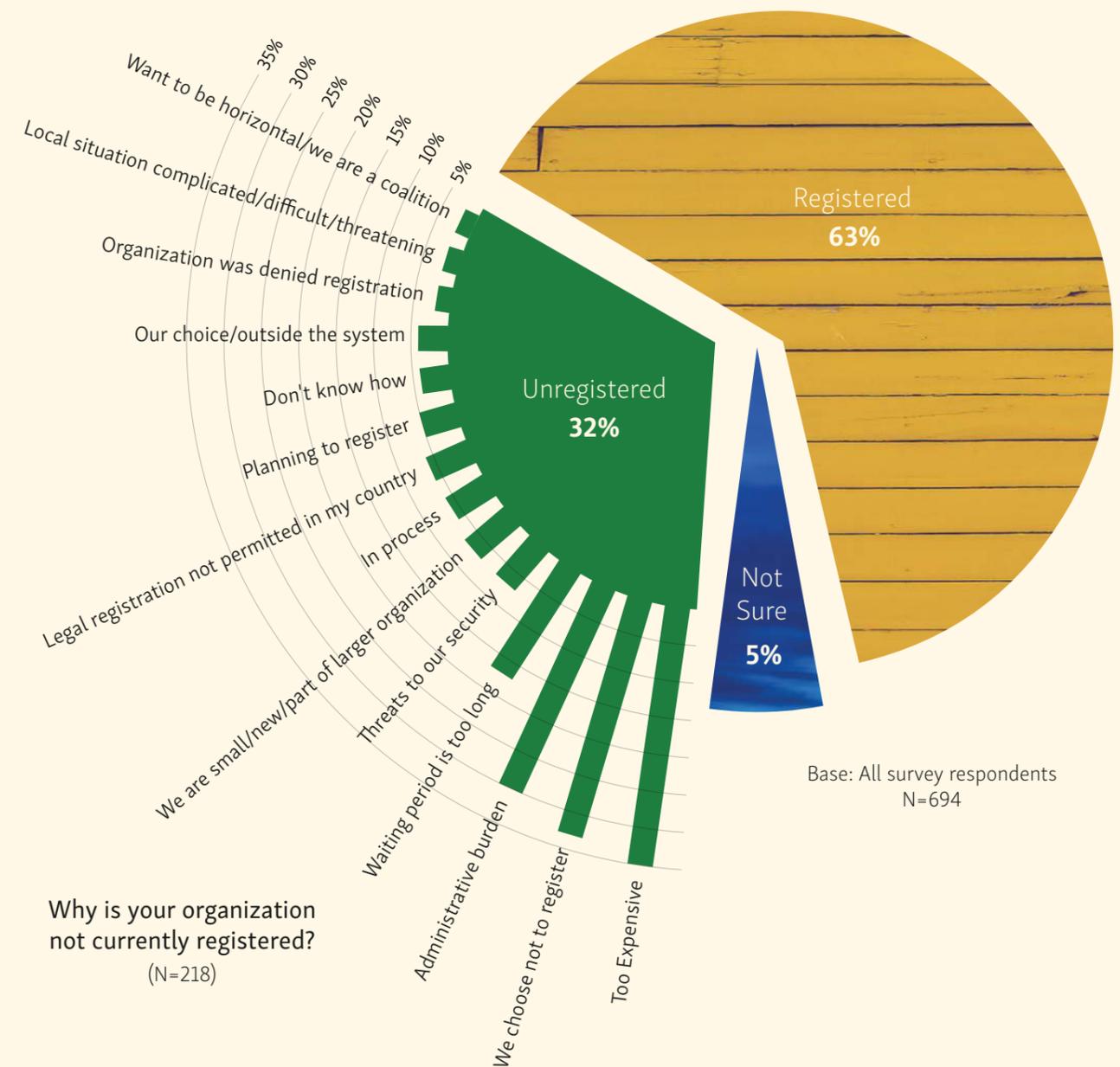


The specific issues and contextual challenges young feminist groups face is impacting organizing structures and leadership models. Findings from the research reveal the diverse ways in which young feminist groups are operating within less formal 'organizational structures'. Volatile political forces across regions push young feminist groups against 'NGO-ization', bureaucratic structures and systems. Whether by choice or necessity, lack of registration often results in increased difficulty in accessing resources and heightened insecurity, a trend that differs dramatically regionally—key themes explored in more depth in later sections of this report.

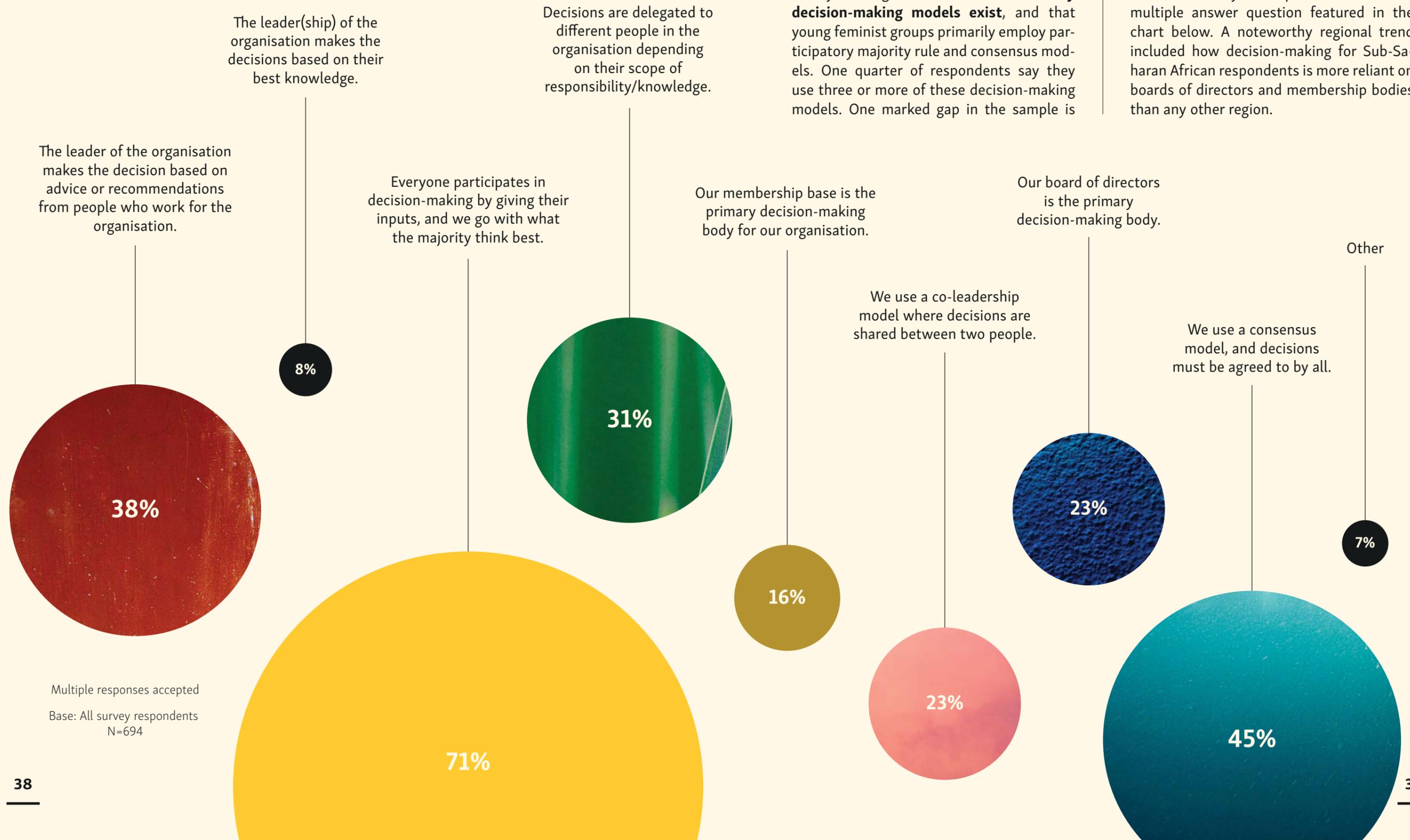
A closer look at registration numbers for both FRIDA applicants as well as survey respondents presents an opportunity to examine this trend further. For FRIDA applicants, there was an overall split (49.4 and 50.6%) in registered versus non-registered applicants. Further regional analysis of FRIDA applicants showed that registration is much more common in Sub-Saharan Africa (69%) and much less common in LAC (17%). When we expanded our sample via the online survey we found an increase—that **two thirds of responding organizations were registered (63%)**. Regionally, a majority of groups in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia-Pacific are legally registered (84% and 71% respectively) but over 50% of the groups in Latin America are not.

One potential explanation for the higher number of unregistered groups within the FRIDA applicant dataset is that FRIDA solicits applications from many small, new and emerging groups who would typically not yet have explored or expressed interest in legal registration. Zooming back, we are left to grapple with the reality that many groups (37%) of survey respondents are not legally registered. As you can see in the illustration below, the decision not to register is driven on the one hand by the cost and trouble of registering and on the other hand by the view that registration is not needed or appropriate for their organization.

REGISTERED VS UNREGISTERED ORGANIZATIONS



DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES



3.4 Leading through Participation and Consensus-Building

Through a 'multiple response question' the survey findings demonstrate that **many decision-making models exist**, and that young feminist groups primarily employ participatory majority rule and consensus models. One quarter of respondents say they use three or more of these decision-making models. One marked gap in the sample is

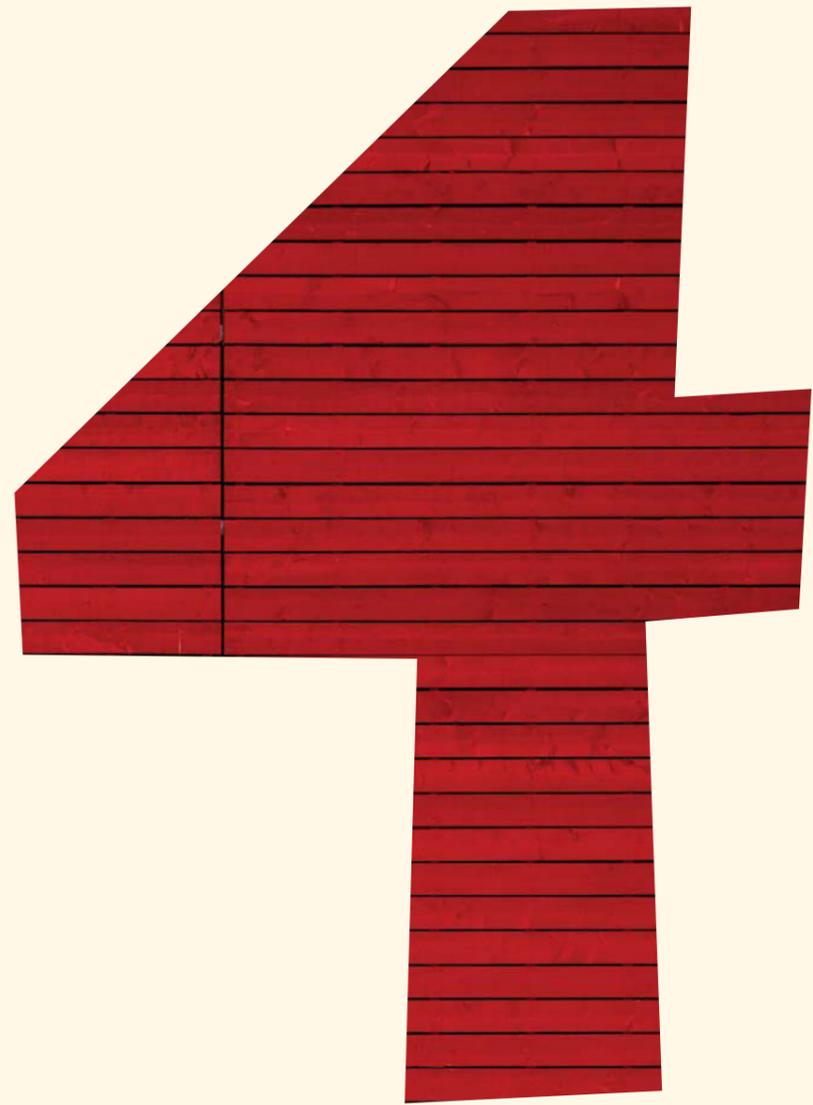
how co-leadership models are barely featured, with only 8% representation in the multiple answer question featured in the chart below. A noteworthy regional trend included how decision-making for Sub-Saharan African respondents is more reliant on boards of directors and membership bodies than any other region.

GIUVLIPEN: PRACTICING PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP

Giuvlipen is a group made up by young women whose mission is to increase the visibility of the life of Roma women facing double discrimination through systemic racism and sexism in Eastern Europe. They are addressing the negative impacts of school dropouts, early marriage, and rejection of the Roma identity. Giuvlipen makes use of creative theater performances as a tool for changing stereotypical views on Roma women, promoting safe spaces for self-expression, challenging oppression and creating social change.

The leadership structure of the group is horizontal and it functions based on a participatory ideology. They try to make all information and decision-making processes as transparent as possible by informing everyone before and during each decision. They consult each other on all issues and make a final decision based on a consensus model. Everyone's opinion is always taken into consideration. Even if they have different approaches, all activists must be in agreement in order to make a decision. Despite the advantages of this enriching model, Giuvlipen struggles with time efficiency and the role of activists who are more engaged and active in certain topics or areas. They are always looking for better mechanisms to work together in the most efficient way, and are immersed in an ongoing learning process on how to respond to specific situations and how to work together better as a team.

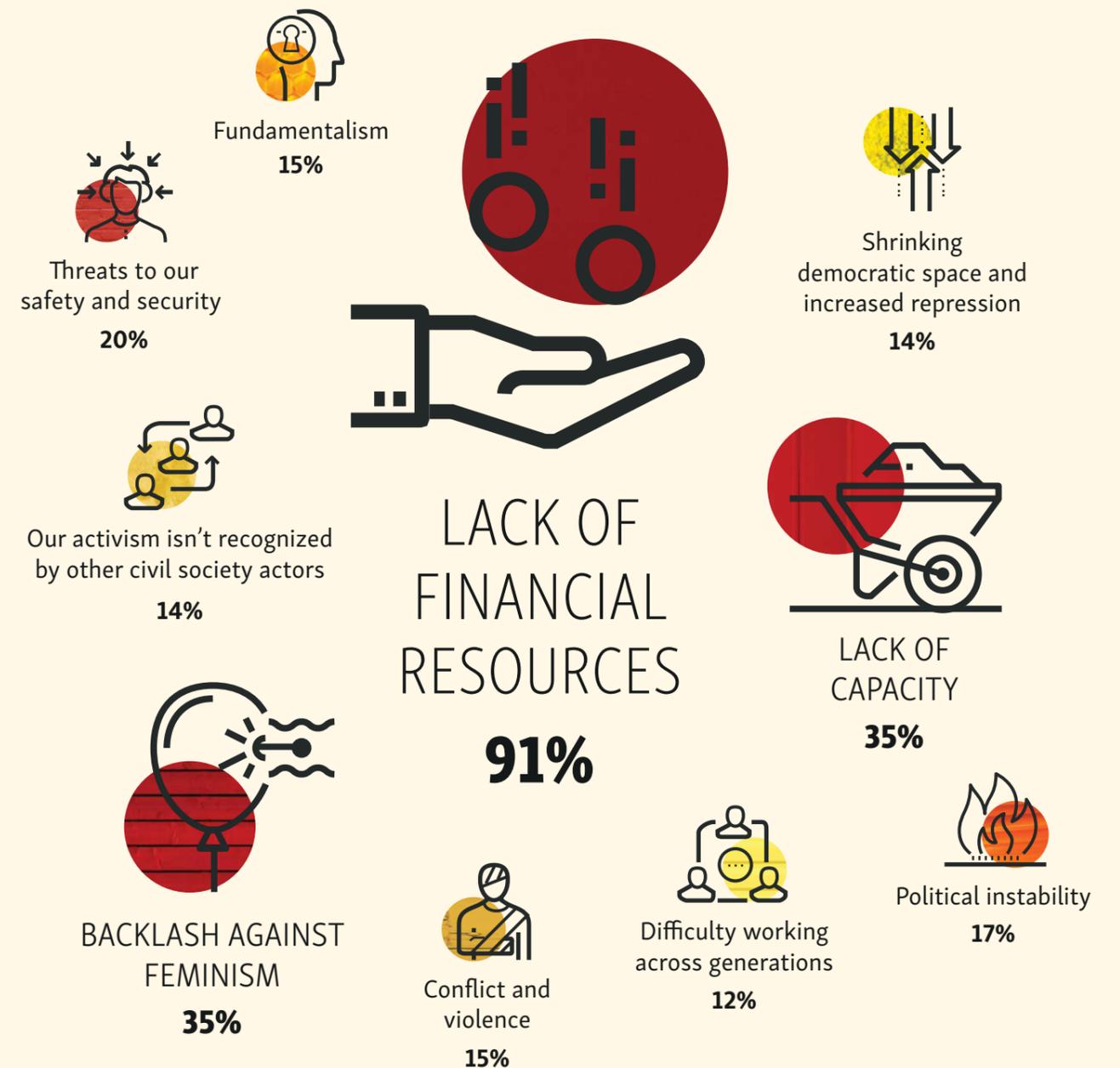




MAIN
CHALLENGES
FACED BY
YOUNG FEMINIST
ORGANIZATIONS

The global survey provides perspective into the kinds of challenges YFOs are experiencing. Organizations identify with many of the challenges included in the survey, but a lack of financial resources is by far the most widely shared. However a significant minority of groups are challenged by lack of capacity, backlash and fundamentalism, and threats to safety and security. These themes are explored in more depth in the following section, providing insight into the forces that are impacting the health and security of YFOs.

MAIN CHALLENGES FACING YFOS



Top 3 responses accepted
 Base: All survey respondents
 N=694

“WE LIVE IN AN IMPOVERISHED COUNTRY WHERE THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 19,000 SEX WORKERS STRUGGLING FOR SURVIVAL IN THE FACE OF POVERTY & VIOLENCE. WE ARE AN UNDER-FUNDED GROUP OF YOUNG FEMINISTS THAT SUPPORTS THIS VULNERABLE POPULATION, MANY OF WHOM SUFFER AT THE HANDS OF A LABOR FORCE THAT DOES NOT RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS. WE JUST WANT TO LIVE HEALTHY & PEACEFUL LIVES.”

4.1 Funding Challenges

A vast majority of YFOs in our survey sample reported that funding is their greatest challenge. This is consistent with qualitative analysis of the FRIDA applications where lack of financial resources was identified as *the* topmost challenge faced by groups. Globally, over half of FRIDA applicants report that they have not previously received any source of income, with LAC (66%) and Global North (64%) being the regions with the highest percentages of organizations that have never received funding. Survey trends such as extensive use of volunteers and low budgets correlate with this reality.

Over one third of the survey respondents consider that **funding challenges are related to a lack of alignment between funders and their priority issues**. A reliance on the same pool of donor allies and difficulty of communicating their impact are also funding challenges commonly mentioned by the survey respondents in the sample. Across regions, SSA seems to have the best alignment with their funders in terms of priority issues, while 47% of the organizations surveyed from CANZUS and Western Europe, and 46% of the survey respondents from LAC report that the issues they work on are difficult to fundraise for. One survey respondent spoke precisely to this challenge in her context: “Because we are the first queer collective of the region, getting funds is a huge challenge. The movement is still nascent here and it is difficult to work in the region given the fact that there is a lot of trivialization of the issue.”

Despite these challenges, survey results suggest that YFOs see themselves as a conduit for investment in young people and young feminist movements.⁷ In particular, they describe their foremost contributions as centered on: building awareness of their rights; their role as future change-makers; and investment in holistic and transformative change in communities. Funding challenges can be overcome by making visible the critical role that young feminist groups are playing. Some insights from the survey make this evident:

“

For holistic and multi-faceted growth, we cannot afford to leave 57% of our population behind. When we invest in young women and girls, everybody wins! We have seen communities and families reap the economic dividends of educating and empowering women and girls...Better quality of life, more inclusive laws and policies, and societal advancement. Funding pro-girl/pro-women projects is one of the best ways to ensure that your finances are channeled to a branch of social development that requires it most.

”

“

We are doing the most impactful work—with the least amount of money. We are strong, we are nimble, and we are working our butts off with little or no support.

”

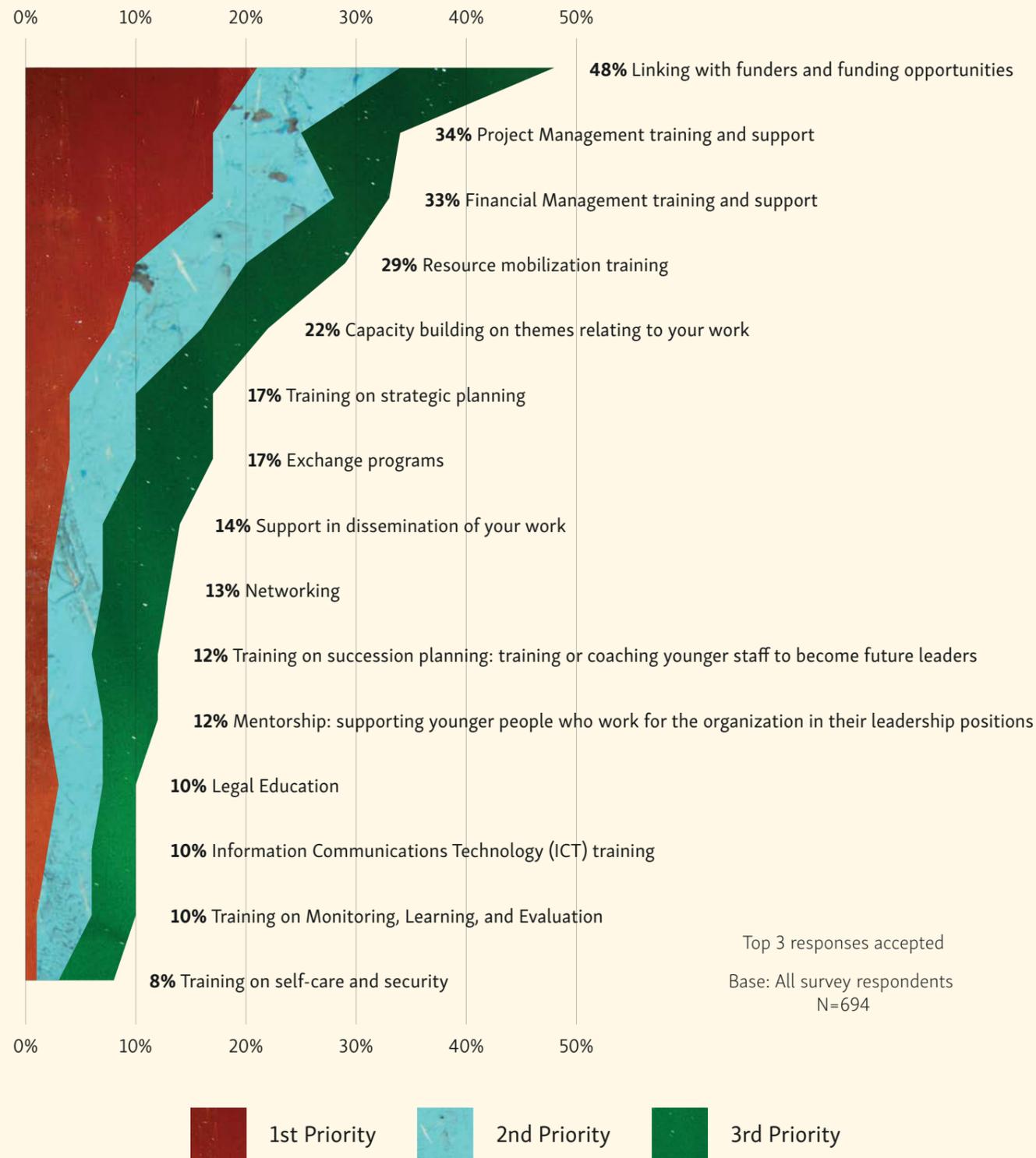
“

Investing in projects that promotes the human rights of young women will empower us to reach our full potential and as well sharpen our understanding of the lived realities women and girls face. Young women need the support and guidance to be able to contribute positively to the socio economic development of the society. Therefore supporting young women’s initiatives will not only promote development but gender equality as well.

”

⁷) This analysis comes from responses to the open-ended question “If you had to explain to a funder why they should fund young feminist organizing what would you say?”.

SUPPORT NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY YFOS



4.2 Priority Areas of Support

Understanding the top areas of support identified by YFOS is valuable data for funders interested in building meaningful partnerships for change. Through the global survey, we learned that while there is an appetite by YFOS for all the types of support tested, the type most valued is around gaining access and connections to funders and related opportunities. This finding is not surprising given the financial challenges outlined in the section above.

Analysis of the survey further revealed that young feminist groups also place widespread value on training in project management, financial management and resource mobilization. These survey results are consistent with the findings from the FRIDA application analysis which highlighted how organizational development is a clear priority, and for many this includes a need to overcome challenges associated with lack of safe office space, lack of trained staff, and lack of equipment. Respondent comments highlight some of the capacity development challenges:



We lack capacity for developing strong resource mobilization skills such as drafting successful project proposals especially to many donors with complicated proposal guidelines.



Our group could really benefit from capacity development and strategic planning. We have lots of great people in our group but are mobilizing across the region on a volunteer basis. Funding that focused on capacity development for our type of groups would be great. It would help streamline our work and make our projects more effective.



Analysis of responses to the 'support needed' question in our survey lends further opportunity to unpack how young feminist groups view and prioritize their own organizational well-being, safety and security. In particular, findings show how despite the violent and often oppressive contexts in which YFOS are operating, very few identified the need for training on security and self-care, with only 8% ranking security and self-care in the 'top 3' support areas. Young feminist groups are therefore heavily interested and focused on promoting their own financial sustainability and organizational development to continue the collective struggle. It is therefore possible that as a result of this reality, they have de-prioritized their own safety and security-related issues. This 'data gap' is a critical area for continued exploration and underscores the need to build more awareness around the importance of self-care for the sustainability of the work and young feminist movements.

4.3 Threats to Safety and Security

One woman was raped, and the other woman was beaten up. In a press release following the attack, Chouf, a Tunisian LBT group expressed the following statements:

In front of the inhumanity of such acts of barbarism, no words are able to express what we feel. Anger, rage and indignation are empty words about the feelings within us. We are denied our ability to live in security, in public and private spaces without being in danger. The violence we are facing everyday remains unpunished. Assaults and harassment we suffer are realizing the negation of our beings and our identities. We are refused the right to be ourselves, we are denied the right to be woman. We are women and as women we will never cease to claim our right to exist by and for ourselves.

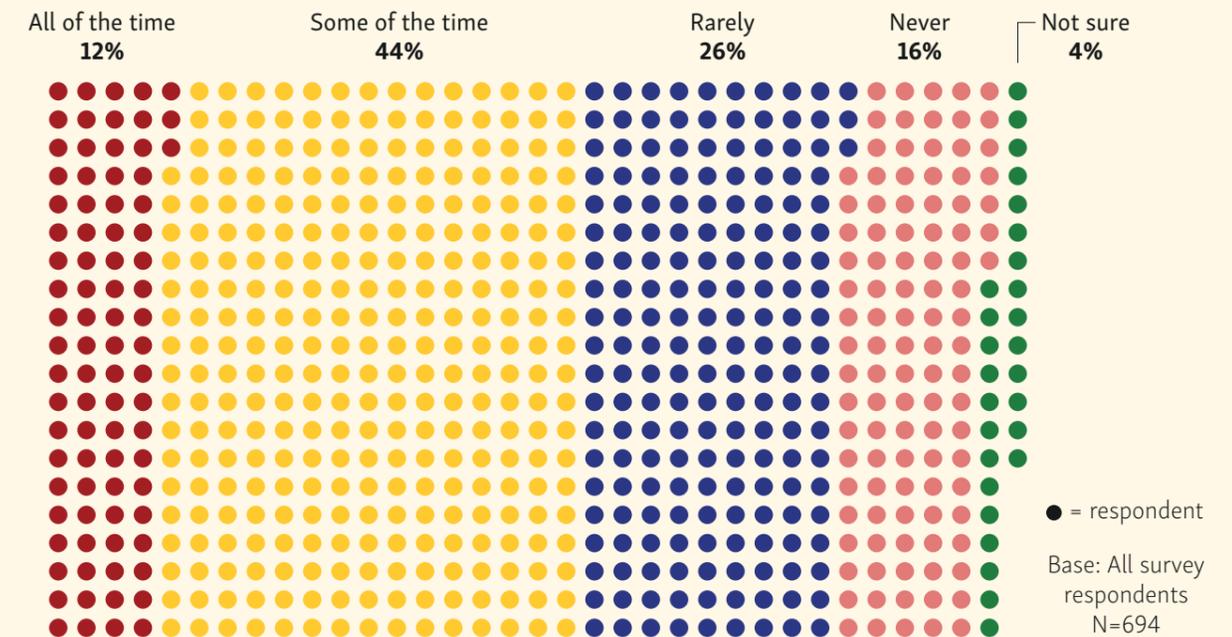
As described at the beginning of this chapter, a significant minority of young feminist groups are challenged by backlash and fundamentalism, threats to safety and securi-

ty, political instability, as well as shrinking democratic spaces. Together, these challenges speak to some of the political and religious threats that are negatively impacting young feminist organizing, and undermining their sense of security and safety.

Survey findings reveal that **more than half of survey respondents regularly feel unsafe or threatened because of the work they do**. This includes about one in eight who feel this way *all the time*. When we asked respondents “who they feel threatened by,” a concerning picture emerges around the role that both state and non-state actors are playing in influencing the security and safety of YFOs. As shown in the figure below, religious extremists top the list of perceived threats (with traditional community leaders also cited significantly), and many groups also feel threatened by civil authorities including police, political parties and the military.

FEELING UNSAFE OR THREATENED

Frequency that YFOs feel unsafe or threatened because of the work they do:



Groups threatening YFOs and their work:



Multiple responses accepted
N=383

WITH THE EXCEPTION MENA AND THE GLOBAL NORTH, ONE QUARTER OF RESPONDENTS ACROSS REGIONS CONTEND WITH ISSUES OF **INSECURITY** AS A RESULT OF THREATS BY MEMBERS OF **ORGANIZED CRIME** (GANGS, CARTELS).

CHOUF: FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE AT GREAT RISK

Created in 2013 in Tunis, Tunisia, Chouf is a Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual (LBT) group that works with LBT women who face discrimination and violence in Tunisian society. Led by young LBT women under 30 years old, the group mobilizes the community and provides important resources on sexual health and legal security, developing their own illustrated guides and audiovisual media like music CDs, books of testimonies, posters, and digital information. Due to the criminalization of homosexuality in Tunisia under Article 230 of the Criminal Code, Chouf is not registered and faces regular online and in person threats to its members' security. Since the security of its members is one of its biggest concerns, Chouf tries to cope with these difficulties by organizing physical and online security trainings, by protecting the anonymity of its members and by forging relationships with different women's organizations and networks like the Tunisian Association of Democratic Women. In March 2015, two members of the groups were attacked in the same week.



Below are a few regional trends related to issues around safety and security of YFOs. Since survey findings substantiate results gleaned from the FRIDA applications, we incorporate qualitative analysis from the FRIDA dataset to lend insight to context and regional results.

MENA

- Concerns over ensuring the security and safety of their team members, participants, partners, and community persons is something that the data consistently shows, in addition to a fear of opposition and resistance.
- Religious fundamentalisms were especially prominent in 2013, impacting on their work, contexts and lives.
- A significant cluster of MENA applicants live in conflict zones or are affected by an ongoing conflict where violence and rights violations were identified as consistent features of daily life.
- Patriarchal structure, society and fundamentalism were also identified as problematic, along with harmful traditional or cultural practices including honor killings, stigma and silencing.
- Many groups referenced the prominence of hate crimes, including (but not limited to) homo-lesbo-trans phobia.

Asia-Pacific

- Discrimination and rights violations were described as prominent by a number of applicant communities including women, sex workers, HIV, disabled persons, and trans* communities.
- In India, Dalit women experience both gender and caste-based discrimination, and in Pakistan, religious minorities face marginalization and lack of visibility.
- In Malaysia, trans* persons experience state-condoned harassment and arrests. Hostility from authority figures, as well as the larger community affects young feminist organizing, as well as their lives and that of their communities.
- At both a community and state level, patriarchy was referenced across the entire region as a deep-seated reality.
- Harmful traditional and cultural practices and beliefs such as the dowry system and early and forced marriage were also referenced.
- Religious fundamentalisms contribute to an oppressive environment, stigmatize and silence communities and restrict access to services.
- Violence, and fear of it, including acid attacks, harassment and honor killings were all reported.
- Homo-lesbo-transphobia is also reported across all three years.
- The state of human rights and the legal situation is of grave concern to young feminist groups impacted by violence condoned or perpetrated by the state.

IN CONTRAST TO OTHER REGIONS, MENA AND ASIA-PACIFIC BASED ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFY **EXTREMIST** OR **FUNDAMENTALIST** GROUPS AS **THREATS** MUCH MORE PROMINENTLY.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Human rights violations are a grave concern and frequent occurrence for YFOs in LAC. With the FRIDA applicant dataset, at least 12 reports of violence condoned or perpetrated by the state were brought forth by countries in LAC including Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Honduras. The majority of the reports were from trans* organizers or those working with trans* communities who reported police beatings, forced arrests or detention. Vulnerable communities especially affected are sex workers, student groups and those living in informal settlements.
- In LAC, “weakening state policies/laws, including the introduction and/or passage of regressive/conservative laws” was strongly reported, as a result there was an increase in hate crimes experienced by marginalized and vulnerable communities.

Sub-Saharan Africa

- **Over half of the organizations from SSA feel unsafe because of threats and attacks perpetrated by traditional authorities.**
- In SSA, a key target audience for young feminist groups’ interventions are the ‘authorities’ i.e. the police or governance structures. Their efforts focus on sensitizing these actors to the issues that are impacting YFOs including: SGBV survivors, sex workers, and LGBTQI people

with a specific focus on trans* persons, and people living with HIV.

- Discrimination was overwhelmingly evident (98 organizations) in FRIDA applicants from SSA, those organizations working with sex workers, people living with HIV, disabled persons, and trans* communities experienced widespread discrimination at both societal and institutional levels.
- Harmful traditional and cultural practices including female genital mutilation and early and forced marriages were also highlighted by organizations as a foremost barrier to the human rights of women and girls.
- Patriarchy was reported across all three years (51 organizations) and specifically identified as a deep-seated part of their realities.
- Violence and the fear of violence is a deeply rooted component of the lives of women and girls, especially given the high reported rates of FGM and violence against women.
- LGBTQI communities are often at risk and reported experiencing hate crimes.
- Stigmatization and silencing of communities were described as factors restricting access to services, especially for LGBTQI communities and survivors of FGM and SGBV.

The case studies in this section also speak to some of the challenges encountered by YFOs.

SALUD MUJERES: FIGHTING FOR SRHR IN THE FACE OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Founded in 2008 by a group of young Ecuadorian feminists, Salud Mujeres provides information on how to safely cause an abortion using medication, access to contraceptives and sexual education to prevent the death of young women resulting from clandestine and unsafe abortions. The group aims to ensure that young women can exercise autonomous, well-informed decisions by decentralizing information and raising awareness on abortion as well as advocating for its decriminalization. Salud Mujeres is extremely concerned about the rise of fundamentalist groups in the country. Fundamentalist engagement in political positions and their presence in women’s assistance centers has resulted in a huge setback for sexual and reproductive health rights. The elimination of the National Strategy for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy as well as the intensification of a context where women are punished and their decisions towards their bodies are watched, are some examples of how sexual and reproductive rights and body autonomy of women have been pushed back in Ecuador. Since 2013, the number of women convicted of illegal abortions has significantly increased. Salud Mujeres has been forced to strengthen their strategies to ensure young women’s safety and rights, and to take security measures to protect themselves.

Since Salud Mujeres created their information line in 2008, they have been subjected to security threats; nonetheless the security risks they face today are higher due to the increasing political power of fundamentalist groups.



LINEA DE INFORMACION
ABORTO SEGURO
0998301317



ORGANIZATIONS IN THE SAMPLE FROM LAC AND SSA
ARE MORE COMMONLY UNSAFE AND **THREATENED**
BY STATE, DEPARTMENTAL AND PROVINCIAL
AUTHORITIES.

4.4 Frontline Human Rights Defenders

Issues related to security and safety of young feminist groups makes up a strong theme running through the global survey. The survey also showed that WHRDs rank as the 2nd highest population that respondent groups work with (representing 38% of the top 5 ranking).

To expand on a theme touched on in the 'Organizing Context' section of this report, young feminists are playing key roles as WHRDs and face situations of significant violence. Analysis of FRIDA applications tells us that the majority of organizations from MENA and SSA live in conflict or post-conflict zones, while violence and the fear of violence are also reported across the six regions. Harmful and traditional practices are part of the context of many organizations from Asia-Pacific, MENA and SSA, whereas femicide and state violence were more common in LAC. Organizations from the Global North and CEE/CIS reported attacks on human rights defenders, and LGBTQI discrimination and hate crimes were reported to a greater or lesser extent across regions. These realities inform our analysis of the past ten years, where we have seen how students and young people are being targeted for standing up for their rights, and mobilizing for change. We have seen how young people in many countries including Cambodia, Egypt, Tunisia, Hong Kong, Russia and Mexico have been the victims of violence for daring to speak up and demand human

rights and gender justice. In particular, over the past decade, the world has witnessed increased violence against WHRDs, with attempts to silence their voices.

As described on AWID's website:

WHRDs are attacked for who they are—their gender identity; and for what they do—fight for human rights for all. It is both their identity and their work that makes them vulnerable to specific attacks, as their activities in human rights defense questions fundamental assumptions about gender roles in society.

In recent years there have been significant strides in protections for WHRDs' by the international community, including the recognition of the unique risks that women face and the passage of the first UN International Resolution on WHRDs. This work is being led by courageous collaborations, organizations and defenders, with the Meso American WHRD Initiative and WHRD International Coalition as key examples.

Amidst this context, we are also aware that young women often do not self-identify as WHRDs and are unaware of protections and networks that exist. A quotation from a member from Colectiva Juana Julia Guzman in Colombia in the Open Democracy piece *Claiming rights, facing fire: young feminist activists* describes why this is the case:

“WOMEN MAKE UP 52% OF THE POPULATION IN OUR TERRITORY, WHERE WE FACE **VARIOUS SOCIAL PROBLEMS** (POVERTY, UNFRIENDLY PRACTICES TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT, VIOLENCE, OVERPOPULATION IN UNHEALTHY CONDITIONS, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF MINORS, ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY, AND DRUG TRAFFICKING, ETC.) AND WHERE WE CLEARLY HAVE HIGH RATES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GENDER INEQUALITIES. THEREFORE, TO **EMPOWER** YOUNG WOMEN IN THE RECOGNITION OF THEIR RIGHTS AND IN GENERATING EMPOWERMENT, ECONOMIC STRATEGIES WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE EXERCISE OF **ENSURING HUMAN RIGHTS** AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN **BUILDING SOCIAL WELFARE SOLUTIONS** AT THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL.”



In a country with a backdrop of armed conflict and militarization, the risks facing WHRDs are very high, with machismo and patriarchy forming a structural component of the war. While young women face the same risks as all women, the tools, networks and alliances we have are often less accessible. We are not as recognized or know the pathways of protection.

The research shows that over 50% of the groups feel unsafe or threatened all the time or most of the time because of the work they do and that threats to security was the main reason that 33% of YFOs were in jeopardy of closing. Yet only 8% of the groups prioritize trainings on self-care and security. This could result from a lack of understanding on the importance of integrating security as a political feminist strategy, to ensure the sustainability of the feminist movement, and to support the resilience, wellbeing and resistance of young WHRDs. In 2016, FRIDA has begun delivering a series of webinars on security (both physical and digital) and self-care to help meet these needs for FRIDA grantee partners. The responsiveness and engagement of the grantees has demonstrated that there is ultimately an appetite for this kind of training.

FRIDA applications provide much needed visibility as to how organizations led by young women and trans* youth are experiencing threats, violence and intimidation in their work in very concrete ways. Over time, the hope is that young WHRDs will receive increased recognition at many levels. Below are summaries based on FRIDA applications of how violence and other threats to human rights are impacting young feminist organizing in CEE/CIS, SSA, and LAC—the three regions where FRIDA applicants most frequently self-identified as Human Rights Defenders.

CEE/CIS Region

FRIDA has received 151 applications from CEE/CIS, a region marked by the presence of patriarchy and fundamentalist values at both the community and state levels. Weakening state policies and laws, passage of regressive and conservative laws, as well as lack of implementation of existing laws are significantly impacting YFOs. Applicants also shared that resources for women’s rights groups in CEE/CIS is very limited, and that the state of human rights and the legal situation in CEE/CIS is of grave concern to young feminist organizers. Furthermore, organizations reported the condoning or perpetuating of violence by the state, which refers to crackdowns on LGBTQI communities, sex workers, and women seeking abortion. In 2012, attacks against human rights defenders and state-sponsored censorship were also identified as barriers, as well as issues they wish to tackle.

LAC Region

338 young feminist groups applied for funding to FRIDA between 2012 and 2014, representing some of the most diverse movements and organizations taking on gender-based violence at a multitude of levels. We know that LAC young feminist organizers represent some of the most courageous WHRDs working at the intersection of struggles over land, territories, environment and women’s bodies. Young feminist groups in LAC are resisting and working within a complex and patriarchal context, punctuated by a recent resurgence of religious fundamentalism. These forces tend to stigmatize and silence communities and restrict access for young women to services and access to rights in LAC. Unfortunately, violence and the fear of violence is a continuous part of life in many parts of LAC, with aggressive state and non-state violence, harassment, and the highest rates of femicide for women globally.

Sub-Saharan Africa

554 applications were analyzed from Sub-Saharan Africa. 98 organizations identified discrimination in formal and informal spheres of life as an underlying challenge to their daily work. Harmful traditional and cultural practices as evidenced by FGM and early and forced marriages were also highlighted by organizations as a significant barrier to actualizing their human rights. LGBTQI communities are also often at risk, experiencing hate crimes, the silencing of communities and restricted access to services. The state of human rights and the legal situation is of grave concern to young feminist organizers who consistently referenced rights violations as a frequent occurrence. Lack of human rights knowledge as an issue that needs to be addressed through their work so that more people—especially women, LGBTQI, disabled persons, and marginalized persons—are aware of their rights and can exercise/claim them, as well as organize to challenge or critique current laws.





ISSUES,
STRATEGIES
&
REACH

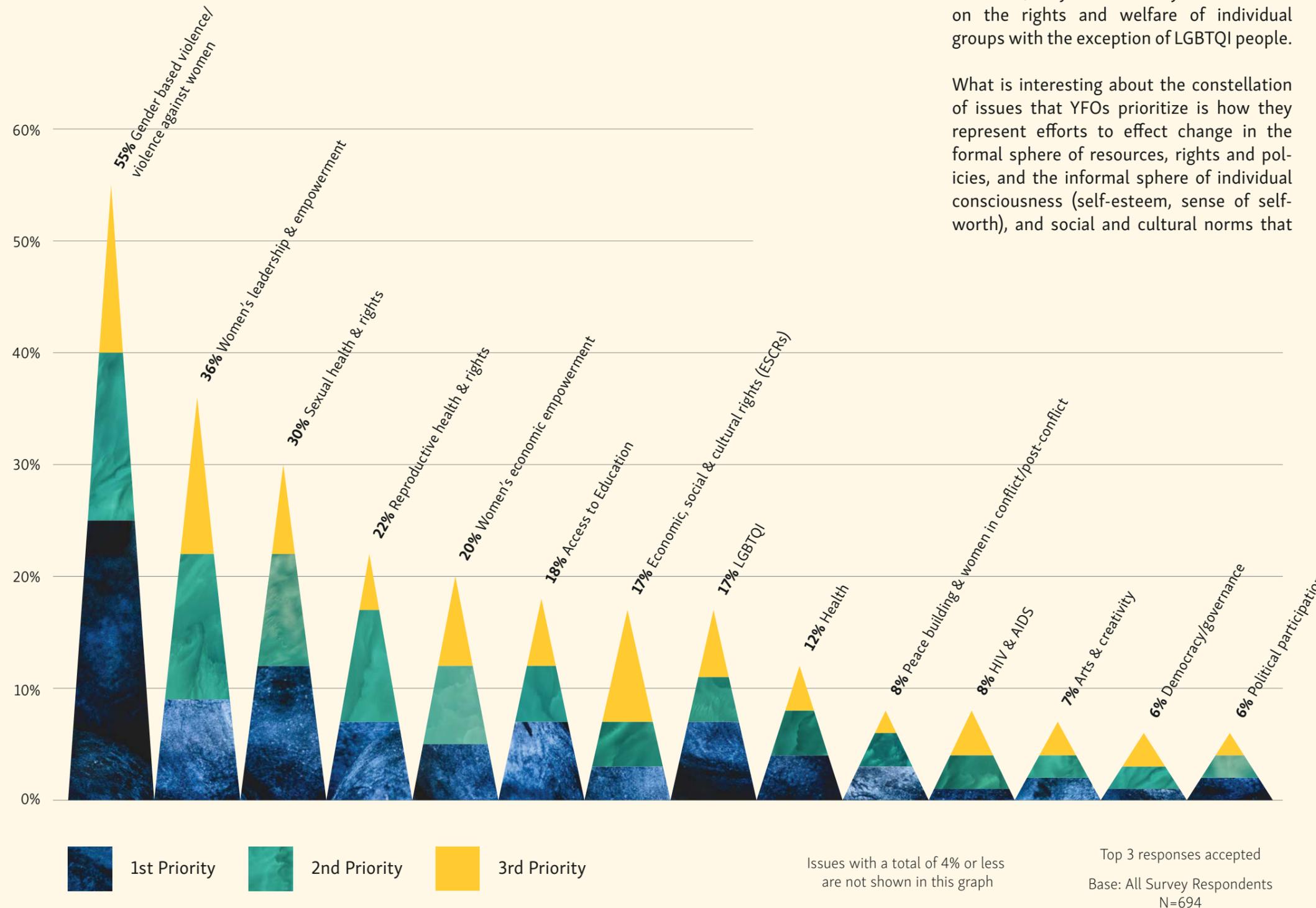
Given the complexity of their contexts, young feminist organizers often work simultaneously on multiple issues and themes. The pool of FRIDA applications illustrated that ‘intersectional organizing’ was a key aspect of YFOs across all regions. Young feminist organizers draw on a diverse set of strategies; some tried and tested, some breaking new ground.

“YOUNG WOMEN AND TRANS ORGANIZATIONS TAP INTO A NEW, **VIBRANT MOVEMENT** OF EDUCATED, CONNECTED FEMINISTS PASSIONATE ABOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY. WE ARE ORGANIZING IN **NEW WAYS AND ACROSS BORDERS**, HAVE A FRESH PERSPECTIVE TO STRUCTURALLY EMBEDDED DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS ON HOW TO **CREATE CHANGE**. WE ARE THE **FUTURE**.”

— FEMINIST JOB BOARD

TOP ISSUES TACKLED BY YFOs

Top three priority issues compiled from each respondent.



5.1 Priority Issues

Top priority issues for YFOs are **gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and rights, as well as political and economic empowerment for women.** Furthermore, they are less likely to be focused on the rights and welfare of individual groups with the exception of LGBTQI people.

What is interesting about the constellation of issues that YFOs prioritize is how they represent efforts to effect change in the formal sphere of resources, rights and policies, and the informal sphere of individual consciousness (self-esteem, sense of self-worth), and social and cultural norms that

perpetuate and justify gender discrimination.⁸ For example, FRIDA applicants are working to realize human rights at many levels to: address embedded constructs that lead to discrimination, stigma and violence; promote the political participation of women, trans* and youth; or the empowerment of LGBTQI groups.

Analysis of priority issues across regions tells a compelling story. Women's empowerment, gender-based violence, and women's leadership are priorities for MENA, whereas SRHR is predominantly reported in LAC and CEE/CIS regions.

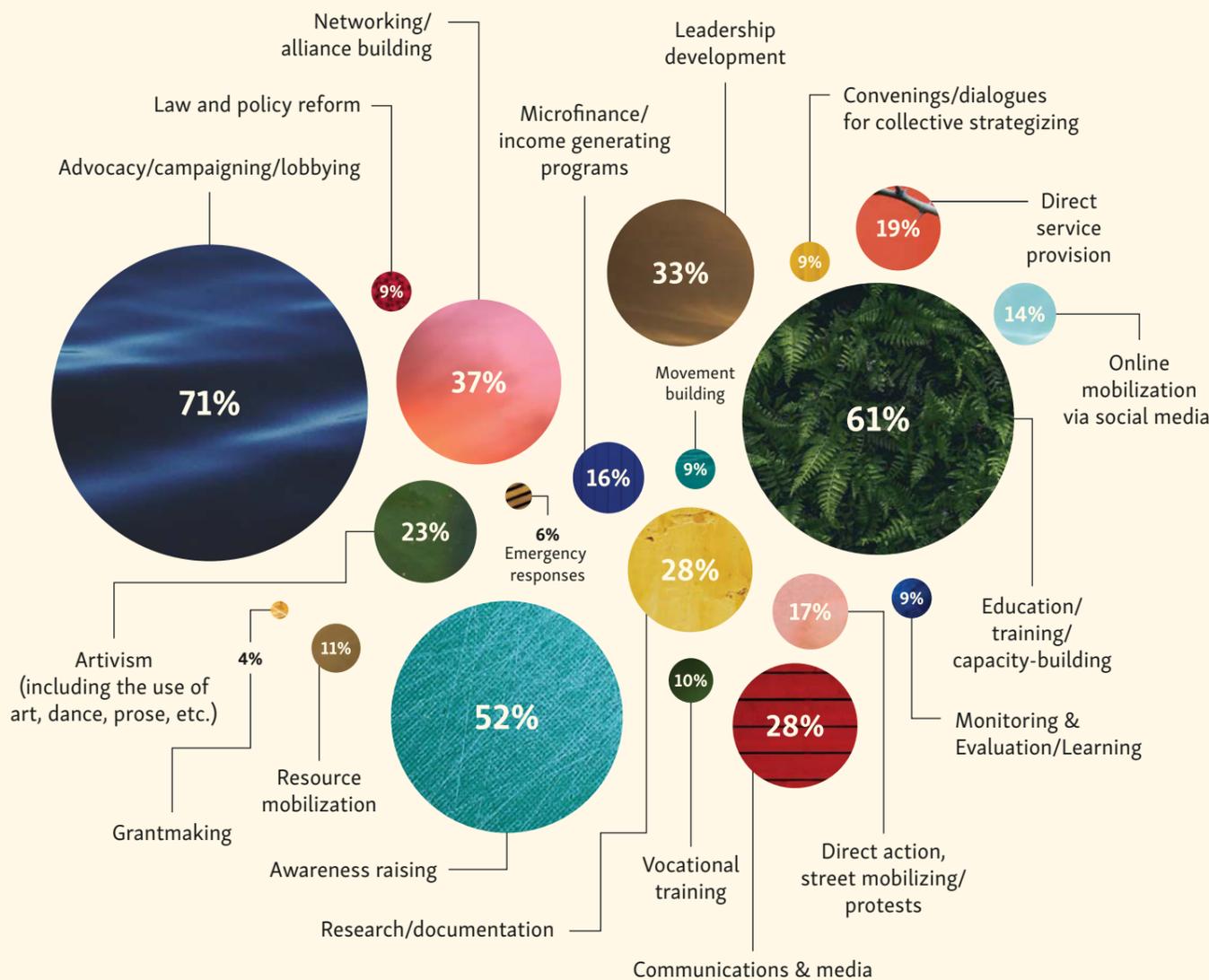
HIV and AIDS are almost exclusively mentioned in Africa, with economic empowerment being a key issue area of work in Sub-Saharan Africa. LGBTQI issues are prioritized primarily by MENA, LAC and CANZUS, and registering comparatively low for Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia-Pacific regions. Finally, gender-based violence is a key priority area across all regions, with the highest prioritization in MENA and LAC as illustrated in the figure to the left.

8) See Gender at Work's "Institutional Change Framework" for more detailed understanding of how these shifts in key domains of gender inequality takes place. Rao, Aruna & David Kelleher, "Is There Life After Gender Mainstreaming?", Gender and Development, Vol.13, No.2, July 2005, pp.57-69, p.60. For a fuller discussion of why this framework is useful for tracking the nature of gender inequality in a given context, and for assessing changes in this, please see "Changing Their World", Second Edition, 2012, op.cit, p.9 http://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/changing_their_world_2ed_full_eng.pdf

5.2 Strategies

YFOs' strategies are heavily focused on information sharing and knowledge building: advocacy, campaigning, education, capacity building and awareness-raising. A secondary focus is on organizing, leadership and movement building, while direct action and service provision are not a primary focus for most. In terms of reach, YFOs primarily target young women and girls, and marginalized communities.

STRATEGIES USED BY YFOs



Up to 5 responses accepted
Base: All survey respondents
N=694

The strategies used by young feminist groups vary according to region. Below are some examples of how FRIDA applicants are utilizing strategies and the regional contexts that use them most.

Advocacy, Campaigning and Lobbying

In an effort to shift current discourses and champion human rights for all persons, **advocacy aimed at policy makers** is a critical intervention tool used most prominently within Sub-Saharan Africa. The number of organizations using advocacy and campaigning in CANZUS is considerably less than the rest of the regions. Analysis of FRIDA applicants affirmed that policy implementation and monitoring of implementation of key policy-related interventions are key strategies. Challenging current legislation was also an often-used tool, especially where criminalization or discriminatory laws persist.

Education and Capacity Building

Efforts were regionally concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia-Pacific, channeled largely through capacity building workshops. In Asia-Pacific, there was a thematic focus on building self-esteem, whereas in Sub-Saharan Africa organizations tended to focus on vocational training as a way to ensure economic empowerment. This priority was also evident in the number of organizations working on income generation projects, sometimes with micro-credit components.

Awareness-Raising

In a region characterized in part by deeply rooted cultural and religious histories of patriarchy and fundamentalism, young feminist groups in CEE/CIS are carrying out cutting edge **awareness-raising work**. A number of them prioritize community building and community sensitization as a way to reach

out and integrate marginalized persons into the larger community, build awareness, and challenge some of the stereotypes and hostility that they endure. Trans* community empowerment was also a priority, often coupled with support groups, and access to legal aid, psycho-social support and counseling. In contrast in Asia-Pacific, groups have taken on awareness-raising efforts, many through media production—radio, film, and photography—as well as public forums, discussion groups, film screenings, and performance art. Awareness-raising was also used by groups in Asia-Pacific and CANZUS.

Leadership Development and Movement Building

Regional analysis of survey results showed that leadership and movement building are key strategies across regions, with a higher concentration within the Global North. Efforts center on creating space for more women's or trans* leadership, and building capacities to take up community leadership roles.

Artivism and Creative Organizing

Survey data showed that 23% of YFOs directly report using art and creative methods as part of their organizing. More broadly, FRIDA's work has extensively profiled the colorful and creative methods which young feminists use throughout their work. Expressions of this manifest through the use of creative approaches such as music, theater, art, photography and film to build awareness, hold solidarity festivals, and leverage at public demonstrations.

5.3 Expansive Reach and Coverage

YFOs work with multiple communities. Survey results identified that the top four populations of concern to YFOs are grassroots women (46%), WHRDs at risk (38%), students (38%) and LGBTQI people (33%). Interestingly, migrants, refugees and internationally displaced persons are among the least commonly mentioned populations.

Further regional analysis of the four top populations of concern highlights interesting trends. WHRDS at risk were prioritized highest by MENA survey respondents as the main population they work with (47%), and of high significance to all other regions except CANZUS. Over half of the respondents

from Asia-Pacific and 46% of the organizations from SSA prioritize grassroots women the most, while in the CANZUS and CEE/CIS respondents work primarily with LGBTQI communities. Compared to other regions, CANZUS and Western Europe prioritize people of color the most but hardly work with rural people, whereas SSA organizations prioritize people living with HIV/AIDS.

Finally, because YFOs are staffed primarily from the populations they work with (75%), they are uniquely positioned to understand the needs and challenges faced by their communities.

TOP POPULATIONS OF CONCERN FOR YFOs

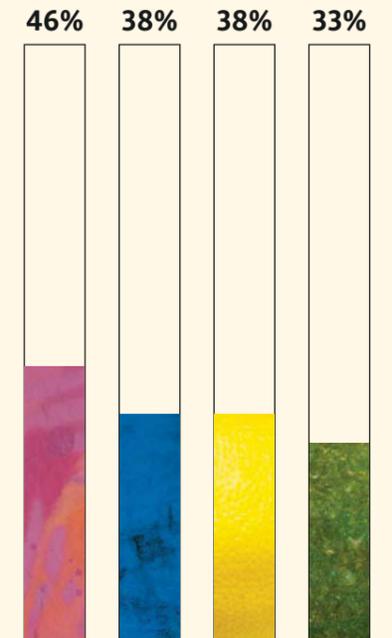


GRASSROOTS WOMEN

STUDENTS

WHRDs AT RISK

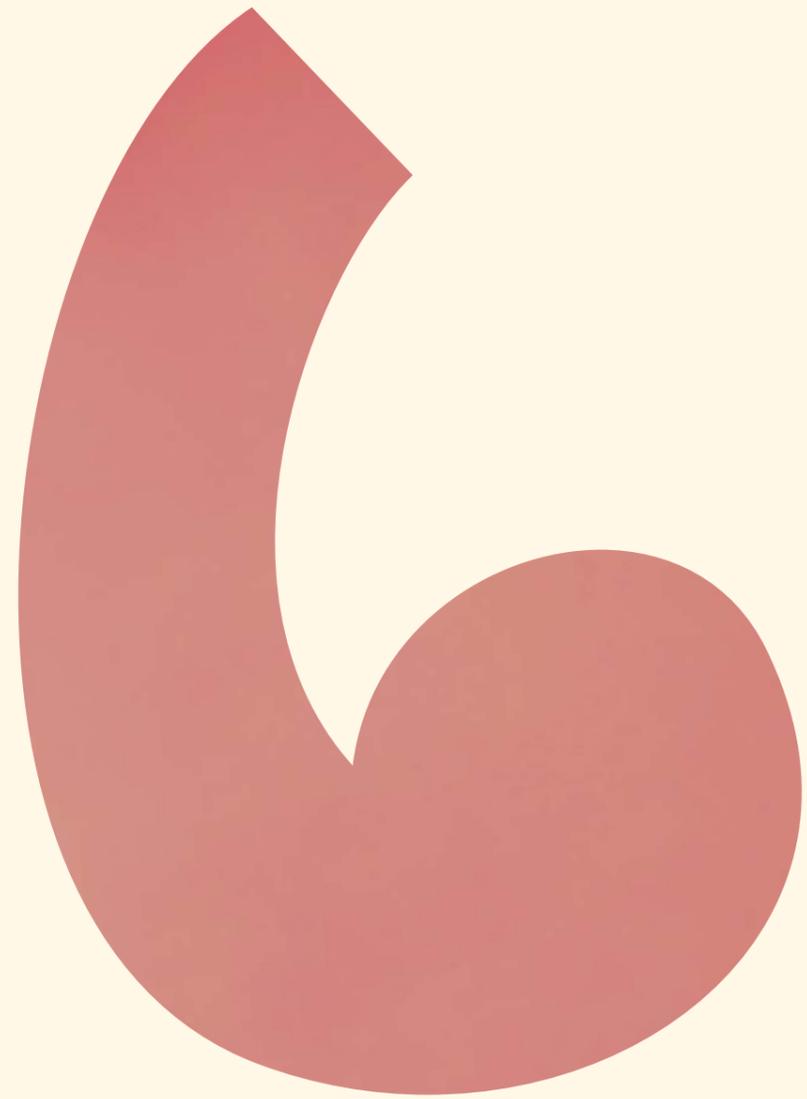
LGBTQI PEOPLE



Only top 4 responses overall shown

Base: All survey respondents
N=694





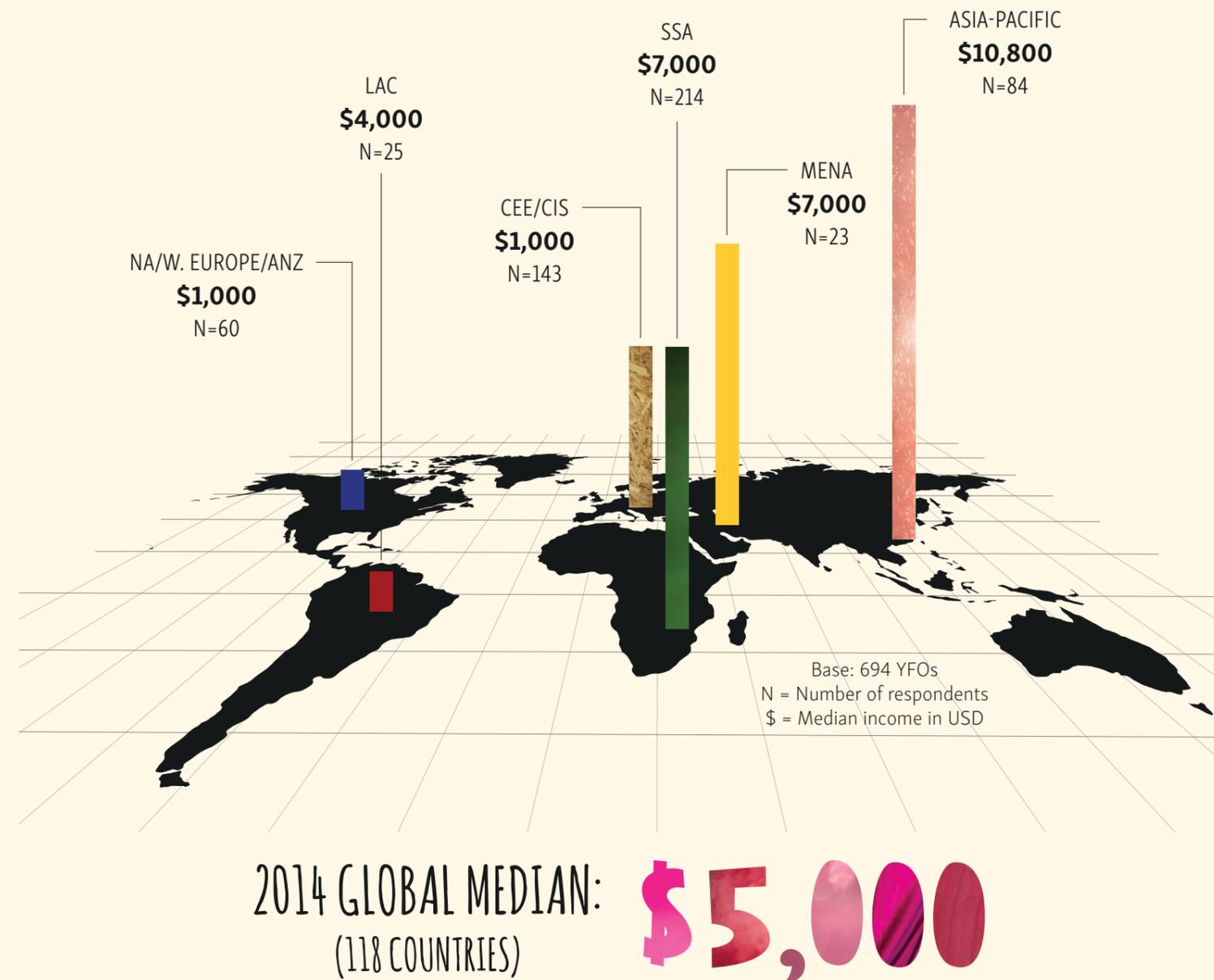
INSIGHTS
INTO THE
FINANCIAL
SITUATION
OF YOUNG FEMINIST
ORGANIZATIONS

“WHEN YOU SUPPORT YOUNG WOMEN OR
TRANS YOUTH-LED PROJECTS/ORGANIZATIONS,
YOU ARE **SUPPORTING** THE
WHOLE SOCIETY.”

—THE BUSSY PROJECT

The global survey served as the primary data source for understanding the financial situation of YFOs globally. The section below presents key insights into the funding landscape for young feminist organizing through an analysis of: income levels; funding sources; organizational resiliency; and funding challenges. The figure below provides a ‘snapshot’ look into the financial situation of YFOs globally in 2014.

MEDIAN INCOME FOR YFOS BY REGION



6.1 Income Levels of Young Feminist Organizations Surveyed

YFOs in the sample have incomes that are strikingly low, especially when compared to more mainstream women’s rights organizations from the 2011 WITM survey. For YFOs, **half report 2014 incomes under \$5,000 USD and one quarter are working with incomes of under \$500 USD.**⁹

YFOs reported a much lower median annual income of \$2,430 USD for 2012 than was reported by respondents to the WITM survey that same year which was \$60,000 USD. This shows that funding available for young feminist groups is even more restricted and limited than those received by women’s rights and feminist organizations more generally—an already under-resourced movement. An encouraging insight is that median annual income has increased consistent-

ly since 2011 as most survey respondents (82%) project higher or equivalent income in 2015 compared to 2011.¹⁰

When we analyzed organizational income with age, we learned that older organizations tend to have higher incomes generally. For example, almost half of organizations founded before 2006 reported income over \$22,000 USD as compared to just one eighth of organizations founded in 2013.

While it remains impossible to know with certainty the size of the whole ‘pie’ of resources being channeled to YFOs, it is safe to say that the majority of young feminist groups are not benefitting from large flows of resources and development aid.

9) Note that average revenue figures are increased by the presence of some well-funded organizations.

10) This positive trend must be seen in the context of organizations which experienced a fatal decline in income.



6.2 Sources of Funding

Further analysis of the sources of funding for young feminist organizing adds texture to the financial picture. We know that young feminist groups are diverse and no single source accounts for a large proportion of revenue. Nonetheless, women’s funds, INGOs and Foundations are a much more common source of revenue than domestic or foreign governments. A further noteworthy finding is how **larger organizations have more income coming from women’s funds, INGOs and private foundations**, while other sources are more evenly distributed. Funding from local and national governments is notably rare, and about one third (30%) rely on a single source of income or none at all.

INCOME SOURCES FOR YFOS

Breakdown of total income reported across all groups surveyed:



Base: All survey respondents N=694

Interestingly, income-generating activities (e.g. hosting a party, organizing a fundraiser) was the topmost mentioned source of income in 2014, with organizations reporting 12% of their income coming from this source. Self-generated income sources were most often mentioned by groups in North America (36% reporting these sources), followed by Sub-Saharan Africa (30%), and Asia-Pacific (17%). This points to a potential trend, that young feminist groups are less reliant on traditional sources of funding, and are instead leveraging resources to support their work independently –and for a diversity of reasons. In relation to the role of ‘self-generated’ income resources, respondents cited political differences and conflicting values as motivating factors.



We operate as a collective where we produce material, articles, videos, photography and analysis that builds and shares on the existing knowledge base of youth in the Global South working on climate justice. Very few funders are keen to fund our work in that our messaging is very clear and radical in addition to the fact that our choice to work as a collective (un-registered) for political reasons does not seem to attract funding for our core work.

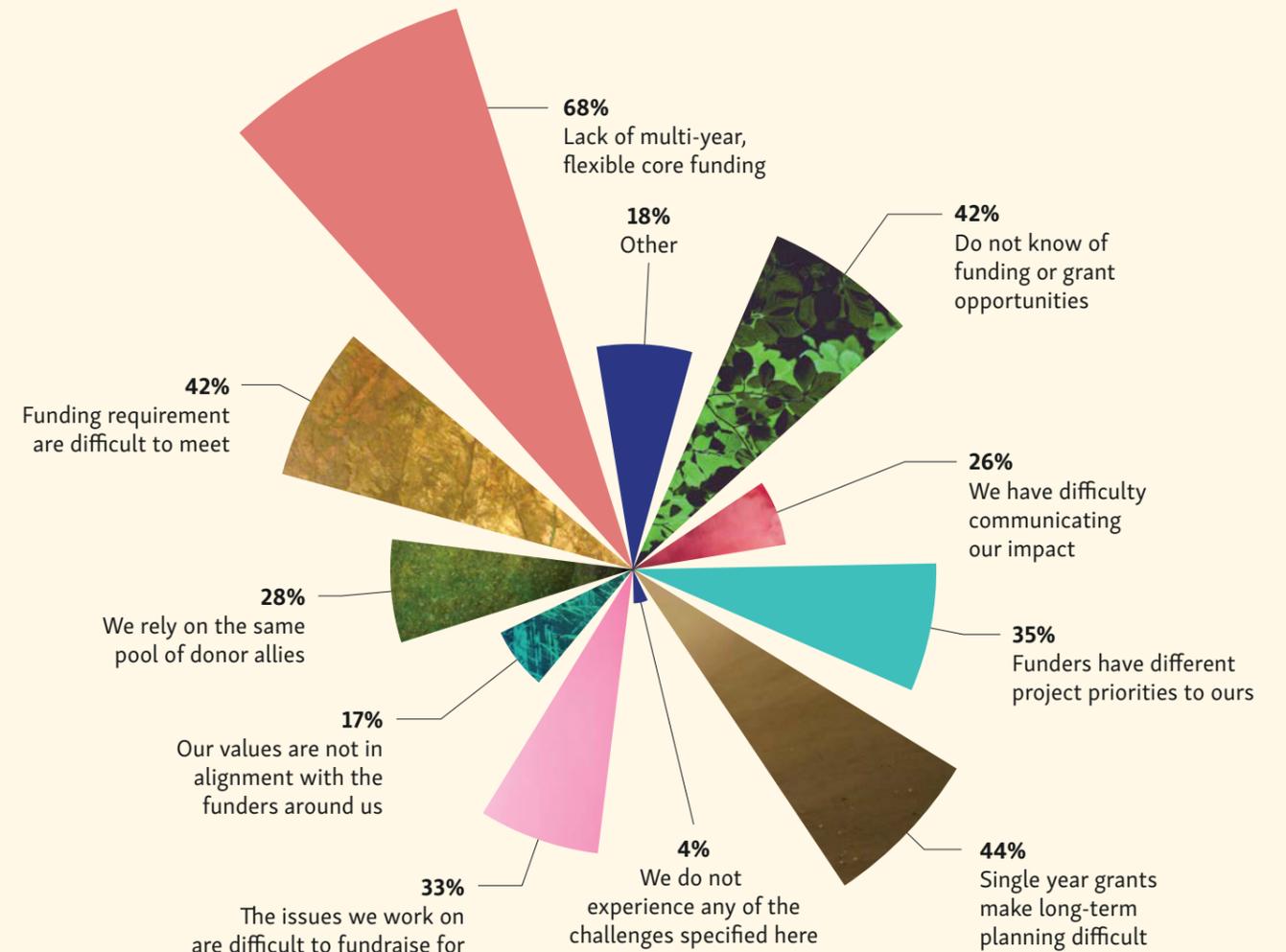


It is difficult, politically, to accept funding from structurally violent organizations, which leaves little options. Also, we try to be quite DIY and anti-capitalist, so try and do activities that require little funding, or that we can fundraise for ourselves.



We also saw a substantial reliance on membership fees a primary source of support for Sub-Saharan African organizations (with 35% reporting these sources), followed by Asia-Pacific (19%), and MENA (10%).

FUNDING CHALLENGES FACED BY YFOS



Multiple responses accepted
Base: All survey respondents
N=694

6.3 Financial Resilience of Young Feminist Organizations

As described in the contextual challenges section of this report, YFOs are operating within unpredictable environments shaped by cultures of violence and political and economic forces. The global survey presented an opportunity to understand how equipped young feminist groups are to withstand these challenges, and understand their financial resilience. What are the factors that contribute to such resiliency and organizational sustainability? FRIDA and AWID wish to argue that the quality of funding matters very much. As AWID's WITM research has shown, organizations with multi-year, flexible (core) funding are more resilient.¹¹

Funding Quality

Although income for young feminist groups is relatively low, YFOs tend to receive a significant portion in core funding when compared to more mainstream women's rights organizations (WITM 2011 survey). Young feminist groups surveyed reported an average of 34% of their total income in 2014 was for core support. This reflects their significant reliance on income generation and membership fees for core support.

That said, when we asked survey respondents to elaborate on the specific funding challenges they face, organizations point to two main impediments to their long-term sustainability: a lack of long-term core support, as well as challenges finding funders willing to support their work. In the multiple-response question below, lack of multi-

11) See AWID's "Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots" report, page 118 for analysis of financial resilience of women's organizations.

year flexible core funding was identified as a challenge most significantly for organizations based in LAC (78%), SSA (73%), MENA (67%), and CEE/CIS (65%). LAC and SSA respondents were also the two regions which reported experiencing difficulties knowing about new grant opportunities more significantly than other regions in the sample.

Precariousness of Young Feminist Organizations and Jeopardy of Closing

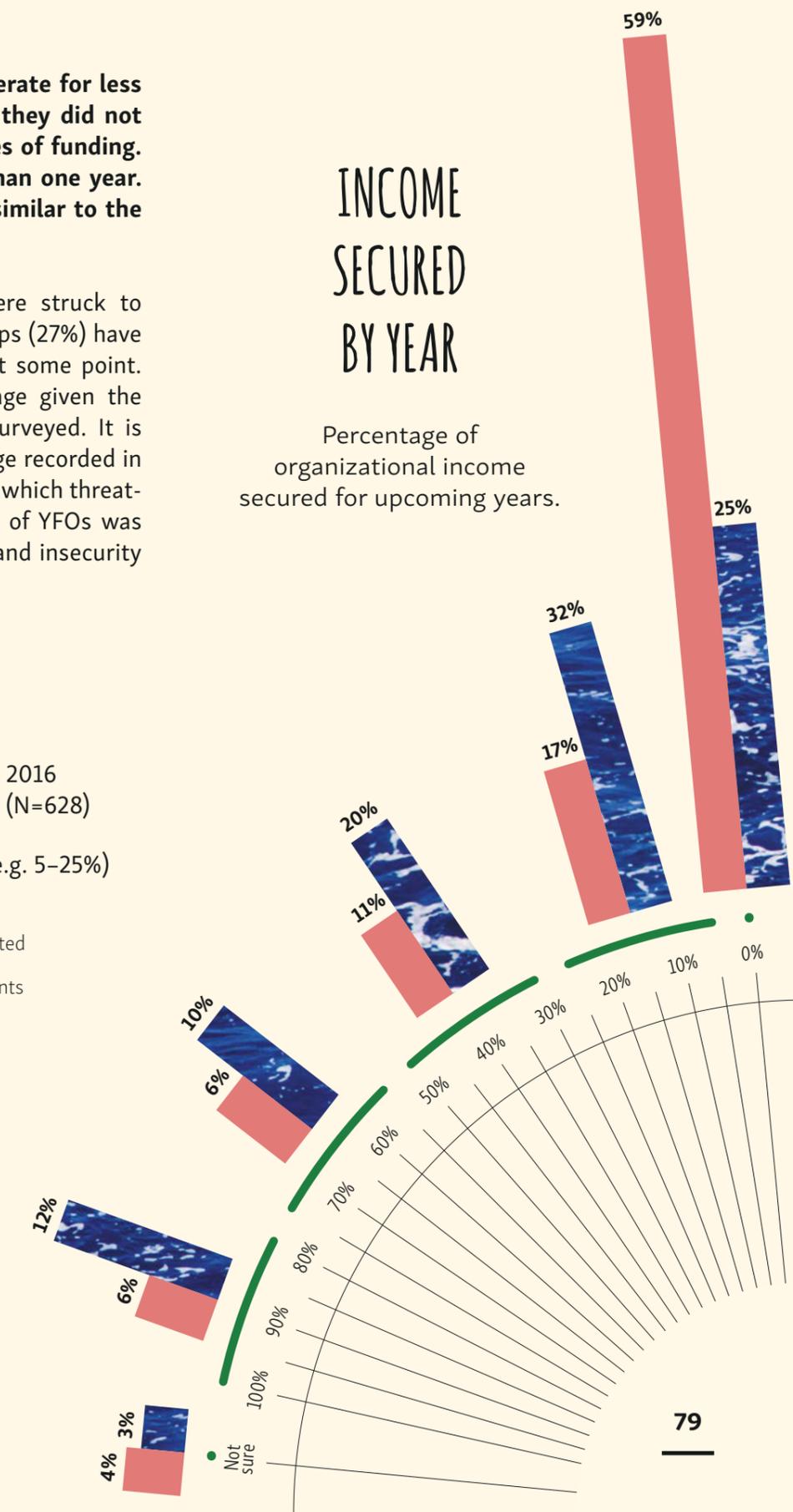
A look at projected incomes for 2015 and 2016 by survey respondents provides a window into their financial security and the reality of the lack of multi-year funding secured. As shown in the figure below, **only a handful of organizations (6%) had secured 90% or more of their 2015 funding in May 2015 while the majority (57%) had secured only one quarter or less. 75% had secured less than one quarter of their funding for 2016.** In 2016, 60%-75% of organizations in those same regions reported unsecured income. A regional analysis of 2015 projected incomes revealed the highest levels of financial precariousness were concentrated in MENA, LAC, and North America where over 40% of responding organizations in all three regions reported having 0% of their budgets confirmed.

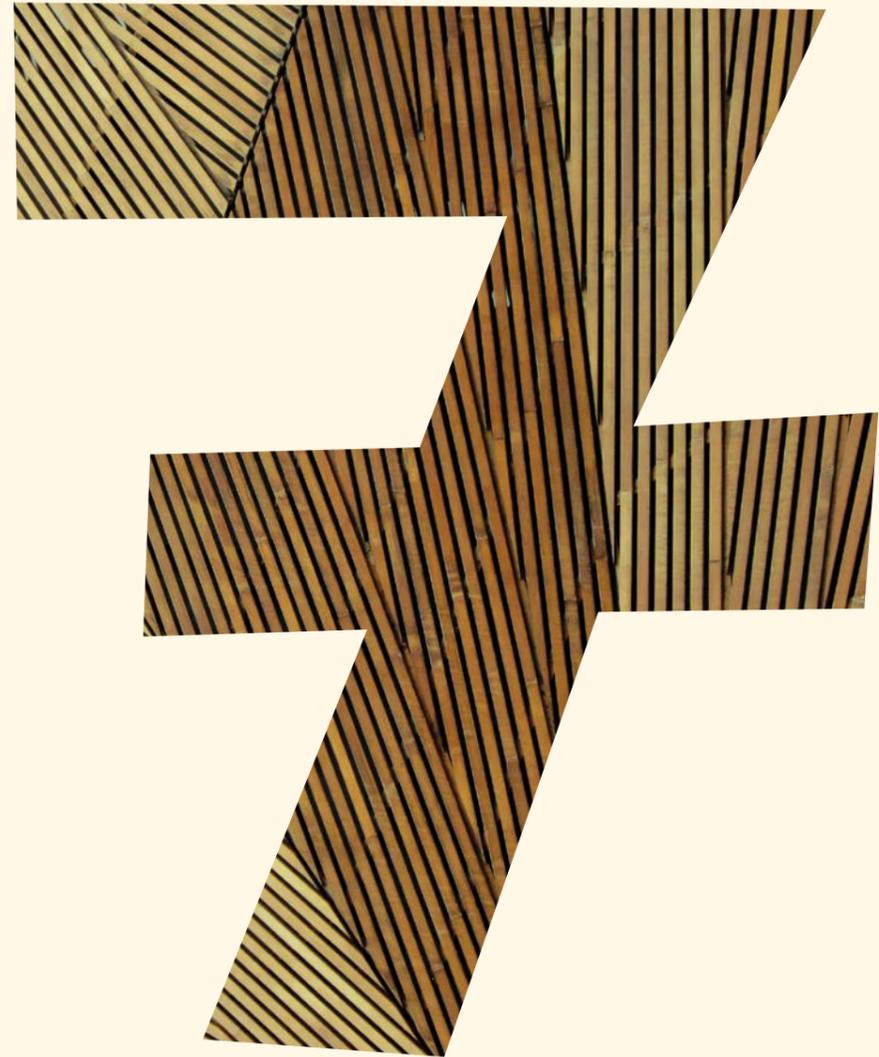
The survey went on to uncover to what extent young feminist groups have been planning for their futures. In addition to challenges of reliably securing external income, low savings and reserves also compromise the financial resilience of young feminist groups in the sample. When asked how many months their organizations could operate using only savings, the answers were concerning. **The majority of organizations**

(56%) believe they could operate for less than six months at most if they did not secure any additional sources of funding. Only 10% could last more than one year. This precariousness is very similar to the findings of WITM 2011.

Finally, AWID and FRIDA were struck to learn that one quarter of groups (27%) have been in jeopardy of closing at some point. This is a significant percentage given the relative youth of the YFOs surveyed. It is also higher than the percentage recorded in WITM 2011. The primary issue which threatened the continued existence of YFOs was funding. However, instability and insecurity also played a role for many.

2015 (N=662) 2016 (N=628)
income range (e.g. 5-25%)
Multiple responses accepted
Base: All survey respondents N=694





CONCLUSION

The findings included in this report represents over two years of outreach, collection and analysis of data from the global young feminist community. Using two major datasets, the research covers the key issues, challenges, resources and trends of over 1500 young women, girl and trans* led organizations. The process of creating this report, like much young feminist organizing, was collaborative and relied on the input and feedback from individuals and groups around the world.

The aim is that this data provides a crucial first step in developing and increasing support for young feminist organizing. The recommendations included in the beginning of the report are drawn from the data and from FRIDA and AWID's direct experiences of work with groups in this space. They represent a call to action—an opportunity for the global community to work together to create new spaces, new conversations and a new world for young feminists everywhere.



