

Annual Report 2022



28 APRIL 2023

COUNT ME IN! IN 2022

In 2022 the Count Me In! (CMI!) consortium entered the second year of its second programme period (2021 - 2025) of its Strategic Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of

Foreign Affairs. CMI! consists of member organisations Mama Cash (MC), the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), CREA, Just Associates (JASS), and the Sister Funds Urgent Action Fund (UAF) and Urgent Action Fund Africa (UAF-Africa). The sex worker-led Red Umbrella Fund (RUF) and the Dutch gender platform WO=MEN are strategic allies of the consortium. CMI! envisions a gender-equal and just world, where all women and girls, and non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans, and intersex people enjoy their rights fully and live to their full potential.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Building on the achievements and lessons of its first six years, CMI! continued supporting women's rights organisations (WROs)¹ and women human rights defenders (WHRDs)² in 2022 to become better *resourced, coordinated and resilient* so they can leverage their power to create change from local to global and from global to local. CMI! believes that we bring about sustainable change by building strong and autonomous movements. Our core strategies, *money, movement building and making change*, mutually strengthen CMI! members' and partners' capacities to engage in Lobbying & Advocacy (L&A) in order to effect positive and sustainable legal, policy and social norm change on women's and girls'³ rights and gender equality.

This work is driven by women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and are structurally excluded from participating in society as equals. Because they lead the change they seek for themselves and their communities - because they demand to be counted in - structurally excluded women and girls are CMI!'s primary actors. As CMI!'s Baseline Study of 2021 affirmed, they have extensive organising experience and strong links to constituents in their respective contexts.

This annual report presents key accomplishments of 2022. It includes stories of change that illustrate the impact of CMI!'s strategies. Central to these stories of change is how CMI! members and partners have worked to strengthen movements and ensure that the voices, priorities and strategies of women's rights movements inform decision-making and agenda-setting spaces at local, regional and international levels.

¹ WROs for CMI! refers to Rights Groups and Organisations led by and for women, girls and/or anyone who faces sex or gender discrimination such as non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans and intersex people.

² WHRDs for CMI! refers to Human Rights Defenders that are women, girls and anyone who faces sex or gender discrimination such as non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans or intersex people.

³ For CMI! "women and girls" refers to women and girls and anyone who faces sex or gender discrimination such as non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans and intersex people. 'Structurally excluded women and girls' are those facing multiple, intersecting injustices, including but not limited to: women and girls with disabilities, sex workers, and lesbian, bisexual and queer (LBQ) women and girls.

CHAPTER 1 CONTEXT

2022 proved to be a challenging year for CMI!’s constituencies, as we described in our Annual Plan 2023. In the global context, we observed an increasing number of crises and emergencies (political, economic, conflict, climate and natural disasters) that are escalating in scale and scope of effect, and overlapping in occurrence and duration. Impacts of climate change, deepening crises of democracy and erupting conflicts in different countries compounded by an ongoing global economic crisis have increased insecurity and vulnerability across all regions. This is particularly the case in CMI! countries with waves of violence hitting across the Sahel region in Burkina Faso and Mali, leading to millions of people being displaced and in need of humanitarian aid. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine reshaped the global geopolitical landscape and impacted people across all regions with surging food and fuel prices. These multiple crises are having dramatic impacts on the living conditions of structurally excluded women and girls who were already facing economic insecurity and injustice as well as an intersection of pervasive and interpersonal violence in their lives and communities. Loss of livelihoods, food insecurity and increased structural violence affect their communities as well as those of Indigenous communities defending land, territory and food sovereignty in the context of struggling against extractive industries.

In 2022 we saw the continuing increasing power of populist and authoritarian actors and a heightened mobilisation of anti-rights movements, by which we mean movements adopting strategies to undermine the universality of human rights and seek to prevent specific communities from accessing their rights, such as trans, gender non-conforming and non-binary people or sex workers. With COVID-19 lockdowns no longer in place, governments across the CMI! regions shifted their attention to regulating dissent and tightening control on civil society and social media. Civic space in CMI! countries, such as Egypt and India, has been progressively shrinking with governments using their legislative powers and carceral system to increase scrutiny of civil society organisations and social movements. In Zimbabwe the government introduced a bill under the guise of countering terrorism severely restricting the operation of NGOs and heavy police violence was used against activists. The extensive circulation of misinformation and the spread of false information by far-right, nationalist and anti-rights movements as well as governments continued distorting people’s perception of reality and undermining trust in public institutions and rule of law. It is of real concern that their narratives seeking to limit sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as the rights of specific communities, especially trans and gender-diverse people, and sex workers, and tactics justifying violence and discrimination against them, have been picked up by actors within the broader women’s movement. This opposition builds its argumentation on false notions underpinning existing and interlinked systems of oppression and dominance, such as patriarchy, white supremacy and capitalism, valuing some bodies more than others. In UN spaces, there has been an increased normalisation of anti-rights language and use of rights language for anti-rights purposes, as well as corporate capture⁴ such as the recent partnership of UN Women with BlackRock showed (see more in the Story of Change on p. 9).

⁴ “Corporate capture” is a phenomenon where private industry uses its political influence to take control of the decision-making apparatus of the state, such as regulatory agencies, law enforcement entities, and legislatures. Definition from: <https://ccrjustice.org/corporate-capture>

Gender-based violence (GBV) remained one of the biggest challenges for women and girls in CMI! countries, disproportionately affecting structurally excluded communities, with governments doing little to increase legal protection or take adequate measures. Violence is often perpetuated by patriarchal social, economic and political norms and institutionalised in laws, policies and practices, leading to the criminalisation of women because of their work, identity or activism, lack of recognition before the law and limited access to protection. Trans people and sex workers have been an easy target for societal as well as state actors, such as law enforcement, in, for example, Zimbabwe. Indigenous WHRDs and land defenders have been targeted for their activism and highly criminalised in Indonesia. Guatemala and Honduras are facing increased violence against women and girls, particularly lesbian, bisexual and trans (LBT) women and human rights defenders. In Honduras, despite the opening of civic space, there is a total ban on abortion and emergency contraception, and communities have been evicted from their ancestral land. In Lebanon, the rates of GBV have surged following the economic collapse. While the state responds with increasingly harsh laws, these do nothing to reduce, prevent or provide remedies for violence victims and survivors.

While facing these challenges, WROs and WHRDs continue to be under-resourced globally, for example, the Open Society Foundations withdrew most of its financial and advocacy support to sex-worker-led organisations in 2022. Even though the WHO indicated that the end of the COVID-19 pandemic was in sight and governments ended lockdown measures, the effects still reverberated on WROs and WHRDs and in some communities, people continue to suffer or even die from COVID-19. The global economic crisis put a growing demand on their organisations and brought to the forefront the need to weigh programme implementation costs versus humanitarian survival needs (e.g. food, income). This has led to many WHRDs facing mental health issues and burnout. This highlights the urgency of our feminist approach to crisis response and our focus on collective care and holistic security. CMI! holistically addresses the needs of our movement partners when supporting them and working in solidarity with them to make visible and address the root causes of these crises and how they affect their safety, wellbeing and human rights. CMI!'s feminist response to crises also includes supporting partners to sustain resilience through collective care and healing support.

In spite of these challenges there have been exciting developments in how feminist movements resisted and boldly continued their incredible mobilisation and activism to 'count in' the voices of all women and girls in 2022. We saw a reinvigoration among CMI! partners to mobilise and organise after lockdowns ended and communities were able to meet again in-person. Some of the innovations required during lockdowns have become sustained adaptations and have strengthened organising and strategising across regions and communities, such as NO2TA The Feminist Lab, an online platform and safe space connecting feminist activists across 13 countries in North Africa and West Asia (see Annex III). New virtual tools and skills have allowed WROs to organise more inclusive multilingual events, resources and meetings. There has been an increase in activism to address land injustices and access to land and control of resources in Burkina Faso, Kenya and Malawi as well as work to resist climate change and economic injustices. The increased visibility of anti-rights opposition has also increased awareness among many more actors in mainstream civil society of the urgency and the importance to take a position and speak up

as allies, including on sex work. More and more organisations are publicly declaring to be feminist and to be including feminist values and practice in their work. The Movement for Black Lives' (M4BL) achievements are enduring and have connected racial, economic, gender and disability justice movements, including on the need for narrative shifts and conversations on decolonisation in philanthropy. These have created opportunities for influencing and shifting philanthropic resources and practices.

The launch of the Alliance for Feminist Movements brought multiple stakeholders together to increase and improve the quantity and quality of resources and garner political support for feminist movements and agendas. It is encouraging to see more governments stepping up their commitment by joining the Alliance or adopting Feminist Foreign Policies. The adoption by the Dutch government of a Feminist Foreign Policy in 2022 based on the four R's of Rights, Representation, Resources, and Reality Check offers an important opportunity to address the existing tensions between different policy areas, such as trade, security, and human rights, and co-create a more sustainable, feminist, and coherent approach of its foreign policy.

The risks and mitigation strategies identified in our programme proposal are still relevant with COVID-19 being overtaken by other contextual factors that impact on CMI!'s partners and implementation, such as conflict, political instability or natural disasters. These aggravate gender-based violence and economic injustice in already challenging contexts for structurally excluded communities. Consequently, in addition to holistic security, rapid response funding and capacity strengthening support, CMI! also integrated uplifting feminist economic alternatives anchored in community solutions into its movement building strategies. This will support CMI!'s L&A efforts for economic justice resourcing and challenging neo-liberal economic models that fuel economic injustice.

In the Dutch context, political instability following provincial elections in 2023 might negatively impact on the Dutch commitment to a Feminist Foreign Policy and continued support for resourcing of feminist movements including in the next funding framework. Last year we already indicated the need to be aware of the risk of division within and across movements related to the increasing opposition to women and girls' rights as well as the co-optation or dilution of feminist terminology. This has led CMI! to focus more on creating cross-movement spaces and alliance-building to address internal schisms and advance the agendas and inclusion of structurally excluded groups, such as sex workers and trans and non-binary people.

CHAPTER 2 SUSTAINABILITY AND PARTNERSHIP IN 2022

Strong and autonomous movements are a key objective of CMI!'s Theory of Change. When entering partnerships, CMI! commits to a long-term engagement that stretches beyond a financial relationship and sustains partners in a broad sense. CMI! ensures sustainability and lasting positive effects of our results through a movement building approach, which

specifically seeks to build broad, committed bases of support through alliance-building and coordinated collective action. Through this approach, the work is carried beyond the life of any single organisation or programme. Long-lasting effects for our community-led partners come about through local leadership, voice and agency. CMI! engages in partnerships with self-led groups representing structurally excluded women and girls pushing for systemic change and who are committed to building collective power together with other networks and movements for greater impact.

CMI! intentionally addresses root causes of injustice and oppression and by doing so, seeks to permanently transform relations of power; we are focused on structural gains that move past symptoms and bring change to whole systems. These can sometimes take many years and come through the advancement in incremental steps toward a big vision. This includes investing in donor influencing to ensure a sustained increase of resourcing of feminist movements as well as to change the modalities of funding so that communities that have been historically excluded have better access to more and better funding. CMI! also focuses on creating and sustaining civic spaces for feminist movements to influence and create change to build solidarity with allied movements. CMI!'s movement building approach centres holistic security, collective care, well-being and protection of activists, organisations, and movements so they can not only survive and continue their work but be resilient, sustain their efforts and thrive. This is why CMI! recognises strong, autonomous feminist movements as an outcome in itself.

At the implementation level, partners continued to be supported by CMI! with core, flexible and long-term support. CMI! supported partners with accompaniment, development of organisational and collective leadership, governance, capacity-strengthening for L&A, South-South exchanges, learning about feminist MEL and the development of organisational work plans in 2022. CMI! partners share power in grant-making processes through participatory decision-making or through advisory roles. Red Umbrella Fund is led by the community it serves, ie. sex workers. Feminist activists from all around the world make decisions on all of Mama Cash's grants to feminist organisations, women's funds and individuals via a participatory grantmaking approach. CMI! members and strategic partners actively engage partners in their activities, including donor influencing, feminist MEL, the planning and implementation of activities, strategy development, advocacy, communications and statements, events and panels. Together with partners, CMI! produced and launched knowledge products and tools (see Annex IV for extensive list) to support WHRD activism such as the factsheet *Counting Sex Workers in Feminist Foreign Policies*, developed at the end of 2022

In addition to strengthening movement building, CMI! continued engaging in advocacy and dialogue with donors for sustainable investment in women's rights and gender equality, as under resourcing and poor access to core, long term and flexible support for WROs remain key obstacles to sustainable movement building. We have been building on existing and continued momentum and commitments around the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) and Dutch Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) to advance our agenda on funding feminist movements well. Mama Cash developed a new donor influencing strategy to transform donor funding practices and translate relevant commitments into increased and sustained resourcing of feminist movements. Partners' voices were amplified by being speakers at CMI! events, such as during the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on labour

rights through cross-movement collaboration, and on feminist solutions for the environmental and climate crisis, or during the Extractives dialogue with the Dutch MFA on 1 April 2022.

Learning agenda

To ensure the effectiveness of the CMI! consortium, we are committed to regular review, learning and adaptation. Effective strategies for funding, capacity development and for direct L&A are regularly revised and adapted based on learning from success and failure and adapted to changing conditions. This need for constant adaptations also reflects the reality that change is often not a linear process, but rather the result of many different actors, actions and circumstances pulling in different directions – some within our control, many not. The change aimed at social justice is political in nature and requires shifts in power relations and therefore involves tensions, struggle and conflict. Conditions and contexts change, and new threats and opportunities emerge.

In 2022 CMI! started rolling out our learning plan that was developed in the first year. The PMEL team in 2022 refined the CMI learning questions:

- (i) Is our feminist movement building strategy working?
- (ii) are structurally excluded women and girls shifting powers?

The learning questions guide and inform how we learn as a consortium especially in the different thematic working groups. These two questions informed the design of the mid-term review process that CMI! is embarking on in 2023.

Activities to date include After Action Reviews by each of the thematic working groups. The CMI! Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy group (SWAG), the Extractives working group, the Pushing Back against Opposition, and the Feminist Economic Realities working group have reviewed our collective activities to document the lessons learned and results of the activities. These include CSW events, sessions at the MFA on the resistance of WHRDS to extractives projects and on feminist economic alternatives, the publication of materials, and advocacy letters sent to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and to the Scottish government and Parliament. Other learning sessions included a sense making workshop where members and strategic partners of the programme reflected on the IATI data, analysed the trends and lobby and advocacy strategies that partners are using in their context to engage policy and societal actors..

Lessons learned

CMI! members have had to shift their strategies and ways of supporting partners in 2022, after the ending of COVID-19 lockdown measures in many places. On the one hand the re-opening created more possibilities for meeting and reconnecting in person. On the other hand, the confluence of multiple crises created more risks and had a negative impact on WHRDs and WROs. They often had to expand the scope of their work by also providing

humanitarian support. CMI! members UAF and UAF-Africa have provided support to respond to these emerging needs and sometimes the resulting need for evacuation. This also meant re-emphasising the importance of strengthening movements to respond to closing civil society space and the need to (re-)establish safe spaces for WHRDs and community members. CMI! members recognised the challenges for organisations working in restrictive environments to access resources while complying to necessary regulations and MEL requirements of donors. CREA has therefore invested in supporting the strengthening of feminist accountability practices and strategic planning of CMI! partners. With its Feminist Accountability project CREA is working with partners to create a tool to help conceptualise MEL from a programmatic accountability lens.

Our campaign and advocacy support at national, regional and global level, also showed the significance of infrastructure support for movements, including translation and communications support, and the strategic impact that our platforms as CMI! can have in supporting mobilising efforts, if we connect people across struggles.

Communication

By March 2022, CMI! adopted its new communications strategy developed with communications colleagues from the member organisations and strategic partners. CMI! identifies three objectives: 1) Strengthening collaboration and coordination within CMI!; 2) Influencing donors and political and societal actors to take action; 3) Jointly amplifying the reach of feminist narratives. For example, WO=MEN developed and published new stories on its blog about the work of local partners of other CMI members to amplify their messages. The objectives directly feed into CMI!'s money and making change strategies, whereas the members mostly do the movement building-related communications.

As a first step to the implementation of the strategy, the channels were set up to reach those objectives with the brand-new [CMI! website](#) went live in October. The website serves as a platform to uplift the stories of our partners and share our collective work. To launch the new CMI! website and promote the CMI! Stories of Change 2021, we rolled out a communications campaign, [#FUNDWHATWORKS](#), with the goal of showcasing the impact feminist activism catalyses. The campaign got 21,720 impressions only on CMI!'s Twitter account and was shared multiple times by members, partners, and allies.

Simultaneously, we set up and increased followers of all CMI! social media channels ([Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#)), gaining about 1500 followers on LinkedIn in 10 months. In 2022, CMI! reactivated Twitter and got about 150K impressions. The campaigns led on Twitter also increased the number of shares and likes per post.

In 2022 CMI! also joined forces with the Dutch media platform Vice Versa to publish two special editions of the magazine. The [Feminist Foreign Policy special](#) edition zooms in on how such a policy can support feminist movements better, but also what is needed for that. For example, in this special, Count Me In! emphasises the importance of leading from the South, feminist funding and considering the needs of structurally excluded women and girls who face layers of oppression and discrimination. The [Gender-Based Violence special](#)

sheds light on the work and reality of some of CMI!'s partners, land rights defenders resisting extractives projects and sex workers' rights activists.

CHAPTER 3 CMI'S IMPACT IN 2022

In 2022 CMI! supported more than 994 WROs and 953 WHRDs⁵ to strengthen the capacities of activists, organisations and movements. Ongoing organising, movement support and mobilising of WROs and communities around the world led to encouraging successes in changing norms, policies and practices.

CMI! members stepped up their support in advocacy and solidarity to push back against anti-rights and anti-gender opposition targeting trans and gender-diverse people, and sex workers. More grants were provided to WROs engaging in land justice activism than before, and we created space for the engagement of land and territory defenders with the Dutch MFA and embassies. Other constituencies supported in their activism were garment factory workers, small-scale farmers, women prisoners, community artists, cooperatives, teachers, migrant workers, women with disabilities, and labour and democracy activists.

A non-exhaustive cross-section of political and social actors targeted by our partners' advocacy are local and regional authorities, Ministries of Environment, Women's Empowerment, Justice, Land Urban Planning and Construction, Health, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, and Religious Affairs, law enforcement, health practitioners, UN mandate holders and agencies, saving and credit cooperatives, and the media.

CMI! members CREA and UAF, for example, supported migrant domestic workers in Lebanon impacted by the exploitative Kafala system. Women in this system face multiple forms of gender-based violence.⁶ Support was provided for advocacy training to migrants facing violence, housing insecurity, medical care, legal issues, and other social justice issues, challenges exacerbated by Lebanon's economic collapse. Eгна Legna, a group set up by returned migrant domestic workers in Lebanon, organised capacity building sessions with 35 returnee women migrant domestic workers. The sessions focused on: creating awareness of the impact of the system; discussing the role of different stakeholders, including government bodies, embassies and local and international NGOs in this system; making recommendations to ensure access to justice; and sharing critical views on economic gain from migration. The sessions increased knowledge, skills on how to create awareness among multiple stakeholders, and connections between women to form a community of returnee migrants. Eгна Legna's outreach has successfully discouraged women from re-migrating from Ethiopia to Lebanon and other countries with similarly exploitative labour systems and gained the support from mothers, religious leaders, school principals, and other returnees. They also conducted and published research on GBV within their constituency in Lebanon.

⁵ These are unique numbers. The actual number of WHRDs and WROs supported by CMI! in 2022 is higher as through our movement building approach we provide long term core support.

⁶ In a research by Eгна Legna with the Lebanese American University almost 68% of the women migrant domestic workers interviewed had faced sexual harassment.

CMI! knowledge products and tools (see Annex IV) have been extensively used by CMI! partners in their advocacy to, for example, substantiate claims with evidence, develop their own messaging and strategy, create a power analysis of key stakeholders, analyse relevant context factors or unveil investment chains behind extractives projects. Sessions on AWID's *Rights at Risk report* created stronger awareness and solidarity between feminist, gender justice and LGBTIQ groups in different regions to be able to respond to anti-rights tactics and strategies in their advocacy at the national and regional level, for example, within the Organisation of American States (OAS). UAF-Africa and JASS organised multiple sessions on the CMI! extractives toolkit in different regions, including training of facilitators in Indonesia (see also the Story of Change on p. 10). At the Feminist Republik in November 2022, UAF-Africa launched its research report on the healing justice framework that recognises historical and intergenerational trauma caused by intersecting systems of oppression and establishes a practice centering healing in social justice organising. It has since been disseminated in multiple countries, including in the Francophone region.⁷

As part of CMI!'s strategic partnership with the Dutch government, we cooperated in the successful establishment of the Alliance for Feminist Movements. AWID is hosting the Secretariat and Mama Cash is part of the steering committee of the Alliance, with an eye to continuing to advance CMI!'s vision of bringing more and money to autonomous feminist movements. Another positive outcome of our partnership was the active inclusion of sex workers' rights at the UN CSW in New York as a result of the sustained commitment of the Dutch government to partner with CMI! in co-organising an event that centred the voices of sex workers' rights activists. CMI! actively contributed to the updated Dutch International Trade and Development Cooperation policy and the newly adopted Feminist Foreign Policy during the consultation processes. Our submissions, video statement and a joint feminist letter signed by 6 Strategic Partnerships can be found in Annex IV. CMI! contributed to awareness building on economic justice and GBV within the Ministry with two learning sessions on Extractives and Feminist Economic Alternatives.

Below we share three stories of change in more detail as examples of local and international advocacy efforts across different geographies and themes. Together these stories show how WHRDs and WROs are building cross-movement alliances, creating more awareness among political and societal actors, influencing norms and changing laws, policies, and funding practices. These successes and more are highlighted by the additional Stories of Change of CMI! partners collected in Annex III.

Story of change - Block BlackRock

On 25 May 2022, UN Women and BlackRock Inc. announced on their websites a partnership "to cooperate in promoting the growth of gender lens investing". It was part of the agreement signed at the World Economic Forum's 2022 Annual Meeting in Davos. The news sparked outrage among feminist and other social justice movements since the trillion-

⁷ *We Carry Generational Demands for Healing That Will Not Rest": An African Feminist Exploration of Healing Justice as an Analytical Lens and a Practice*, UAF-Africa, Kenya, 2022.

dollar asset management firm is the largest investor in fossil fuels and deforestation-linked agricultural commodities. BlackRock's investments are worsening the climate crisis, land grabbing and causing violations of Indigenous Peoples' rights. They are also investing in military and civilian weapons and sovereign debt.

A group of committed feminist economists and activists coordinated allies to take collective action against this decision by UN Women. This group drafted a letter that highlighted the problematic partnership of a UN body and a private company. Organisations active in climate and economic justice, such as AWID, were approached for their support for this letter to create cross-movement resistance to the partnership.

AWID quickly created a press release to reach the broader audience and a social media kit to activate a digital campaign called #BlockBlackRock. AWID [published the open letter](#) signed by over 700 women's rights organisations, feminist activists and allies. The petition was made available in English, Spanish and French to increase its accessibility across regions and communities. This story was picked up by [The Guardian](#) and subsequent news agencies that helped amplify the message.

The #BlockBlackRock co-convenors, including AWID, co-organised a [webinar](#) in August to spell out the threats this partnership posed to advancing a human rights and feminist agenda. Over 200 participants showed up to the webinar, including UN Women representatives. The webinar and the #BlockBlackRock campaign were a cross-movement effort that included groups like SOMO, No tech for ICE, Friends of the Earth, Amazon Watch, the International Association for Feminist Economics, Public Services International and independent activists.

The strategy worked. On 23 August 2022, the feminists behind #BlockBlackRock met with UN Women representatives to [express concerns about the announced partnership](#) with the world's largest investment firm, BlackRock, and about the broader approach to corporate partnerships. During this meeting, Lopa Banerjee, Director of the Civil Society Division at UN Women, and other UN Women representatives stated that they heard the concerns and terminated the partnership with BlackRock.

By connecting movements and actors worldwide and bringing the collective voice to the policymakers, CMI! through AWID has implemented movement building and making change strategies together to reach impact. Engaging on this BlackRock campaign meant looking at the interconnectedness of debt, conflict, the climate crisis, private finance, Big Tech, border industrial complex, extractives, and human rights violations. The experience also highlighted the interconnected nature of agendas and the need to keep pursuing cross-movement building to challenge the power of companies and corporate impunity.

[Challenging UN Corporate Partnerships is bigger than just this Black Rock campaign](#). There is a popular misconception that corporations have all the solutions. The UN system is increasingly risking capture by corporate interests. Therefore, CMI! will continue to monitor, interrogate, and when needed, resist the UN's strategy with the private sector.

Story of Change - Indonesia - Fighting for everything we stand for

The land and livelihoods of the Indigenous people in the East Kalimantan province of Indonesia are under constant threats from so-called 'development' and extractive projects. With an estimated cost of 32 billion USD, a proposed [New Capital City](#) (NCC) project plans to move the country's capital from Jakarta to a forested section of the province. The NCC project is the latest addition to a long line of extractive industries in East Kalimantan. Indigenous women from the Dayak Benuaq community in this territory have been fighting to defend their land and identity for many years. While doing so, they face multiple challenges.

Women who defend land and territory are often labelled as "anti-development" and threatened or attacked. Governments and elites often use this to silence their activism and generate conflict and divisions within communities. In Indonesia, the government uses the media to perpetuate negative messages about women land and territory defenders, portraying them as poor, backward, lacking higher education, and unable to participate in the "modern" economic system. This serves to not only discredit their work but also further exclude and discriminate against them. The government also does not recognise them as Indigenous peoples, and therefore, refuses to protect their rights as Indigenous people.

Despite concerted efforts of intimidation and discrimination, young Indigenous women are exposing the damaging impacts of the extractive model of development and proposing alternatives that can save the future of our planet. [PEREMPUAN AMAN](#) (or Association of Indigenous Women of the Archipelago), a group of such women land defenders, works to uphold the rights of Indigenous women in Indonesia. Lou Bawe is the local chapter of PEREMPUAN AMAN in East Kalimantan.

To support them in their efforts, JASS organised a series of workshops in Indonesia using the CMI! toolkit developed in 2021 "[Behind the Scenes of Extractives: Money, Power, & Community Resistance](#)." Members of PEREMPUAN AMAN-Lou Bawe participated in the workshops based on the toolkit (which was translated in Bahasa), including the "[Follow the Money: Activists' Tools for Challenging Extractives](#)" dialogue.

The toolkit has been highly relevant to PEREMPUAN AMAN-Lou Bawe's work, and they have already applied several key components. Despite the mobility limitations caused by several COVID-19 surges, PEREMPUAN AMAN-Lou Bawe made significant progress in engaging with the local authorities. At an audience meeting with the local government they shared how the extractives project created a very difficult and dangerous living environment for them due to land grabbing, threats and violence by the companies backed up by gangs, police and military, and disasters resulting from the project, such as flooding, landslides, and forest fires. The meeting was a historic achievement since some local government officials had previously viewed them as adversaries due to their vocal opposition to extractives and other harmful development projects.

Dayak Benuaq recognises the need to build a strong and united community to sustain their struggles and achieve their goals. To achieve this, they use various strategies for

organisational strengthening, such as creating safe spaces and organising reflection sessions for women. A crucial factor in their success is to continue building and regenerating the movement leadership of Indigenous women in PEREMPUAN AMAN-Lou Bawe.

“We have been active in the national-level processes on navigating extractives, using the toolkit as a guide. We believe that this toolkit will particularly help community organizers like us who are facing the impacts of these destructive projects,” - **Pipi Supeni, the secretary of the Regional Daily Management of [PEREMPUAN AMAN](#).**

While sharing expertise from the global level and other regions through the *Behind the Scenes* toolkit, JASS also facilitates safe spaces that foster an environment of political trust where women can openly and honestly discuss their fears, risks, and conflicts. This boosts the capacity and confidence of the Indigenous women in PEREMPUAN AMAN-Lou Bawe to engage with social and political actors to work towards reclaiming their land and territory.

Story of Change - Zimbabwe- Feminist Participatory Action Research for Women’s Organising

In 2010, the inhabitants of Chiadzwa, Marange in Zimbabwe, were forcibly removed to make way for diamond mining operations. They were relocated 110 km away to ARDA Transau. This was the start of a long and difficult battle for the women land defenders in the community to reclaim their basic human rights and the right to access clean and safe water.

The displaced community members participated in JASS Southern Africa’s feminist circles, where women came together to discuss pressing issues and elevate demands outlined in the What Women Want (WWW) manifesto.

To understand and learn from the circles’ experiences of gender-based violence, JASS Southern Africa launched a **feminist participatory action research (FPAR)** process. The activists have been participating in the FPAR processes since 2020, which have equipped them with skills for translating their learning into action. They led and conducted dialogues with people in ARDA Transau to gather and analyse information, helping them to identify an organising issue for collective action. Based on the data women from the community identified access to clean and safe water as their main concern and organising agenda for moving forward.

In 2022, some donor agencies tried to sink boreholes for drinking water throughout the area to help them access safe water. The district councillor, however, blocked these attempts and demanded that the community pay for installing a water reticulation system. Women in the community responded by forming a committee and successfully engaged in advocacy with the local government for access⁸ to clean and safe water. As a result, the District

⁸ These are WorldVision and Anjin Diamond Company.

Development Coordinators (DDC) have requested the names of families without access to clean and safe water so they can arrange to drill boreholes for them. However, the work is far from over. The committee will continue to put pressure on the government to ensure that they follow through on their commitment.

The FPAR process equipped women activist leaders with power analysis tools that enabled them to collectively investigate and document instances of structural violence in their lives. The data gathered were then used as the basis for developing new organising strategies to address the issues that matter most to their community. For instance, women learned to apply different approaches to engagement, such as conciliation and confrontation. Using power analysis to weigh the risks and opportunities of either approach, they chose conciliation as a safer approach. This led to the formation of a committee to engage with their local government leaders.

The accompaniment that JASS has provided to the feminist circles in Zimbabwe and sustenance of the What Women Want campaign over the years provided a space for building critical awareness and common ground. This laid the foundation for women's collective leadership in their fight against injustice. Through their feminist circle in ARDA Transau, women found a hub to mobilise and organise around their struggle for land, housing, and clean water.

The story delineates a clear journey through CMI!'s theory of change. JASS facilitated women human rights defenders for about three years in that area to recognise the oppressive systems, learn from their experience and take careful steps to stand up for their rights. This awareness also helped them to meaningfully participate in articulating their experience through the participatory action research process and identify their immediate needs. Equipped with the requisite knowledge and capacity, they could easily mobilise when needed to interact with the local policymakers and secure basic human rights such as access to water.

Special Feature: 10 years of Groundbreaking Support to Sex Workers

2022 marked a very special year for our strategic partner, Red Umbrella Fund (RUF), as it celebrated its 10-year anniversary. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs through CMI! has supported RUF for seven of these ten years. With RUF being the first and only global fund dedicated to supporting the rights of sex workers, this anniversary is a truly significant achievement, given its impact on the funding situation of sex workers' organisations worldwide. Its very existence matters to the advocacy, safety and community building of sex workers' rights activists on a daily basis.

Red Umbrella Fund was established in 2012 to respond to the lack of funding available for sex workers' rights organising. The sex worker-led fund was launched in 2012 as the result of a dialogue spanning several years between donors and sex worker activists, starting in 2006 with a meeting to discuss how to promote increased and better funding for sex workers. A report painted a dire picture of the funding situation, indicating that the five most active foundations supporting sex workers' organisations gave less than 1 million USD in

2005. This dialogue and more in the following years were intended to help donors understand that what they thought of as the priority for sex workers (anti-trafficking) was not in line with their actual needs. These helped funds to understand the actual needs and priorities of sex workers and figure out more effective ways to support sex workers.

*“If you’re genuinely interested in supporting our rights,
you should set up a fund where we set the priorities ourselves”*

- **Ruth Morgan Thomas, NSWFP**

In 2010 and 2011, the outline of the fund started to become visible: a fund that would be led by sex workers themselves, decide through participatory processes, provide support to sex worker-led organisations only, engage in donor influencing, uplift the voices of sex workers’ rights activists and support their advocacy. At the 2012 AWID Forum in Istanbul, Turkey, Red Umbrella Fund went public and a secretariat was set up at Mama Cash. The over one-thousand applications received for just the first call that year pointed at the immense need for funding among sex workers’ organisations. It was able to fund only twenty-one.

Between 2012 and 2022, Red Umbrella Fund made 279 unrestricted grants to 180 sex worker-led organisations in 68 countries. In 2022 1,300,000 Euros in grants were given out, the first time that more than a million Euros was dispersed in a year. The fund received 226 applications and continued to distribute over 70% of its annual budget in core flexible grants to sex worker-led organisations around the world. The fund now employs 5 staff.

Many of the organisations supported by Red Umbrella Fund were new and unregistered and Red Umbrella Fund was often their first funder. With financial support and accompaniment from Red Umbrella Fund, sex workers’ rights activists all over the world have built stronger organisations and alliances and brought small and big changes to their communities, from reducing violence to pushing through better laws. As the CMI! 1 End Term Evaluation noted, organisations report improved capacity in financial management and resource mobilisation to skills in feminist and transformational leadership through support from CMI!. This increased their legitimacy to donors and the ability to properly manage grants and engage in other fundraising activities to strengthen their organisations. They advocated at local, national, regional and international level with successful examples from India in defeating the Anti-Trafficking Bill in 2019 or challenging the Article 6 interpretation by CEDAW. Today, the global sex workers’ rights movement has become more visible, more diverse and more connected than ever before.

From our inception in 2015 the CMI! consortium recognised the importance of including sex workers as a key constituency in our work and leveraging our power as an alliance of feminist organisations and funders to show up as an ally. Our institutionalised commitment has been visible through the advocacy, knowledge production and alliance building of CMI!’s Sex Workers’ Rights Advocacy Group (SWAG), co-led by RUF and CREA. With the strategic leadership of Red Umbrella Fund on sex workers’ rights issues related to GBV and economic justice, CMI! has been able to provide capacity strengthening support, provide long-term core and emergency security grants to sex workers’ rights organisations, and show up in solidarity action and advocacy support. Additionally, CMI! has supported

sex workers' rights organisations in building relationships with donors. Red Umbrella Fund acted as a referral to other donors for their grantee-partners, which allowed them to get further funding. CMI! has also contributed to the visibility of sex workers' issues in international fora by co-organising events with the Dutch government featuring sex workers as key panellists. We have supported building alliances between sex workers at national and international fora. As a result cross-movement alliances have been created that include and advocate for the rights of sex workers. There is increasing support within the broader women's rights movement and a growing number of countries willing to speak out in favour of sex workers' rights and taking steps to decriminalise sex work.

CHAPTER 4 PROGRESS

Progress of CMI! programme implementation picked up steam in 2022 with lockdowns ending in many countries and the renewed possibilities of meeting in-person. This can be seen in the data collected for the SCS and WR&GE indicators. This means that for all organisations most actual values for 2022 were much higher than in 2021. Partnerships in all CMI! countries have been set up and are well underway, with the first activities having been implemented. In fact most organisations have worked hard to catch up with the delay of implementation and spending resources during COVID-19. Due to the many security threats and emergencies in CMI! countries this year, there has been a significant increase in security and protection grants, while there were fewer grants provided for lobbying and advocacy (L&A) opportunities. Security threats limited the possibility of engaging in traditional L&A in those contexts, and called for alternative ways of organising and providing support to communities. Within movement building there was also more focus on supporting movement-strengthening activities such as cross-movement building and solidarity building, knowledge exchange between regions, awareness raising (e.g. on anti-rights tactics), capacity strengthening on MEL and strategic planning, legal audit of laws and judgements, and strategic communication. Most L&A activities form part of a longer-term strategy, which means that the results aimed for and targeted impact are not yet visible but will be reported in a later reporting period.

Cross-cutting themes of the framework

CMI! also contributed to the cross-cutting themes of gender, climate and youth of the Strengthening Civil Society framework. As CMI!'s target groups are structurally excluded women and girls, all its interventions contribute to the **cross-cutting theme of gender**. CMI!'s output and outcome areas are aligned with and contribute to the basket indicators in both the Power of Voices (PoV) and the Women's Rights and Gender Equality (WR&GE) results frameworks. In 2022 CMI! supported WHRDs who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. These included **youth** and women land defenders addressing root causes of **climate change** and developing alternative feminist economic models.

Climate change is very closely linked to the two main themes of CMI!, gender-based violence and economic justice, as it can severely amplify gender inequalities by increasing GBV and economic injustice with disproportionate impact on women and girls that are already structurally excluded. In 2022 CMI! members put more focus on the intersections of gender and climate change. This showed up in our advocacy and organising of an event at CSW related to the theme that year. UAF will prioritise climate, crisis and collective care in its new advocacy strategy for the next three years. This includes applying intersectional feminist approaches to crisis and collective care. For JASS the interconnection between safety of land and territory defenders and feminist economic alternatives has become the learning focus in 2022, seeing their vital contributions to addressing both climate change and creating economic justice. Activities included a regional workshop in Southeast Asia for grassroots environmental defenders and small-scale farmers to engage in advocacy around the ASEAN Summit, a documentary on the impact of climate change and pandemics in Malawi and the development of an interactive game to transform oppressive systems. AWID in collaboration with WEDO organised a young feminist virtual meet up as a parallel event during Climate Week to connect and collectively reflect given their role and leadership in the climate justice movement. UAF-Africa's movement building support created room for cross collaboration on issues relating to natural resource governance, environmental and climate justice, as well as land access. Women with disabilities in Lilongwe were for example supported in their strategic advocacy for improved access to safe drinking water to 100 households with women with disabilities, and their surrounding communities. They had been facing issues of impending water privatisation, sustained land grabs, droughts, and the impact of Cyclone Ana.

Young women and girls' initiatives were supported through our grantmaking and accompaniment strategy, such as through Mama Cash and UAF-Africa. We witnessed young women taking the lead in a new wave of feminist organising and programming for transformative change. UAF-Africa supported this through co-facilitated knowledge generation, learning and influencing spaces across the African region. CREA included young people's sexuality and criminalisation in their work and WO=MEN advocated for youth participation, such as on the official Dutch government delegation to CSW. As a part of their UN advocacy, UAF sought to expand the definition of reprisals to better incorporate and address the diverse experiences of structurally excluded groups facing intersecting forms of oppression and violence, including environmental and climate justice defenders, defenders with disabilities, young women and girls.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

Despite the current challenges and backlash against gender justice and human rights, CMI! members and their partners have ensured that feminist activists have access to and can participate in key decision making tables and that the voices of women, girls, and non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans, and intersex people are heard and taken into account. Our activities have ranged from direct lobbying and advocacy, to providing feminist leadership trainings and movement building workshops to activists and feminist. CMI! has also contributed to creating connections across movements and building alliances, and we

have provided core financial support and rapid response grants to WHRDs and WROs, so that they can safely advance their innovative work. CMI! has contributed to conversations on feminist economic realities that centre care for communities, all forms of life and the planet as opposed to neo-liberal capitalists models. Through these initiatives, the constituencies of structurally excluded women, girls, and non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans, and intersex people that CMI! works with, have strengthened their movements and their advocacy. They are increasing their influence and scale, and holding political leaders accountable. In a time where oppressive governments and anti-rights actors isolate women's rights and gender equality advocates, movement building - including cross-movement, regional and cross-regional efforts – is a crucial strategy for supporting the organising of structurally excluded women, girls, and non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans, and intersex people.