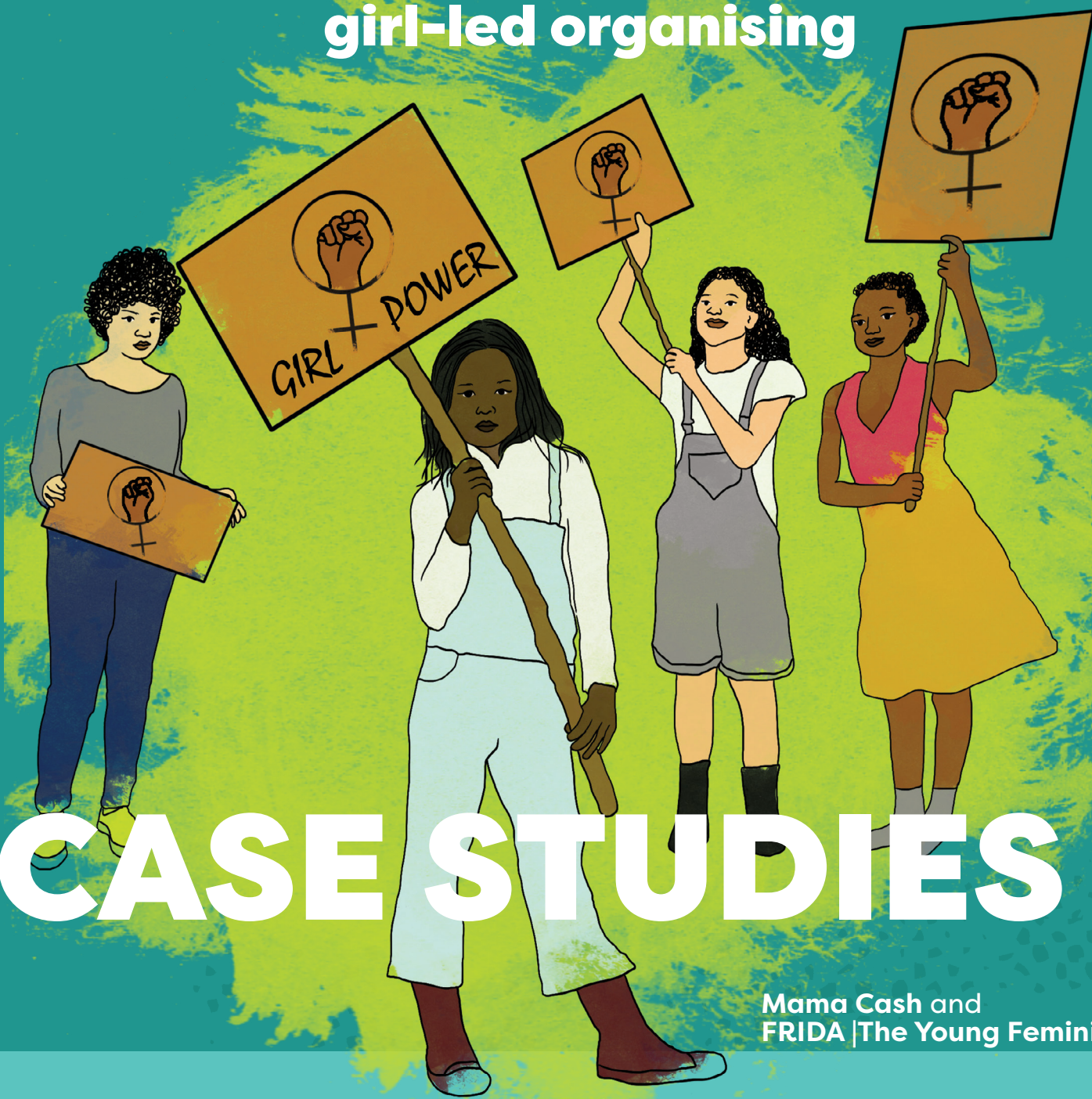


GIRLS to the FRONT

A snapshot of
girl-led organising



CASE STUDIES

Mama Cash and
FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund



WHO ARE WE?

Mama Cash

Mama Cash funds and supports women's, girls', trans and intersex people's rights organisations and initiatives around the globe that challenge the root causes of injustice. Mama Cash's role is to provide the money and support that will enable our grantee-partners to strengthen their organisations, build their support bases, shape their agendas and collaborate with others to build collective movements for change. Mama Cash mobilises resources from individuals and institutions, makes grants to women's, girls', trans and intersex people's organisations, and helps build partnerships and networks to successfully defend and advance women's, girls', trans and intersex rights globally.

FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund

FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund is the only youth-led fund focused exclusively on supporting global young feminist activism to advance social justice movements and agendas. FRIDA envisions a world where young women, girls, trans and intersex youth are recognised as experts of their own reality, enjoying their human rights and building a more just and sustainable world through collective power and transformative leadership. FRIDA provides accessible and strategic funding for newly established young feminist-led initiatives through a participatory grant-making process. It aims to strengthen their capacity to leverage additional resources, enhance their impact, increase commitments from donors and allies, and build partnerships to resource young feminist activism.

IWORDS Global

IWORDS Global is a UK-based social entrepreneurship with a presence in the United Kingdom, Spain, Colombia and Nepal, with expertise on providing research and technical support services in the fields of human rights, gender rights, youth and children, gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health rights. We help our clients with strategic planning, specialised translations, fundraising, report and proposal writing, e-content development and design creation. We have supported many international, regional and local organisations in over 120 countries across Africa, Europe, Asia, the Americas and the Middle East.

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WE STAND FOR CHANGE: Urban girls advancing sustainable development in Mexico

We Stand for Change¹ is a girl-led organisation that works to achieve the UN goals of sustainable development, including ending poverty and hunger, and ensuring quality education for all.

Its founder, Montserrat Freigoso knew early on that she wanted to work to improve the well-being of her community. Growing up in Mexico, she drew inspiration from other girl activists around the world, particularly Malala Yousafzai who fought for women's education in Pakistan; while closer to home, her parents' involvement in social projects had an unquestionable influence on her desire to work for change.

Passionate about quality education and gender equality, Montserrat sought to meet and learn from other advocates of social change. In 2015, she managed to secure sponsorships to send her and her schoolmates to the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York where she met with women leaders who motivated her to kick-start her own projects. Today, she's working on establishing exchange

programmes with the UN to give other girls the same networking opportunities that launched her into activism.

Montserrat leads the organisation, and together with the group's project coordinators and external advisors, they are all involved in decision-making. She believes that only when people treat a project as their own, do they truly engage and fight for it. Montserrat does not picture herself at the helm forever though, because she wants a constantly evolving organisation.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We Stand for Change remains an unregistered organisation but Montserrat says that acquiring a legal identity is a priority for the group so as to unlock the technical and financial support she would like to receive from the UN.

Despite the lack of registration, We Stand for Change has formed a number of alliances with organisations such as Know my World, which provides training

1. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/WestandForChangeSDG/>

and with whom it implements a joint project; and The Grail International, an organisation that has trained Montserrat and provided her group with a direct link to the UN system. Funding comes mainly from funders such as Grupo Planeta.

CHALLENGES

Being a girl leader is not easy, says Montserrat, because adults do not take young people seriously and think their ideas are not realistic. However, she believes that being surrounded by people with experience in social projects and an open mind has facilitated the work of her project.

Although the organisation does not explicitly define itself as feminist, it does work to deconstruct gender stereotypes and promote equality in its processes and projects. On that account, it has encountered resistance from older

adults, particularly around issues of gender equality and diversity.

THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

In the future, We Stand for a Change seeks to be an organisation with greater financial and technical capacities in order to achieve the goal of establishing exchange programmes with the UN.

“ I think that when you really want something and you concentrate all your energy, and have good intentions things will always work out. ”

- Montserrat Freigoso



ASOMUJERDI NAHUALÁ: Girls launch radio for women's rights in rural Guatemala

Asomujerdi Nahualá² works to promote the empowerment of girls and women through radio in Guatemala's Sololá region. It works with Indigenous girls and women aged from seven to 30 and delivers workshops that focus on the defence of women's rights. The organisation, which started working with the community in 2012, also publishes a monthly newsletter to discuss women's rights and to raise awareness of the work it does.

Manuela Xocol, one of the founders of the organisation, began her activism when she was just ten years old. She joined several groups that worked to defend the rights of children and women in a bid to fulfil her dream of working in community radio in her region. After collaborating with the World Association of Community Radios (AMARC), the National Women's Network and other local groups on communication processes, Manuela decided to motivate other girls who had also been trained by AMARC to create a new organisation in Nahualá.

The group registered in 2015 mainly to counter perceptions from those in the community who didn't consider them a "real" group before. After working with members of the community to raise awareness, today, and with their support, Asomujerdi is proud to run its flagship project: a community radio station which includes programmes like the Feminist Hour that delivers information on girls' rights. The organisation also trains girls in journalism skills.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Asomujerdi is supported mainly by the contribution of its members. It also receives financial support from the Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres. Capacity building is currently being done through AMARC which provides the girls with training space. The members are also keen to share any knowledge management processes with each other.

While legal registration opened the doors to financial support, finances are still limited and this poses a serious challenge to the group's sustainability.

2. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/asomujerdi/>

CHALLENGES

Despite her dreams of radio coming true, Manuela says it's not easy being a girl leader in Guatemala, least of all in a rural area where culture dictates that a woman's role is limited to domestic matters. In the beginning, members even had trouble getting parental permission to join the organisation.

Other challenges include difficulties with commercial radio stations that saw Asomujerdi as competition. The organisation's coverage is not very wide and there are problems with the radio frequency being moved around often. The group's access to internet and technology is also limited given that the region does not have good internet coverage. Despite all this, the organisation hopes to keep engaging young women and even hopes to expand to television.

“ Really, because of my experience, I think that girls need their space, and that was what motivated us to get organised... because everything can be achieved when we believe in ourselves, we can achieve things and it is important to keep strengthening girls in all capacities they have. ”

- Manuela Xocol



PRINCESS CENTER: Defending girls' rights in Mongolia

Princess Center Mongolia³ works on raising awareness and knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, human rights, and women and girls' rights in Mongolia, with a vision to creating a girl-friendly society.

The centre was founded in 2003 by Undrakh Chinchuluun when she was an undergraduate at the National University of Mongolia. She was moved to action by the experience of a friend who had become pregnant as a teenager a few years earlier. At the time, there were no medical services or support systems explicitly geared at pregnant teens. Her friend wanted to have an abortion but could not afford one, and had to keep the baby. Undrakh felt helpless. After graduating from high school, she decided to become a social worker, and later at university, she began volunteering at a women's rights organisation, which eventually led to her starting her own group.

Princess Center's initial focus was teenage mothers. It provided counselling, vocational skills training, group activities and community events. In 2009, it expanded its work to include survivors of sexual abuse and their families. Today, Princess Center deals with girls' rights, providing comprehensive social services, raising awareness and doing policy advocacy.

Usually the upper age limit to access the centre's services is 18, but in some cases, work is done with women well into their twenties. Girl beneficiaries have created clubs based on their interests, and work together with the centre where they are members of the board. These clubs are autonomous but Princess Center helps them find funding and supports them with the implementation of their activities. They also have continued access to services provided by the centre.

The organisation believes it is important to work with boys because it helps them establish healthy relationships with girls. Some of the boys created a club of their own and have decided to develop an organisation to continue working around gender equality with other boys.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Princess Center is the only group that works in defence of girls' rights in Mongolia. The centre receives project-based funding from other organisations. Currently, it also counts on the support of a private foundation to help maintain the social services available to teenage mothers. Princess Center also receives support from the Canadian and Australian Embassies. Now, the organisation is looking for a source of stable funding to cover its policy advocacy programme. It receives no support from the government.

3. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/princesscenter/>

“ People think like, she can't do it or, how she can do that? she can't be a founder of organization, maybe she can't continue with the activities.... So, those type of attitudes are the main challenge for me. ”

- Undrakh Chinchuluun, Founder

CHALLENGES

Undrakh says the main difficulty of being a young woman leader is the attitude of adults and the discrimination against young women. Even in many civil society spaces, adults do not value young women, and Undrakh feels she is rarely given credit for her initiative. Thankfully, Mongolian society is changing due to the multiple efforts and interventions led by young people throughout the country.

When Princess Center first started, it faced some resistance even from parts of civil society. Because so few organisations were providing social services in Mongolia at the time, the centre and its work were difficult to understand.

Another significant barrier to the organisation's development is the limited opportunity for funding, as the Mongolian government does not offer support to any civil society organisation. Princess Center currently only has three full time paid members of staff because resources are limited and donors do not include a budget for costs like salaries. Rent is also a significant expense. Princess Center is planning on creating a social enterprise to cover these permanent costs, but as the staff does not have business training, this is quite a challenge.

Cyber bullying has been a big issue for the organisation. This has required the organisation to be agile and think creatively about how to address this issue and address security concerns moving forward.

THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

Princess Center's vision is to increase society's understanding of girls' rights in Mongolia. To realise this vision, the centre would like to carry out more research studies. It also wants to encourage more young girls in Mongolia to participate in social work and empower them to know their rights.



HANDS OF HOPE INITIATIVE: Menstrual Hygiene Management brings freedom to girls in Uganda

Hands of Hope⁴ Initiative is a registered community-based organisation in Uganda led by girls and young women aged 10-24, that works on sexual and reproductive health, economic empowerment, leadership and governance. The founder, Joan Khabele, was moved to start the initiative because girls in her community did not have access to basic information on sexual and reproductive health and menstruation, and were poorly treated by their families simply for being female. She thought about setting up an initiative that would empower them and give them skills, while they were still at school. Today, Hands of Hope offers a host of programmes for youth in and out of school. These include menstrual hygiene management (MHM), life skills, age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education and career counselling.

Thanks to Hands of Hope, young girls and teenage mothers are taught income-generating activities to contribute to their financial independence. One of the group's projects is teaching girls to make reusable and healthy sanitary pads using local materials. This has been a life-changer for the girls who previously were not able to afford readymade pads.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Financing is a challenge. In Hands of Hope's case, it works with numerous local partners such as Mentor, Coach and Power, PLAN International and Kampala City Concern Authority. However, the support it has secured has not been sufficient to keep going, and many of its programmes are currently on hold because there isn't enough money to implement all the planned activities.

In addition to the funds and support provided by partners, Hands of Hope organises fundraising events and sells the items produced by girls through its life-skills programmes (soap, jewellery, etc.).

“ We have experienced that people were not happy with the work we were doing, especially men with our work with domestic violence and teenage pregnancy. They think its a private matter and we are interfering. ”

- Joan Khabele, Founder

4. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/hohiuganda/>

Hands of Hope works with girls and young women aged 10 to 24. After 24, those who wish to remain involved become peer-educators. They are great assets because younger members trust them given their experience. Boys are hired as trainers in the programmes; they train young girls on particular skills, such as how to generate their own income. The boys are also hired to help the organisation in the logistics of the projects and are given the title of “extra helping hands.”

CHALLENGES

The organisation has faced many challenges in its work, most significantly resistance from the community. Parents do not like the idea of their daughters being involved with the organisation, and husbands do not want their wives involved. Thus, Hands of Hope recognises the need to work with respected community leaders, to help reach community members and sensitise them to the value of its work for girls and for the community at large.

THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

Although the initiative began only a few years ago, it has already made its mark in the community, particularly with the MHM programme. As well as teaching girls how to make their own sanitary

pads, it has given them the opportunity to talk openly about menstruation. As it grows and expands to other regions of the country, Hands of Hope knows that the role of members and the nature of activities will evolve, but it wants to remain loyal to the original values of the organisation.

“In the beginning, we faced rejection, because we were young. Parents were not sure what we were doing with their daughters, they thought we were misleading them. The community was also not convinced with our work, many said what could young girls teach a fellow girl.”

– Joan Khabele, Founder



GIRLS UNITED FOR HUMAN RIGHTS: Working against child marriage in Pakistan

Girls United for Human Rights⁵ is a feminist non-profit group established by Hadiqa Bashir in 2014 that works to end forced marriage, child marriage and to promote women and girls' rights. When Hadiqa was 11 years old, she received a marriage proposal from a taxi driver that her parents insisted she accept. She was lucky enough to have the support of an uncle who convinced Hadiqa's parents to reject the proposal and let her pursue her studies. But one of Hadiqa's friends was forced into marriage aged only seven, and stopped coming to school after the wedding. When one day Hadiqa and some friends invited the married friend to a party, they were shocked and dismayed to find her covered in bruises.

Seeing first hand the severe injustices faced by women and girls, Hadiqa decided she needed to fight against them. That is how she came to found Girls United for Human Rights.

The group has ten members, girls between the ages of nine and 18. Because the members are very young and do not yet have national identity cards, they have not been able to register the organisation.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Unlike most girl-led groups and organisations, Girls United for Human Rights says it has enough financial and technical support from organisations like FRIDA, local NGOs, Girls not Brides and other philanthropic groups. Securing funds is not a big challenge for the group because its work is recognised and honoured by the funders. In fact, it was granted the With and For Girls Award in recognition of its work.

CHALLENGES

Girls United for Human Rights is a girl-led organisation. The most challenging aspect of the work is the effort to overturn gender stereotypes that consider a woman's place in the home. In the beginning, girls were not allowed outside and were not allowed to talk with males in the community but the group put a great deal of effort into advocating for women and girls. One example of a successful campaign, 'Safe City Swat', involved the installation of street lights in the city so that women could move around safely after dark.

5. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please contact: GirlsUnitedforHumanRights@hotmail.com

THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

The group receives excellent support from partners, and the priority now is to register the organisation shortly after Hadiqa turns 18. In Pakistan, organisations that are not officially registered risk being banned without notice.

As the girls that make up the organisation are still quite young, they have not yet had to think about what happens to the organisation when they are older. Hadiqa fears that as Pakistan is a patriarchal society, few girls will be able to continue their work in the organisation once they get married, and those who do are likely to be less active.

“ Once, I received the biggest award for doing excellent work, but there was a rumour in the community that I won the award because I had an affair with white people. Because of the same reason, I was not allowed to continue my education in the school I was studying and I had to find another school for my continuing education. There was continuing threat for us to stop the work we were doing. ”

- Hadiqa Bashir, Founder



COLECTIVA MATRIA: Creating safe spaces for girls and women in Honduras

Colectiva Matria⁶ was established in Honduras in 2014, as an initiative for girls and young women under 30 who want a safe space to learn, share, explore and discuss issues associated with feminism freely. Matria members work together in solidarity and cooperation, with no hierarchical structure, seeking to disprove the common belief that “women don’t get along.” Their work focuses on four main core areas: self-taught education in feminist social studies; self-care; art including street art, graffiti and music; and popular protest and propaganda. Other actions include providing information on sexual and reproductive health rights, contraception, and the defence of women’s rights. The collective also offers reading circles and trainings on feminist policies and safe abortion.

As the founders of Colectiva Matria have grown older, the group has gone from girl-led to young women-led. Today, the collective includes members who are university students and professionals – doctors, engineers, journalists, writers and biologists- who support the group through their different areas of expertise.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The group has worked with many local organisations including the Centre for Women’s Rights of Honduras, which offered training. It also received support from international funders, who have facilitated exchanges with other groups and given training on issues around women’s health abroad.

At present, the collective does not have any financial support, with all materials provided by the members of the group themselves. What they need most are the resources to reach more girls as well as a permanent space to meet. Currently, they meet in public places or in members’ homes, which is not ideal for the stability or safety of the group.

CHALLENGES

The work that is being done by Colectiva Matria puts its members at risk given that emergency contraception and abortion are illegal in Honduras, and just taking a stand or providing access to information can be a risk. Restrictions on freedom of expression mean that the girls can be prosecuted, and some people have

6. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ColectivaMatria/>

already threatened members of the collective. Members have also been subjected to physical and verbal threats from religious groups during protests.

THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

The organisation hopes to have a Matria house in the future, a safe space in which to conduct training on feminist policies, sexual and reproductive health, and strengthen the core of the organisation. It also hopes to secure more donation-based resources in order to reach more women.

The collective provides information to all girls, but participation in the group is limited to young women that are 18 or older given the risks they face due to the nature of their work. Colectiva Matria believes it first needs a safe permanent space and financial stability before it can include younger girls into the group.

“ Having a ‘safe space’ is the motto of Colectiva Matria, because that is what we demand, we demand safe spaces where we can learn, share, where we can be ourselves and exercise our rights. ”

-Fabiola Rubio, Colectiva Matria

Original quote in Spanish, translation by the research team



FONDO LUNARIA: Betting on the extraordinary: girls' autonomy and leadership in Colombia

Fondo Lunaria⁷ is a feminist fund that mobilises resources to support organisations of diverse Colombian women, with an emphasis on young women working for a country that supports social justice and rights, free of sexism, racism and homophobia. The fund mobilises resources from funders such as NoVo Foundation, Mama Cash, Global Fund for Women, Fokus and Interpares to support grassroots young women's initiatives throughout Colombia. It has as its primary objective to grant and respect the financial autonomy of women and girls that organise towards a common goal. Fondo Lunaria supports initiatives that are aligned with five core themes:

- Freedom from violence for young women
- Sexual and reproductive rights
- Young women defending territories
- Young women and peace
- Young LGBTI women defending their rights

The fund's calls for proposals centre on these five themes, and although they each have specific requirements, they share some common eligibility criteria such as the fact that all proposals must be coordinated by young women (between

16-29 years old) and may be directed at any segment of the population. In the case of mixed organisations⁸, proposals that prove to be developed, presented, led and implemented by the young women of the organisation will be prioritised.

Fondo Lunaria supports both organisations and groups that are legally registered as well as those that are not. The organisations that apply must obtain the endorsement of other civil society groups. Those that have less access to resources will be prioritised. Groups or organisations that have been or are currently being funded by Fondo Lunaria are not excluded.

THE FUND AND GIRLS

Fondo Lunaria works with girls and young women because it wants to redress the inequalities in the resources and opportunities available to them. Almost 70% of organisations supported by the fund do not have legal status. This is because Fondo Lunaria believes that new Colombian fiscal reforms make it difficult for small organisations to register, given the financial requirements.

7. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/fondolunaria/>

8. Women and men

“ For us the experience with the Fund was very significant with regards to how they treat organisations that they support. I went to present a proposal and it’s not even the presentation but how the advisors sit down and listen to you, and give you recommendations on how to strengthen your initiative with regards to women’s rights, and the administrative and financial aspect... sometimes you need to find organisations such as this one, that do not make you feel like you are in a position of inferiority but instead that we are there to grow together. ”

-Katherin García, Jóvenes Creadores del Chocó.

The fund can also act as a fiscal sponsor to unregistered organisations who need that support.

The most important aspect of the fund and which it highlights as its main characteristic is the financial freedom it gives to girls and young women to implement the initiatives they want in the way that they want, without imposing on them a structure or way of doing things, as other donors do.

Each of Fondo Lunaria’s grants amount to US\$3,000 (though this can vary). In addition to the financial support, Fondo Lunaria also conducts workshops and training along the fund’s principle themes mentioned above, as well as training on resource management and conflict resolution. The fund also supports exchange programmes amongst its grantee partners, which allows them to share knowledge from their region and community.

THE ORGANISATIONS THEY SUPPORT

Fondo Lunaria supports those that “nobody else wants to support.” These include initiatives that create spaces for cultural expression in isolated regions of the country, to sexual and reproductive health work with the young indigenous Wayuu tribes in La Guajira. Below are some examples of the organisations supported by Fondo Lunaria.



JÓVENES CREADORES DEL CHOCÓ

The Collective Jóvenes Creadores del Chocó⁹ is an artistic and cultural organisation that works with vulnerable boys, girls and young people on the Pacific coast of Colombia. It was set up in 2008 by four young women under 18 who had had enough of witnessing ongoing rights violations against youth in this region mired by violence. The four came together to create spaces where youth could use culture and artistic expression such as dance and theatre as a vehicle to transform their realities.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

So far, the organisation has not received as much institutional support as it requires to meet its goals. Nonetheless, the police have provided security and protection to members of the group because of the presence of criminal groups; and the Ministry of Education has provided spaces for the various art groups of the collective.

Prior to registering in 2011, Jóvenes Creadores did not have any economic or technical support, but having a legal identity has allowed the collective to qualify for calls for proposals from donors such as the Ministry of Culture. The organisation's limited financial

resources means it is difficult to hire full time staff, but the biggest impediment to the organisation's success remains finding a physical space to carry out its work.

CHALLENGES

It has not been an easy journey for the girls and young women leading the collective due to patriarchal attitudes, lack of institutional support, discreditation from leading cultural figures in the region and the constant conflict with criminal gangs. The lack of physical space to call their own has meant that much of the group's work has had to take place on the street.

“ We always say, if we have this impact without having any financial resources, we cannot imagine how many people we could reach if we had enough financial resources. ”

-Katherin García- Project Leader

9. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/jovenescreadoresdelchoco/>



5TA CON 5TA CREW

Fundación Cultura Quinta con Quinta Crew¹⁰ is a mixed community-based organisation that has been working in the region of Norte de Santander, Colombia for the past ten years. The organisation, which has been legally registered for the last four years, focuses on the defence of rights, peace building and empowerment for communities affected by armed conflict. It works to preserve historical accounts of events and honour the experience of victims through music and art particularly hip-hop, graffiti, rap, break dance and audio-visual tools such as photography and video.

5ta con 5ta Crew plays an important role in the region as it offers one of the very few cultural and artistic alternatives available to young people. The group's philosophy is based on the equal participation of men and women and it seeks to create spaces that are free of stigma and discrimination, that can foster teamwork and celebrate difference. Girls and young women actively participate in disciplines such as rap and hip-hop, which have traditionally been considered the exclusive domain of boys and men.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The technical and financial support currently being received comes from government agencies such as the Ministry of Culture and national and international donors such as Fondo Lunaria, The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), ProPaz and UNHCR. The region's Public Library and several universities have allowed the group the use of their premises to carry out activities.

This type of support, while extremely valuable, is not enough to maintain the stability of the group due to its short term and sporadic nature. Members also feel they do not have enough knowledge about what type of support is available to them.

CHALLENGES

Girls play a crucial role in decision-making within the organisation and some have felt empowered enough to start their own initiatives. But the girls still struggle with a lack of support from the community, which still sees rap and hip-hop as male activities.

10. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/jovenescreadoresdelchoco/>



COLECTIVO PODER MESTIZO

Colectivo Poder Mestizo¹¹ was founded in 2012 by eight university students between the ages of 17 and 22 (four female and four male). The organisation was born out of a desire to transform the lives of those affected by armed conflict in the Córdoba region of northern Colombia. A decades-long climate of violence and war left a whole generation of youth in a state of apathy. Of particular significance to the region was a paramilitary takeover of the University of Córdoba in 1995, which saw professors and students murdered and threatened. This broke the fabric of society and instilled a deep sense of fear amongst its youth. Colectivo Poder Mestizo wanted to change this.

The organisation began by working jointly with the student movement at the University of Córdoba through music. Together they founded one of their most important projects, “the memory festival,” which pays homage to the victims of the paramilitary action. Over time, this gave way to a platform of initiatives aimed at preserving the historical memory of the city of Montería and the region of Córdoba.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

In the beginning, Colectivo Mestizo managed to secure funding and support by working jointly with other NGOs that had a legal identity. Following legal registration, the collective decided to set up a more hierarchical organisational structure with a board of directors, a president and a legal representative. The main motivation to legally register was to improve access to resources and to fund staff. This paved the way for various initiatives including the implementation of an independent organisation geared exclusively to feminist women, and which targets girl activists who identify as feminist from other mixed organisations. The idea is to organise exchanges with female artists in the Colombian Caribbean, in the hope of strengthening the region’s feminist cultural agenda. Although men will have a voice in this process, they will not have a vote.

CHALLENGES

Colectivo Mestizo faces several security problems as a result of the particular characteristics of the region. The resurgence of armed groups in the region and the censorship that has again ensued, has given rise to discriminatory attitudes, and sometimes even violence, towards all those who think differently.

11. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/PoderMstzo/>

RARAS NO TAN RARAS

Raras No Tan Raras¹², or Las raras (the rare ones) as they call themselves, are a group of feminist women with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities in the region of Atlántico in Colombia, who have been engaged in activism since youth. It was founded by a 17 year-old university student who had been involved in other LGBTI organisations. Las raras' goal is to empower themselves and become visible as women with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities.

The work of Las Raras is structured around three main themes:

Communication: the dissemination of messages to raise awareness and promote the group's profile. This mainly involves community radio, but the group plans to expand into audio-visual programming as well.

Arts and culture including theatre and dance.

Research: the main objective is to implement research that focuses on women with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities in the Atlantic region.

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Raras no tan Raras made the decision not to have a legal identity because members wanted to focus on their process as a group-- to raise awareness and promote tolerance—rather than

spend time and resources trying to secure financing. It is aware that the decision not to register limits the group's access to technical and financial resources.

Another reason for not formalising the group is the fear that registering could limit the group's programmes to those dictated/made available by donors, rather than the ones that best fit their needs.

CHALLENGES

The experiences of the leaders of Raras no tan Raras show that it is not easy to be a young woman, particularly in a LGBTIQ organisation. Some have felt patronised by older activists, and this has created intergenerational conflicts. Another factor is that the majority of LGBTIQ groups are made up and led primarily by adult gay and trans men. This is challenging for young females (both cis and trans) who want to participate actively and feel represented. It is the objective of Raras no tan Raras to recognise the voice of all young women, given that within these seemingly safe spaces, discrimination against trans, lesbian, and bisexual women has also been normalised.

12. For more information about the work of this group/organisation please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/Raras-No-Tan-Raras-207255183339103/>



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