



COUNT ME IN! POWERING FEMINIST MOVEMENTS

Count Me In! is a consortium of feminist funds and movement builders dedicated to creating a gender-equal and just world. Women and girls – too often excluded and silenced – are demanding their right to be counted in.

Our work is driven by those facing multiple forms of discrimination and structural exclusion, including Indigenous and rural women, sex workers, lesbian and bisexual women, women with disabilities and women living with HIV. We focus on eliminating gender-based violence and advancing economic justice, ensuring that all women and girls, non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans and intersex people can reach their full potential.

The Count Me In! consortium powers feminist movements fighting for their rights. The women and girls at the heart of our work are leaders, activists and changemakers, driving transformation in their communities and beyond.



HOW WE MAKE AN IMPACT

Our goal is to empower strong, autonomous feminist movements that can hold political leaders, societal actors, and donors accountable, ensuring they recognize, protect, and fulfil the human rights of all women and girls.

The Count Me In! consortium formed in 2014, with support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Our unique consortium brings together feminist funders and international women's rights organisations with the financial and political resources to power feminist movements.

Over the last decade we have been providing the scaffolding needed by feminist movements so that they can remain strong and resilient, even in times of crisis.

We do this by reaching, connecting, providing funding and tailored support, and amplifying the voices of women's rights organisations (WROs) and women human rights defenders (WHRDs). CMI! believes that better resourced, coordinated, and resilient movements bring about sustainable change.

WHERE WE WORK



CMI! IN SHORT:

- 8 consortium partners - a unique mix of feminist funders and movement builders
- 26 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin-America, Southwest Asia and North Africa
- 25,000 women's rights organisations
- 20,000 women human rights defenders
- 10-year track record to build on and scale up

Across the world, efforts to roll back women's rights are accelerating at an alarming pace, fuelled by democratic backsliding and rising opposition to gender equality. The need for the sustained support of movements has never been more urgent.

CMI! has the partnerships and infrastructure in place to respond. We have a model that is proven to work effectively at scale for structurally excluded women and girls to prevent and counter GBV and promote economic justice.

WHAT IMPACT HAS CMI! HAD?

In 2023 we commissioned a mid-term review of our 2021-2025 partnership with the Dutch Government to evaluate our progress. It was conducted by the Feminist Collective, an independent team of feminist evaluators from the Global South. 142 partner organizations participated in assessing the effectiveness, relevance, and long-term impact of CMI!

What did they find?

The review highlighted several key areas where CMI! had a significant impact.

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- **Moving Money:** Innovative feminist grant-making of \$8.4 million to the hard-to-reach for their trailblazing work to address GBV and economic justice.
- **Movement Building:** With 25,000 WROs and 20,000 WHRDs to advocate for their rights, lead community solutions, and connect to other movements.
- **Making Change:** Local, regional and global level policy and practice resulting in 2,800 changes in laws, norms and social perceptions, potentially impacting the lives of millions of women and girls across 26 countries.

CMI! focuses on three core strategies to drive impact – Money, Movements, and Making Change. The review found that these have been crucial in helping feminist movements resist these threats and push back against authoritarian governance.

CMI! IS PROVEN TO WORK, AND WORK AT SCALE

Key findings:

Funding the hard-to-reach: \$8.4 million in funding reached structurally excluded women and girls through rapid response grants, core, flexible and long-term funding and participatory grant making – ensuring community-led decisions.

- **Long-term core grants:** \$30,000 - \$50,000 to support movements to strengthen and consolidate their infrastructure and their gains over time.
- **Rapid response grants:** \$1,000 – \$6,000 to respond to crises, security, and emerging opportunities.
- **Advocacy grants:** \$10,000 - \$20,000 to respond to emerging advocacy opportunities or threats.

Powering feminist movements: With resources, advocacy and movement-building support, CMI! enables movements to effectively respond to GBV, anti-rights forces and shrinking civic and democratic space.

In Kenya, WROs have secured the establishment of stand-alone courts for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence cases to reduce the backlog of cases in mainstream courts. In Zimbabwe, a bill was passed that grants teachers maternity leave, as a result of coordinated, cross-sector advocacy.



Fig 1: Providing the scaffolding needed by feminist movements so that they can remain strong and resilient, even in times of crisis.

Adapting to the moment: CMI's comprehensive understanding of partners' and movements' needs and priorities as well as the dynamic changes in their contexts ensured that funding and strategies evolve with socio-economic and political shifts, making feminist movements more resilient and effective.

Ensuring that humanitarian aid in Malawi responded to the needs of marginalised women facing GBV when Cyclone Freddy hit by building stronger connections across the feminist movement for a coordinated approach (2023).

Defending civic space: Across all regions, partners reported that they engaged in activities to respond to shrinking civic and democratic space. Amid threats to feminist organising, CMI! members are defending and creating civic space.

In Lebanon, CMI! partners organised a feminist forum in 2022 in Beirut and invited feminist content creators from all over the region. This assisted in building a feminist network that can push back against mainstream narratives related to shrinking civic space and security of WHRDs.

TOGETHER WE GO FAR CMI! collective added value



"CMI!'s unique coordination and collaboration among members to leverage their influence as a collective is one of their superpowers. The consortium's ability to act as a consolidated force and to leverage the diverse thematic expertise of its members, and their expansive feminist and rights-based networks around the world cannot be underestimated" - The Feminist Collective Evaluation Team

The evaluation found that by bringing the insights, strategies, concerns and challenges of structurally excluded women and girls into global advocacy spaces, CMI! has facilitated increased buy-in among donors, including bilateral donors. This has supported the overall agenda of CMI!'s work.

Case study 1: In 2017, when the Spotlight Initiative was announced - a €500 million EU and UN programme to eliminate GBV - CMI! brought the voices of millions of activists from Global South to the table. As a result of CMI!'s fierce advocacy, WROs influenced global-level Spotlight decision-making. As a result, women and girls were included in Spotlight implementation, and funding modalities became more inclusive and accessible. CMI! provides the needed capacity building and tailored resources e.g. Toolkits & analyses to 1) Equip and strengthen their activism and advocacy; 2) Provide for security needs in moments of violence; 3) Build relationships among movements to enable more coordinated and mutually-supportive agendas.

Case study 2 : In 2016, Indigenous activist Berta Cáceres was assassinated for opposing a dam that threatened her community. CMI! amplified global outrage through media coverage (e.g. The Guardian) and pressured funders to act. As a result, Dutch and Finnish development banks withdrew their financing from the project. Berta's murder also sparked action. CMI! launched "Behind the Scenes of Extractives: Money, Power & Community Resistance". This toolkit is widely used across the world.

WHAT NEXT FOR CMI!?

As efforts to roll back women's rights continue to accelerate, the need for collective action is more critical than ever. To continue supporting feminist movements globally, we are seeking new funding partners for the next phase of CMI!'s work. Join us in creating a world where every woman and girl is counted in to reach their full potential.

To find out more about CMI! contact:

Gemma Graham

Count Me In! Partnerships Lead

g.graham@mamacash.org

FIND US ON

Website : cmiconsortium.org | **LinkedIn :** count me in! (cmi!) | **BlueSky :** countmein-cmi

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CMI! DEFINITIONS:

- '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.
- 'WROs' 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.
- 'WHRDs' 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.

