

A PUSH FOR LASTING PEACE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 WHO WE ARE	4
1.1 Our values	4
1.2 Our vision and mandate	4
1.3 Where we work	5
2 KVINNA TILL KVINNA'S JOURNEY	6
3 GLOBAL CONTEXT	7
3.1 Conflict, militarisation and climate change	7
3.2 Economic and political rights and gender justice	8
3.3 Gender based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights	9
3.4 Feminist movement-building and shrinking civic space	10
4 OUR FUTURE DIRECTION	11
4.1 Our theory of change	11
4.2 Our areas of change	12
4.3 Contributing to change through three avenues	17
5 THE WAY WE WORK	18
5.1 Our approaches	18
5.2 Our programmatic work and partnerships	19
5.3 Our knowledge, studies and research	20
5.4 Our communication and advocacy	20
6 IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY	21
6.1 Our organisational priorities	21
6.2 Funding	22
6.3 Risk-management, safety and security	23
6.4 Monitoring for social change	23
7 GLOSSARY OF TERMS	24

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	SOP	Standard operating procedure
GBV	Gender-based violence	SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus	ToC	Theory of Change
HRBA	Human rights-based approach	UN	United Nations
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex ("+" denotes everything on the gender and sexuality spectrum that letters and words cannot yet describe)	USA	United States of America
MENA	Middle East and North Africa	WEE	Women's economic empowerment
NGO	Non-governmental organisation	WHRD	Women human rights defender
		WPS	Women, Peace and Security

OUR NEW DIRECTION

A peaceful and just world for everyone. That is what Kvinna till Kvinna has set out to achieve. Together with our partner organisations across the world we enable empowerment of women, both in their own lives and in society, without attaching importance to religious, political, national or ethnic affiliation.

Since the beginning of this century the world has experienced deteriorating respect for women's rights and gender equality. The twin-pandemics of covid-19 and increased domestic violence have set back the agenda for women's self-determination even further. In parallel we see how the climate crisis in combination with numerous violent conflicts on national and global levels are causing the destruction of lives and unprecedented numbers of refugees and displaced people. The combination of it all have left us with alarming assaults on women's rights, legal protections being dismantled and women human rights defenders at unprecedented risk.

Grounded in our 30 years of working for women's rights in conflict areas, we will in the coming strategy period amplify our own voice and that of our partners—because together, we have the power to be recognised and heard. We must work together for the protection and promotion of women's rights and towards a feminist peace. Therefore, we will continue our work to call for the equal and meaningful participation of women in all peacebuilding work, including as representatives in peace negotiation processes.

We will also find new ways of supporting feminist movements and women human rights defenders beyond our current presence. We will broaden our partnerships to include more changemakers in the fight for peace and equal opportunities through networks, informal groups and grassroots organisations, as well as non-traditional actors such as international financial institutions, private companies and authorities. We, more clearly, highlight the importance of economic rights and justice, and sexual and reproductive health in our organisational theory of change. We also see the support to strong feminist women's rights movements as a means to an end as well as an end-goal in itself.

To become a stronger and more flexible enabler of change, we will diversify our institutional funding and invest heavily in our private fundraising. To stay relevant as one of the world's most prominent women's rights organisations working in conflict affected areas, we will continue to challenge ourselves and our partners in finding methods to work with intersectional approaches to feminism and anti-racism.

As violent conflicts and humanitarian crisis increase—both in numbers and protraction—the need for acute relief and support grows stronger. We will continue to balance these needs with the long-term work for democracy and human rights necessary for the achievement of lasting peace.

Let this strategy be our compass for the years to come.



Devrim Mavi
*Chairperson of the Board,
The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
Stockholm, June 2022*

1 WHO WE ARE

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation has defended women's rights since 1993. For every woman and girl's right to be safe and to be heard.

Today, we are one of the world's leading feminist women's rights organisations, working directly in areas affected by war and conflict to strengthen the influence and power of all women. We work closely together with around 150 partner organisations in 20 countries to defend women's rights, achieve gender equality and justice, and reach lasting feminist peace.¹

As part of the global feminist and women's rights movement, we advocate for women's full and effective participation in peace processes and call for women's position to be strengthened, so all people may shape the development of society on equal terms. We also work with our partners to support women affected by poverty.

Kvinna till Kvinna promotes human rights for all women in line with the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our work is anchored in global agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Sustainable Development Agenda, and the Women, Peace and Security agenda initiated by UN Security Council Resolution 1325. We recognise that women have a wide diversity of experiences and lived realities and therefore take an intersectional feminist approach, to address the specific needs of different groups of women and support diverse feminist movements. Our definition of women is inclusive and refers to all persons who self-identify as women. Our partners work with women of all ages, including young women and girls.

1.1 Our values

Courage, commitment and credibility are Kvinna till Kvinna's core values. They determine how we act and communicate.

- **Courage:** We partner with women human rights defenders who dare to challenge social structures that violate women's rights and opportunities. Together, we tackle contentious issues in difficult contexts and strive for justice and equality for all women, because we know that greater equality reduces the risk of conflict reoccurring.
- **Commitment:** We are committed to creating an equal world and know that a strong feminist and women's rights movement is key to building equality. We establish close, long-term relationships with our partner organisations in conflict-affected contexts, because we know that achieving structural change by addressing the root causes of gender inequality takes time. Our commitment and long-term approach are what makes us stand out.
- **Credibility:** We endeavour to uphold the highest level of professionalism and take our responsibility seriously towards each other and the women human rights defenders we work with. We aim to keep working together with our partners and allies to expand and share our knowledge and expertise, as this makes both us and our partners more relevant, credible and legitimate actors in the communities and areas we work in.

1.2 Our vision and mandate

Our long-term vision for the future is:

**A world of peace and justice
in which women have equal
rights, power and opportunities.**



1. We define "feminist peace" as an approach to peace and security that seeks to address the root causes of structural violence and power inequalities, while simultaneously working towards gender equality.

Our mandate is:

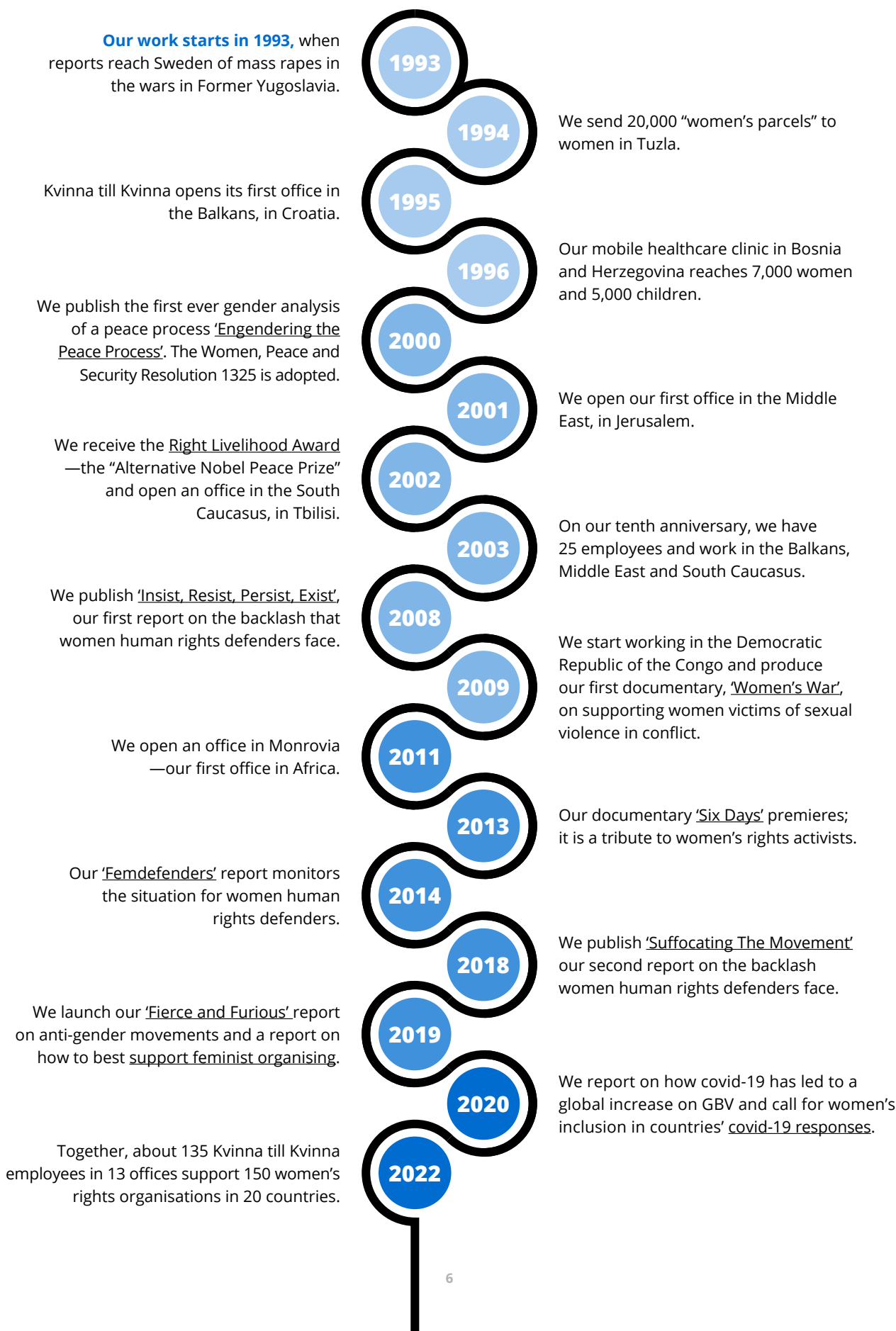
1. To conduct projects in regions of war and conflict that promote women's self-reliance, self-esteem, psychosocial and/or physical health, or that contribute to promoting women's participation in building a democratic civil society.
2. To foster studies and research on the effects of war and armed conflict on women, including in collaboration with others.
3. To publicise facts and information about the effects of war and build public support for peaceful conflict-resolution through civil methods.

1.3 Where we work

Kvinna till Kvinna is an international non-governmental organisation that was founded in Sweden. Today, we have offices around the world in conflict-affected contexts, plus an advocacy office in Brussels. We currently work in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region), the South Caucasus and sub-Saharan Africa. Our staff has unique knowledge and expertise of the contexts we operate in. We use the term "conflict-affected" to refer to a variety of conflict situations at different stages, with varying degrees and types of violence—from open warfare or sporadic altercations in unresolved conflicts to stable post-conflict situations with ongoing peacebuilding efforts. We work in both conflict-affected and humanitarian contexts, supporting women's rights and peace building with a long-term perspective. We strive to be a flexible and reliable partner for women's rights organisations in these contexts, supporting them to adapt their work to the state of conflict and emergencies.



2 KVINNA TILL KVINNA'S JOURNEY



3 GLOBAL CONTEXT

Increasing conflict, rising nationalism, the climate crisis and a complex interplay between global and local power structures are changing the world we live in. Many countries, particularly in the global North, as well as the aid sector itself, are struggling to come to terms with a history of colonialism and racism and continuing structural racial inequalities. Anti-gender movements embody the increasing resistance to gender equality, while safe spaces for women human rights defenders continue to shrink. The result is a deterioration of women's security and human security.

The covid-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of society. It has exacerbated economic gender inequalities, pushed more women into poverty, increased the amount of unpaid work that women perform, and led to polarisation and destabilising conspiracy theories. Lockdowns and other restrictions have created a "shadow pandemic" of gender-based violence, including domestic violence. International financial institutions have gained even more power and influence through various recovery packages, but usually pay little or no attention to women's rights.

The world has also seen a rise in conflict, which in turn has led to increased migration, feminised poverty and violence against women. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has altered the European security order, increasing tensions across the region and raising the spectre of nuclear war. The conflict will likely have a long-term effect on world politics and lead to increased militarisation and nationalism in the years to come.

Despite these challenges, women's rights organisations and women human right defenders continue to work for equality, peace and human rights.

3.1 Conflict, militarisation and climate change

Violent conflicts and instability often exacerbate existing inequalities and put women, girls and gender non-conforming individuals at greater risk of human rights violations. Militarism is deeply connected to patriarchal values and destructive gender norms and correlates with greater gender inequalities.² The Global Peace Index shows that peacefulness in the world has been decreasing for almost a decade, while military expenditure has risen.³ More state-based conflicts have broken out, especially ones involving regional or global powers,⁴ which can make it more difficult to negotiate a resolution of the conflict.⁵ This in turn has led to a range of negative consequences, including record-high forced displacement,⁶ and other protracted effects, that affect women in particular.⁷

Over the past two decades, the world has started to pay more attention to the gendered aspects of (the aftermath of) war and conflict. This has improved understanding of the link between gender inequality and peace and security. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda has contributed to this shift in international norms, which has influenced national and international policy. But full implementation of the Agenda is still a long way off, both in terms of funding and in terms of realising its full potential as a transformative tool to achieve sustainable and feminist peace.

Meanwhile, the climate crisis is having a disastrous impact on the environment, with consequences for the health, food security and livelihoods of many women. When resources such as water and firewood become scarcer, women have to spend more time on unpaid care/household work, which leaves them with fewer opportunities to engage in society. Climate change also affects the dynamics of ongoing conflicts and increases the risk of new conflicts breaking out. This makes it more difficult to build and sustain peace, and can lead to forced migration, which in turn puts women at risk of rape and sexual violence and restricts their access to SRHR. Finally, the climate crisis also tends to exacerbate poverty, which leaves women and girls vulnerable to trafficking and sexual exploitation. All of this makes it more difficult for women to fully enjoy their human rights.

2. The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights: 'The Impact of Militarization on Gender Inequality and Female Labor Force Participation' ([link](#)).
Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO): 'How Should We Understand Patterns of Recurring Conflict?' ([link](#)).

3. Global Peace Index.

4. PRIO: 'Conflict Trends: A Global Overview, 1946–2019' ([link](#)).

5. PRIO: 'New Conflict Data Reveals More Conflicts but Fewer Killed'. (4 Jun 2019) ([link](#)). Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO): 'How Should We Understand Patterns of Recurring Conflict?' ([link](#)). PRIO and European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)

6. UNHCR: 'Forced Displacement in 2020' ([link](#)).

7. Humanity & Inclusion, Human Rights Watch, International Disability Alliance, Women Enabled International and the Women's Refugee Commission: 'Joint submission on promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325' (2 April 2021) ([link](#)).

3.2 Economic and political rights and gender justice

The international human rights framework clearly indicates that discrimination against women violates the principles of equal rights and respect for human dignity. CEDAW states that women have the right to participate “in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries on equal terms with men”.

And yet, women across the globe are still largely excluded from economic and political decision-making, as power structures remain dominated by men.⁸ In terms of political participation, inequalities and discrimination range from women not even having the legal right to participate in the democratic process, to having rights on paper but in practice still struggling to participate in political life in a meaningful and equal way. Discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education and a lack of economic means are some of the barriers to women's political participation. In many parts of the world, women risk being harassed and threatened if or when they challenge political power structures. In high-stakes conflicts, women's political participation and leadership (whether at the local or national level) tends to be even lower than the already unequal global average.⁹ Women's participation is particularly low in conflict-resolution and peace processes.¹⁰

For Kvinna till Kvinna, it is imperative that more women participate in peace negotiations, because sustainable peace reflects the needs and wishes of all citizens and all members of the community. For this to happen, it is crucial that more women participate in political decision-making on all levels. Conflict-resolution, peace negotiations and peacebuilding all require sound and representative political decision-making. There can be no sustainable peace if women are excluded from political life.

Women have far fewer economic rights than men¹¹ and restricted access to and control over resources.¹² Globally, less than half of women participate in the labour force.¹³ When women do enter the (in)formal labour market, gender hierarchies and social norms result in low salaries, poor working conditions and informal positions that grant little security.¹⁴ In times of conflict, economic discrimination and barriers to women's economic rights are accentuated. And because climate change has made resources scarcer, women are now at greater risk of losing their livelihoods—especially women who face discrimination on multiple fronts, for example because they are racially discriminated, disabled or part of an underprivileged national minority, because they identify as LGBTQI+ or because they were forced to migrate.

Today, development agencies and international financial institutions tend to focus on “smart economics”¹⁵, economic growth and employment of women. But this ignores the fundamental macroeconomic gender inequalities that stem from women having to disproportionately shoulder the unpaid burden of household and care work. Research shows that economic growth does not necessarily lead to gender equality, but there is clear evidence that gender equality increases economic growth.¹⁶

In conflict-affected contexts with weak institutions, women's economic exclusion tends to be exacerbated. As the UN Secretary-General's report on Women, Peace and Security stated in 2021, “the international community's support to women is focused on microenterprises and microcredit, while large-scale reconstruction after conflict is dominated by men and overwhelmingly benefits men”.¹⁷ Recovery and reconstruction programmes should always include a gender analysis, so they can address the root causes of gender inequality. Important issues include women's right to inherit, their right to own land, unpaid care work, employment, and welfare.

As long as women do not have equal economic rights (including housing, land and property rights) and as long as access to the labour market, financial services and social protection remains unequal, women will not be free to decide over their own lives, will struggle to engage in politics, will remain at greater risk of gender based violence and exploitation, and will be less likely to assume leadership roles that would allow them to contribute to community-building and peacebuilding efforts.¹⁸

8. According to the World Economic Forum, it will take 95 years to close the political gender gap (Salier and Cann 2019). International IDEA's 2019 Global State of Democracy Index shows that, at the current rate, it will take another 48 years for parliaments to reach gender parity. IDEA, 2021: 'The Role of Political Parties on Women's Representation and Participation' ([link](#)).

9. UN Women: 'Facts and figures: Women, peace, and security' ([link](#)).

10. Between 1992 and 2019, women constituted, on average, 13 per cent of negotiators and 6 per cent of both mediators and signatories in major peace processes around the world. Council on Foreign Relations: 'Women's Participation in Peace Processes' ([link](#)).

11. Women only have 75% of the economic rights that men enjoy. The World Bank, 2020: 'Women, Business and the Law', p.1.

12. Globally, only 15% of landowners are women. Stand For Her Land: 'Women's Land Rights' ([link](#)).

13. ILO: 'The Gender Gap in Employment' ([link](#)).

14. 92% of working women in developing countries have informal jobs. ILO, 2019: 'Women and Men in the Informal Economy – Statistical Brief', p.5.

15. “Smart economics”, according to the World Bank, is an approach that defines gender equality as an integral part of economic development and aims to spur development through investing more efficiently in women and girls. UNESWA, ([link](#)).

16. Grantham, Dowie and de Haan (eds): 'Women's Economic Empowerment: Insights from Africa and South Asia'. Routledge, 2021.

17. UN, 2020: 'Women and peace and security: report of the Secretary-General' ([link](#)).

18. Kvinna till Kvinna, 2021: 'Challenging The Norm' ([link](#)) and 'A Right, Not A Gift' ([link](#)).

3.3 Gender based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a serious obstacle to gender equality and is a violation of human rights. One in three women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence by a non-partner in their lifetime.¹⁹ Globally, intimate partner violence is the most common form of gender-based violence. Most gender-based violence is perpetrated by men and targets women and girls. The cumulative effects that multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination have on marginalised women and girls (including women and girls with a disability or gender non-conforming and LGBTQI+ persons) put them at particular risk of GBV. When violence is committed against women and girls because of their gender, women's ability to participate in and contribute to social, economic and political life is severely hampered. Although GBV legislation has improved in most parts of the world in the past few decades,²⁰ most of the countries we work in still lack comprehensive GBV legislation or do not fully implement and/or enforce existing legislation.

In recent years, GBV and sexual harassment in the workplace and the public sphere have received more attention, in part due to the MeToo movement and numerous high-level cases of sexual exploitation, abuse and sextortion.²¹ At the same time, digitalisation has led to new forms of GBV; there is still a lack of knowledge of and legislation on how to address such online forms of violence. GBV tends to increase in conflict situations, in the form of militarised violence, non-partner sexual violence, intimate partner violence and child/forced marriage.²² Even during the global pandemic systemic conflict-related sexual violence has been fuelled due to rising inequality, increased militarisation and reduced civic space among other factors.²³ In post-conflict societies, prevalence of GBV tends to remain high, with GBV having become normalised and perpetrators often enjoying impunity for conflict-related sexual violence. This is in spite of the international community's clear legal framework, which acknowledges that sexual violence can be a tool for genocide and a crime against humanity.²⁴

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) encompass the rights of all human beings to decide over their own bodies, have healthy social relations and good reproductive health, and express their gender identity and sexual orientation without having to face violence or discrimination. Full SRHR are fundamental prerequisites for gender equality and are key to women's ability to take part in social, economic and political life. Today, many of the world's young women and girls, especially the poorest and most vulnerable ones, lack access to comprehensive sex education, modern contraceptives, menstrual and maternal healthcare, and safe and legal abortions. When women cannot control their own bodies, their health and the size of their families, they are simultaneously denied control over their education, income and future.

In times of crisis and conflict, the interruption of basic health services tends to put women in a vulnerable position. Unattended births, a lack of contraceptives, unsafe abortions, HIV and AIDS are some of the most serious threats to women in conflict and crisis. A third of all maternal mortality cases occur in crisis- and conflict-affected regions, where already fragile healthcare systems suddenly face additional strain. Conflict also heightens the risk of child marriage, trafficking, rape and sexual violence.²⁵

Growing anti-gender movements around the world have been mobilising to support traditional values and target SRHR and anti-GBV efforts. This undermines existing legislation and threatens the advancement of SRHR/GBV policies and legislation. Abortion, LGBTQI+ rights and harmful traditional practices are often the most controversial topics to address. Coupled with a rise in nationalism, authoritarianism and right-wing extremism, this trend has limited women's rights organisations' ability to act and demand change. Today, they often struggle to even maintain the status quo—the result of decades of hard work.

19. WHO, 2021: 'Devastatingly perverse: 1 in 3 women globally experience violence' ([link](#)).

20. This is partly thanks to the 2011 Istanbul Convention.

21. ILO, 2019: Convention on Violence and Harassment.

22. Murphy, M. et al, 2020: 'What works to prevent violence against women and girls in conflict: Synthesis Brief.'

23. UN Security Council, 2022: 'Conflict-related sexual violence: Report of the Secretary-General' ([link](#)).

24. As reflected by the adoption of the Rome Statutes in 1998 and the establishment of the International Criminal Court in 2002.

25. Murphy, M. et al, 2020: 'What works to prevent violence against women and girls in conflict: Synthesis Brief.'

3.4 Feminist movement-building and shrinking civic space

Before covid-19, women human right defenders in countries like Iraq, Belarus, Lebanon and the USA took to the streets to protest against misgovernance, corruption, poverty, inequality, racial discrimination and the backlash against SRHR. The collaboration between feminist movements and other social justice movements was a reminder of the way in which different kinds of oppression intersect and of the importance of analysing and addressing them together.

But we have witnessed countless ways in which space for civil society has been shrinking—a development that tends to worsen during conflict. Women human rights defenders are subjected to ever more (threats of) violence, hatred, and verbal abuse, which makes it riskier for them to keep up their efforts. Increased administrative burdens and public restrictions on civil society's work have also affected feminist movements. The lack of funding for women rights organisations is a major barrier to safeguarding women's rights and gender equality and countering the anti-gender movement. Digital spaces have fundamentally affected feminist movement-building, with women increasingly organising online. But the glaringly unequal access to the internet has widened the digital divide. And while the internet is a transformative space that offers new opportunities to network across borders, campaign and build movements, it also reproduces the same inequalities that women face offline. Much of the violence and hatred that women human rights defenders are subjected to occurs online. We are also seeing an increase in government surveillance through digital monitoring systems. All of this has led to a growing discussion on the need for safe digital spaces for the feminist movement.



Photo: Fadi Dohdoh

4 OUR FUTURE DIRECTION

4.1 Our theory of change

Based on the main challenges identified to fully realising women's equal rights, power and opportunities we have developed our global Theory of Change (ToC). Our ToC underpins our strategy for 2023–2029, including the areas of change we will strive to make a difference in alongside our partners. Our ToC describes the way we believe our contribution (as well as that of our partners) will create the changes we want to see.

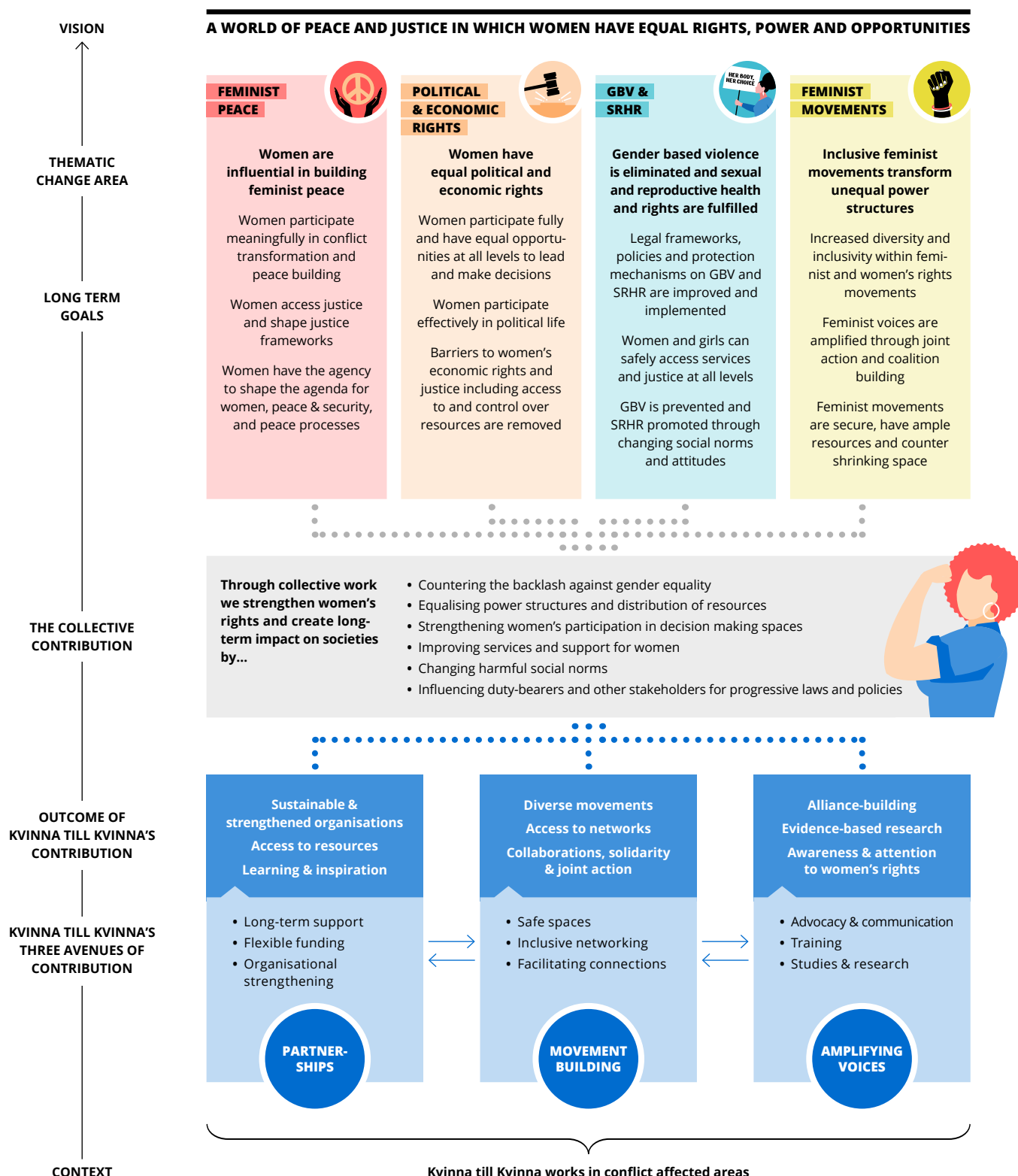


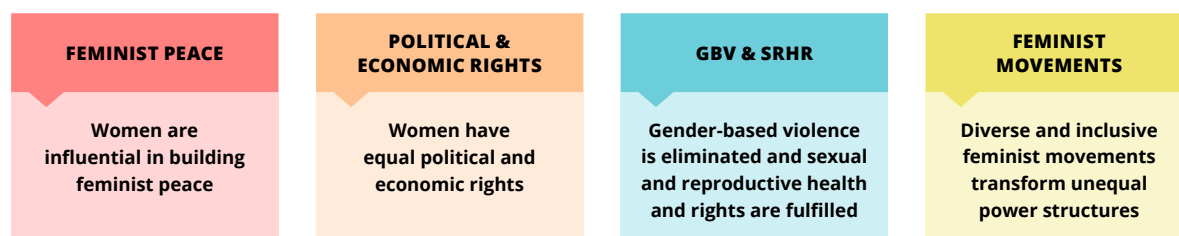


Photo: William Edjeberg

4.2 Our areas of change

Lasting structural change does not happen overnight: it happens through a complex series of intentional and unintentional events. Since 1993, we have worked to challenge and change norms in conflict-affected areas, drawing on our contextual and thematic knowledge and strong partnerships to determine how and when to push for structural change and support local agency. We do not operate in a vacuum: creating lasting change is a collective, multifaceted effort.

Looking back on our work during the previous strategy period and assessing global trends and the contexts we work in, we identified four long-term **areas of change** for 2023–2029 that will thematically guide our work. They will pave the way for a set of **structural changes** that we and our partners can contribute to, and which we believe are fundamental to achieving feminist peace and fulfilling the rights of all women, regardless of who they are.



Below, we present these four areas of change and explain how we will aim to achieve our long-term goals in each of them. Regional strategies in the regions we work in will translate our four global areas of change to reflect each region's specific context and needs.



CHANGE AREA 1

WOMEN ARE INFLUENTIAL IN BUILDING FEMINIST PEACE

Long-term goals:

- Women meaningfully participate in conflict-transformation and peacebuilding in their societies
- Women access justice and shape justice frameworks
- Women have the agency to shape the WPS agenda and peace processes

Kvinna till Kvinna works towards a feminist peace, because we believe peace and comprehensive security for all requires us to both address the root causes of structural violence and power inequalities, and advance gender equality.

During this strategy period, we will continue to encourage our partners and women to shape, participate in and lead peacebuilding efforts. We will focus on understanding and addressing the interconnected and mutually reinforcing structural barriers and power barriers that stand in the way of peace, security and equality. We believe peace comes about by promoting women's meaningful participation in conflict-prevention and -transformation and women's influence over peace processes and politics. We do not just work to contain violence: we also focus on conflict-prevention, conflict-resolution, social cohesion, resilience and post-conflict reconstruction. We do so by calling for greater attention to women's lived experiences of the root causes of conflict and injustice.

With our partners, we will keep supporting women as they mediate and negotiate conflicts, from the community level to the regional level. We will implement measures to reduce and prevent violent conflict, working for long-term structural change.

Our feminist peacebuilding is guided by the multiple layers of injustice and unequal power relations that exist in the conflict-affected countries we work in. That is why we promote justice and accountability. We will stand by our partners as they address current and past injustices and support them in gaining access to and shaping justice mechanisms and frameworks.

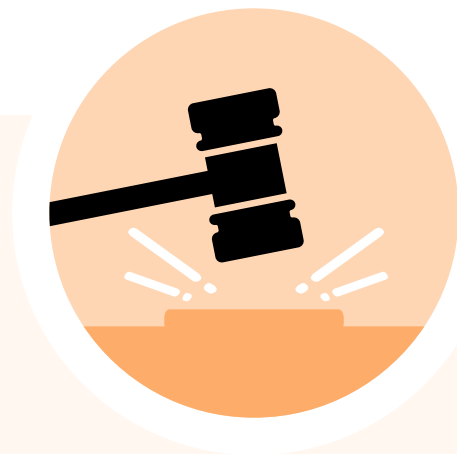
We advocate the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and call for increased funding for it. But the WPS Agenda is only the beginning: we envision a world of feminist peace, with a greater focus on power inequalities and other systemic barriers to peace and security; decreased militarisation and fewer arms; prevention made a higher priority; and increased support for peace and local agents of change.



We call for women's meaningful participation, leadership and perspectives in peacebuilding processes, which make societies more peaceful, just and equal.

CHANGE AREA 2

WOMEN HAVE EQUAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS


Long-term goals:

- Women participate fully at all levels of leadership and decision-making
- Women effectively participate in political life
- Barriers to women's economic rights and justice (including access to and control over resources) are removed

Kvinna till Kvinna will continue to promote women's political and economic rights as two closely interlinked areas. Low participation in political decision-making curtails women's ability to influence laws and policies that affect them—including economic policies. Similarly, women's lack of access to resources and economic rights hampers their ability to partake in decision-making, influence decisions that impact them, escape poverty and leave abusive relationships. Advancing women's political and economic rights require us to challenge traditional power structures and discriminatory laws, policies and gender norms that hinder women's participation.

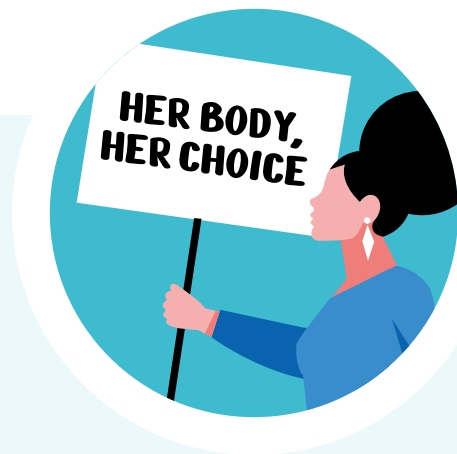
With our partners, we will remove barriers to women's full, effective and equal participation in society. We will promote women's political participation by raising awareness and challenging the traditional values and power structures that prevent women from engaging in politics, elections and other decision-making spaces. We want women to be leaders at the local, national, regional and global levels, including in national parliaments, village councils and local committees or other types of community-engagement public institutions.

Together with our partners, we will address barriers to women's economic rights and justice. We will promote their access to and control over resources like land (for example through gender budgeting); advocate a reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work (for example by strengthening social protection); and promote income and livelihood opportunities for women via the labour market.

International financial institutions are powerful, influential actors that set rules and norms for the global economy, including for post-conflict economic recovery. We will collaborate with partners who work with women's economic rights, networking, learning from and supporting each other. Together, we will contribute to economic equality and call on international financial institutions to respect women's rights.



We call for women's effective and equal participation in political and economic decision-making at all levels, as well as in economic reforms and post-conflict economic reconstruction plans. We call for economic gender justice and for women's equal access to and control over resources.



CHANGE AREA 3

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IS ELIMINATED AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS ARE FULFILLED

Long-term goals:

- Legal frameworks, protection mechanisms and policies on GBV and SRHR are improved and implemented
- Women and girls can safely access services and justice at all levels
- GBV is prevented and SRHR promoted by changing attitudes, behaviours and social norms

In times of crisis and conflict, all forms of GBV increase and women and girls often find themselves in vulnerable situations as basic health services are interrupted. That is why we will work with our partners to prevent and end GBV and to promote SRHR in conflict-affected areas. We will use a holistic approach: encouraging our partners to both prevent GBV and improve access to services for victims/survivors. We believe that SRHR and the right to live a life free from violence are fundamental rights: women and girls should be able to decide over their own bodies and lives and participate in and contribute to social, economic and political life.

In our programme countries, we will continue to work with partner organisations and networks to improve legal frameworks, policies and protection mechanisms.

In terms of services for victims/survivors, we will support our partners' shelter work, their provision of psychosocial support and legal aid, and their advocacy for improved access to justice. We will also support our partners as they facilitate access to existing SRHR services and improve the quality of those services or call for additional services when there is a gap.

In terms of prevention and changing of attitudes, behaviours and social norms, we will keep supporting our partners' awareness-raising, their educational and community-based SRHR initiatives and their efforts to safeguard women's right to a life free from GBV. We will do so through an intersectional and gender-transformative approach.

We will make sure our partners (within and across different contexts) regularly get the opportunity to network and share best practices with each other, so they may develop their GBV/SRHR knowledge and methods. We will also promote the use of psychosocial support systems and self-care for staff at our partner organisations who work on GBV and SRHR.



We advocate for the right of all women and girls to a life free from violence and call for their sexual and reproductive health and rights and bodily integrity and autonomy to be respected in conflict-affected contexts.



CHANGE AREA 4

DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE FEMINIST MOVEMENTS TRANSFORM UNEQUAL POWER STRUCTURES

Long-term goals:

- Feminist and women's rights movements are more diverse and inclusive
- Feminist voices are amplified through joint action and coalition-building
- Feminist movements are secure, have ample resources and counter shrinking space

We know from research and experience that strong feminist and women's rights movements are key to strengthening, implementing and enforcing women's rights legislation.²⁶ Which is why, during this strategy period, we want to help movements become more diverse and inclusive.²⁷ This will require us to discuss and understand who is heard and who is left out. We will bring new and more diverse actors together by providing opportunities for them to meet and learn from each other. We will strengthen voices and solidarity within and across movements. We will counteract fragmentation by encouraging joint action and coalition-building.

As we do so, we will face significant obstacles: shrinking civic space, anti-gender movements, nationalism and counter-terrorism measures. We will continue to analyse and raise awareness of the conditions under which women human rights defenders work, calling on key stakeholders to change these.

Security-wise, we have been supporting women human rights defenders and feminist activists for years as they push back against violence. We will keep working to improve their protection: supporting our partners as they analyse and manage risks; establishing physical and digital safe spaces in which they can meet, share experiences and strategise; and finding safe ways to transfer funds to grassroots actors without putting them at risk.²⁸

Burnout is a real threat for the women's movement and can even be a security issue. Women human rights defenders should have proper tools to manage stress. We will finetune our existing tools (such as the concept of Integrated Security) and discuss this topic with our partners.

Limited funding is another major obstacle that makes movements less effective. We will join forces with like-minded organisations to bring in more funding, and use our network to open doors for the movement so it can influence decision-makers in turn.



We call for increased and tailored funding for feminist and women's rights movements to make them stronger, more diverse and more well-connected and to maximise their potential to be influential and push back against shrinking space.

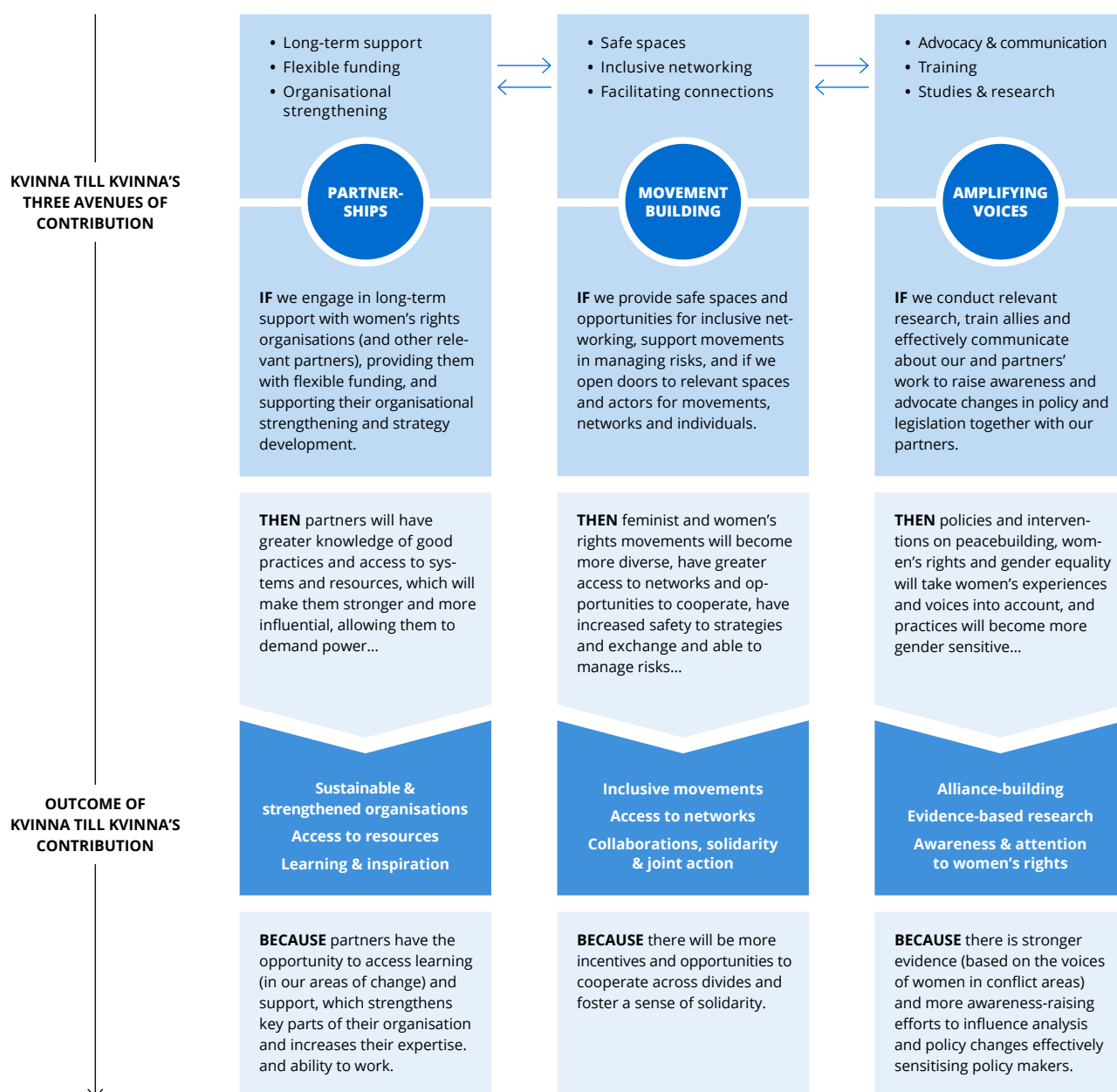
26. Weldon, S. and Htun, M.: 'Feminist Mobilisation and Progressive Policy Change', 2013, p.231–247.

27. These could include e.g. (but not limited to) some of the following actors: LGBTQIA+ actors, inter-generational movement, or young women, women with disabilities, women refugees and women working for climate justice activists.

28. In terms of digital spaces, we will discuss why digitalisation is important, how it can be an advocacy tool, how we can close the digital gap, and how we can use social media for change—all while staying safe.

4.3 Contributing to change through three avenues

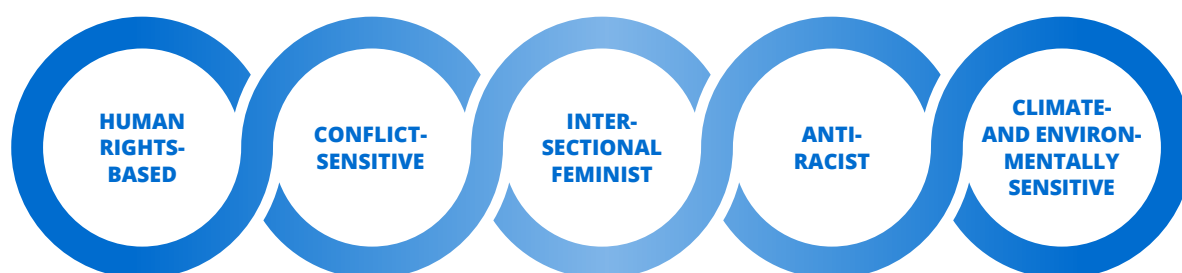
We will achieve structural change in the above four areas of change through three different avenues: partnerships, supporting movements and amplifying voices.



5 THE WAY WE WORK

5.1 Our approaches

To forge partnerships, support movements and amplify the voices of women human rights defenders, we will continue to apply and develop five cross-cutting approaches, both internally and in our work with partners. This will ensure we operate in an ethical, inclusive and climate- and environmentally sensitive way.



- We will take a **human rights-based approach** (HRBA) to ensure our programming and partnerships follow international human rights standards and norms, thereby striving for equality, an end to discrimination and a transformation of power structures.
- We will take a **conflict-sensitive approach**. We appreciate how important it is to understand the contexts we are working in and the way our interventions interact with these contexts, to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impact of our work. We will go the extra mile to integrate conflict-sensitivity and a commitment to Do No Harm into our decisions and programmes. We will conduct detailed analyses of conflict dynamics to monitor how these affect the impact of our work.
- We will take an **intersectional feminist approach** to our work and our understanding of peace. We strive to be inclusive and to remember that women experience discrimination and privilege differently depending on intersecting factors such as disability, race, age, economic status, nationality and sexuality. We will approach gender justice in a comprehensive way—supporting allied movements for justice that are, for example, based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- We will take an **anti-racist approach** to our work to address racism and discrimination both internally with regard to the management and structure of our organisation as well as externally in our work with partners.²⁹ We will identify and oppose racism through concrete action at the organisational and structural level, including with donors. We will strive to be transparent about our efforts, learn from other women's rights and civil society organisations working at the forefront of anti-racism, document our successes and failures, and encourage others to follow suit by leading by example.
- Finally, we will take a **climate and environmentally-sensitive approach**. The nexus of gender, climate and conflict is crucial for us and for our partner organisations. Conflict and the inequalities that women and marginalised groups experience will be exacerbated by the effects of the environmental and climate crisis. We will set aside time and resources to minimise our environmental footprint and to increasingly promote climate and environmental justice. We will shine a spotlight on the structural causes of climate change and environmental degradation that increase GBV, affect women's economic rights and harm SRHR. We will strive to be intentional when we support partners, conduct research and engage in advocacy in this area, so we may address its root causes together.

We will express these five approaches as we collaborate with partners and donors, and monitor and reflect on our progress.

29. See, for example, Kvinna till Kvinna's Code of Conduct.

5.2 Our programmatic work and partnerships

Kvinna till Kvinna is part of the global feminist women's movement and partners with a range of actors that share our values, contribute to our strategic areas of change and help us achieve our goals. These actors range from feminist activists and women human rights defenders, organisations and movements, other civil society actors and grassroots community initiatives to businesses, institutional and private donors, international financial institutions, philanthropists, academia, government authorities and the police and military. During 2023–2029, we will continue to work with many of our longstanding partners. At the same time, we will explore new partnerships with different types of actors, look into new funding mechanisms and partnership models; and engage in new ways of working—opening up our programme work in additional countries or providing remote support to actors in times of need.

i) Partnerships for local agency and diverse movements: Women's rights and feminist actors

Women's rights organisations, women human rights defenders, feminist movements and networks working in conflict-affected areas will continue to be our main civil society partners. During this strategy period, we will also explore opportunities to partner with other types of civil society actors, to promote a diverse feminist and women's rights movement in an intersectional way.

Our partnerships with civil society actors will continue to take on different forms: from long-term partnerships to short-term engagements; financial to technical support; as a door opener or advocacy partner. All our partnerships are guided by principles based on international standards³⁰ and the abovementioned five cross-cutting approaches.

ii) Government and other duty bearers

Where feasible and relevant, we will engage in dialogue with government actors and other informal duty bearers and lobby them to influence the decisions they make that affect women's lives and to counter tendencies of shrinking civic space. We will continue to engage with local actors, not least through our international training programmes with the police, military, lawmakers and civil society. We will also continue to provide expert advice on women's rights to governments and local authorities.

iii) More than money: Institutional and private donors and philanthropy

Kvinna till Kvinna regards donors as partners in development rather than mere sources of funding. We will explore opportunities to strengthen women's rights together and learn from each other. We aim to influence donors by speaking up in the debate on WPS and women's role in peacebuilding, shrinking space and the anti-gender movement, and funding for women's rights and feminist organising. We will also lobby for reasonable donor requirements for ourselves and our partners, to ensure funding modalities are in line with our partners' actual needs.

We aim to raise more funds from the private sector³¹ as this would allow us to be more agile and to flexibly respond to the needs of women human rights defenders in the contexts we work in. We will also leverage our global presence to promote networking opportunities for our partner organisations and open doors for them to donors that promote women's rights.

We will seek out partnerships with corporations, foundations and donors that share our feminist values and our desire for lasting peace for everyone. We will engage with donors and partners that can play a vital role in improving the lives of women in conflict-affected areas, whether through corporate social responsibility initiatives, their businesses or their economic or political influence.

30. These international standards include the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), the Busan Outcome Document (2011), the Nairobi Outcome Document (2006) and the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness (2010).

31. See section 6.2 Funding.

5.3 Our knowledge, studies and research

One of the guiding principles of our commitment to research and knowledge is that members of a movement build knowledge and experience together. During this strategy period, we will increase our organisational knowledge and intensify collaborations that are relevant to this strategy's four areas of change and five approaches. We will continue to facilitate exchanges, provide spaces to share knowledge, and offer our partner organisations and teams trainings and products that are relevant to their work and to our own advocacy, communication and fundraising efforts.

We want our research to inform our advocacy efforts and to initiate debates. Since our founding, we have carried out and collaborated on studies and research, often based on stories told to us by women in conflict-affected areas. Kvinna till Kvinna will continue to contribute to a wide range of studies on key issues that women human rights defenders face in conflict-affected areas. As it takes considerable investment to collect and analyse data, we will work to ensure our studies are disseminated and used as widely as possible. Our research work will inform our programmatic and advocacy work and cross-pollinate the work of likeminded organisations.

5.4 Our communication and advocacy

Through our communication, we call for change, raise awareness of what we do, highlight the important work women human rights defenders perform every day, and inspire more people to commit to our cause.

Our voice is one of our strongest assets, so we will continue to strategically strengthen our brand and increase our reach. In Sweden, our aim is to be the country's no.1 women's rights fundraising organisation and to engage the public in our global work for women's rights. To do so, we will communicate in an impactful and targeted way about our partners and the rightsholders they meet. Internationally, our aim is to become the go-to organisation for institutional donors and decision-makers who want to make an impact on women's rights across the world.

We will strengthen our communication and advocacy capacity at the regional level by investing in communication expertise and in our staff's knowledge on advocacy and information-sharing. We will design and implement communication strategies for each of our programme countries to increase our visibility in the contexts we work in. We will enhance our coordination at the global level to streamline and sync our regional communication efforts.

In our global advocacy, we will both amplify the messages of our partner organisations and to strengthen our own voice. We will continue to support partners in their advocacy efforts, strengthen their advocacy capacity and facilitate their engagement in global and regional advocacy initiatives. When it is relevant to do so, we will advocate through and with feminist and women's rights networks and coalitions. We will continue to work in cross-regional and cross-country constellations (including through our advocacy office in Brussels) to strengthen the link between our national, regional and global advocacy. We will continue to invest in evidence-based research and policy development, to produce high-quality reports and communication materials that are relevant to our target audiences.



Photo: Sandra Simbakwira

6 IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

6.1 Our organisational priorities

During 2023–2029, we will prioritise certain internal organisational developments to achieve our strategic goals. This will support the implementation of this strategy, make our work as impactful as possible and help us remain a relevant and knowledgeable partner.

During the previous strategy period, Kvinna till Kvinna expanded in terms of staff, partners and the number of countries we work in.³² We opened four new offices (and closed two existing ones). We began to decentralise the organisation to bridge the gap between our decision-making and our operations, and strengthened our capacities in key areas such as finance, HR, method & development, fundraising, grants management and security & safety.

As we enter this new strategy period, we have offices in 14 countries.³³ The majority of our staff work outside of Sweden. Kvinna till Kvinna's regional teams all have their own strategies, which reflect this global strategy and provide detailed guidance on our work in each respective region. Each of our offices and departments is essential to Kvinna till Kvinna. Moving forward, we will continue to work on becoming a more well-connected, global organisation. We will develop our internal decision-making structures, improve our operational systems in our programme countries and strive to be a more balanced organisation, in line with our feminist and anti-racist approaches. Our focus will be on balanced and strategic growth that is in line with our mandate. We will prioritise looking into new ways of working with women human rights defenders, organisations and movements.³⁴

Covid-19 taught us a great deal about online and remote ways of working. We will take those lessons with us as we explore how to remain relevant in conflict-affected countries we are not physically present in. The pandemic also taught us that we need to keep scaling up our digitalisation efforts and use digital tools to network across borders, support movements, share knowledge, advocate, raise funds effectively and communicate with the public.

In an era of misinformation, being a well-known and trustworthy brand is more important than ever, both in Sweden and internationally. That is why we will intensify our communication efforts in our programme countries.

32. Between 2016 and 2021, we went from employing 93 to 132 staff members. In terms of partnerships too, we expanded: in 2021, we had 150 partner organisations, whereas in 2016 we partnered with 108 organisations.

33. Sweden, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, North Macedonia, Palestine & Israel, Rwanda, Serbia and Tunisia.

34. See also Section 2 Chapter 5.

Kvinna till Kvinna will also work even harder to raise funds from and awareness among the Swedish general public and to build alliances with the corporate and public sector, as donations from the public and from corporations allow us to be more flexible and agile. This will also bring us closer to our goal of being the no.1 women's rights fundraising organisation in Sweden.

In terms of studies and research,³⁵ we will maintain our current level of efforts, conducting a select number of prioritised studies each year, in areas in which we and our partners can contribute with our voice and expertise.

6.2 Funding

Kvinna till Kvinna's work to empower women in conflict regions is made possible by donations and grants. Since our founding, we have mainly been financed by grants from bilateral and multilateral institutional donors, with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) as our main donor.

During the previous strategy period, one of our organisational goals was to diversify our donor portfolio and broaden our fundraising base. We successfully did so: we strengthened our identity as a fundraising organisation; increased the share of funds raised from individuals and companies in Sweden; and raised more institutional funding in the regions we operate in. We did learn, however, that contextual developments such as a democratic backlash or changes in donor governments can very easily impact funding for women's rights.

Raising funds from the general public remains a necessity going forward, as we want to strengthen our autonomy and our ability to respond to unforeseen crises and wars. In some cases, institutional donors also require we raise funds from the public as a co-financing contribution.

Kvinna till Kvinna's two fundraising priorities for 2023–2029 are to raise more funds from the Swedish general public and to diversify our institutional fundraising.



Photo: Iryna Moskaluk

35. See also Section 3 of Chapter 5.

6.3 Risk-management, safety and security

We aim to ensure that all our work in conflict affected areas is conducted in a safe and risk aware way, based on our deep knowledge of the contexts in which we operate. To continuously account for the unexpected, our systems for risk management, safety and security need to be strong, fit for purpose and able to support staff and partners in their work.

In line with ISO standards³⁶, we identify all risks related to our goals and, when necessary, adjust them. Risks are divided into five categories: safety and security, staff, finance, trademark and core activities. During this strategy period we improve our ability to identify opportunities and threats and effectively allocate and use resources for risk management.

There is an increased risk of mis- and dis-information affecting the NGO community in the contexts in which we work³⁷ and as an organisation we have witnessed an increased in reported digital security incidents. It is therefore crucial for us to ensure adequate digital security for ourselves and partners and this requires a long-term investment. Our capacity to safely handle personal data and protect the digital security of our staff, partners and donors remains a priority for Kvinna till Kvinna.

It is essential that our incident reporting systems highlight the dangers that staff and partners face in a context of a shrinking space for women human rights defenders in order to protect their safety. As part of our risk-management efforts and safety and security assessments, we have systematically been collecting and recording incident reports since 2018, through our Incident Reporting & Management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), which facilitates and streamlines our management of incidents and crises. We will continue doing this during the coming strategy phase.

We will work to strengthen our and our partners' capacity to report incidents to better mitigate risks. These reports will also feed into our research of the effects of war and armed conflict on women and improve our insight into the security and safety situation for our partner organisations.

6.4 Monitoring for social change

Civil society organisations today are under a lot of pressure to report positive changes. For women rights organisations, this is a challenge, as progress is usually followed by backlash. Interventions are often movement-based and/or designed to deal with the structural causes of gender inequality: addressing such issues takes time and can rarely be measured linearly.

We see monitoring as a learning process that allows us to track our contribution to change. Monitoring is essential: it safeguards our accountability to our partners, our donors and our cause, and advances our individual and collective learning and adaptiveness.

During this strategy period, we will draw on our 30 years of experience of working with women's movements in conflict-affected areas to establish best practices and to strengthen our collective capacity for advancing gender equality. Doing so is a priority, because the challenges we face as we support women's rights and women's collective power for social justice are becoming more serious and complex at every level, and funding for this work now comes with more rigid conditions and requirements.

We will invest in systems that will help us monitor our progress in every single area of this strategy, from the partner level to the structural-change level. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of our strategy will serve three goals:

1. Being a watchdog for women's human rights in our four areas of change
2. Analysing the work we set out to do during this strategy period
3. Supporting organisational learning

36. ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 167 national standards bodies. Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards for companies and NGOs.

37. For more information on security and the feminist movement, see area of change no. 4 in Chapter 4, Section 2.

7 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Anti-racism: The process of actively identifying and opposing racism. The goal is to challenge racism and actively change policies, behaviours and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas and actions. Anti-racism is about taking active steps to eliminate racism at the individual, institutional and structural levels.

Conflict-affected: Refers to a variety of conflict situations at different stages, with varying degrees and types of violence—from open warfare or sporadic altercations in unresolved conflicts to stable post-conflict situations with ongoing peacebuilding efforts. Regardless of the situation we work in, we always strive for conflict sensitivity. Our presence on the ground helps us do just that, because it allows us to interact closely with different actors across conflict divides.

Decolonisation: The process of deconstructing colonial ideologies that systemically positioned Western people, thought and approaches as superior and as the norm, while indigenous and non-settler communities were seen as inferior and ‘other’. This understanding of decolonisation is rooted in a number of intersectional intellectual movements, including indigenisation, post-colonialism, post-development theory, decoloniality and critical theory.

Economic justice: The existence of opportunities for meaningful work and employment and the dispensation of fair rewards for the productive activities of individuals. We view economic justice as an aspect of social justice.³⁸

Economic rights: The basic rights of control and ownership of tangible resources such as land, housing and property; the right to inherit; and the right to access to the labour market, secure, safe and paid employment, education, adequate health services and social security. Social reproduction and care work are closely connected to economic rights, as they are mostly unpaid and prevent women from accessing the labour market. Economic gender equality is a matter of women having the same economic rights as men.

Feminism: A movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, discrimination and oppression, and to build an equal, safe and just world.³⁹

Feminist peace: An approach to peace and security that seeks to address the root causes of structural violence and power inequalities, while simultaneously working towards gender equality.⁴⁰

Gender-based violence (GBV): Harmful acts directed at an individual or group based on their gender. GBV is rooted in gender inequality, harmful norms and abuse of power and is a brutal form of discrimination and a violation of fundamental rights. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differences put women and girls at risk of multiple forms of violence. While women and girls disproportionately suffer from GBV, men and boys can be targeted too. The term is also sometimes used to describe violence against the LGBTQI+ community that is related to norms of masculinity, femininity and/or gender. GBV occurs everywhere: at home and in public, in every society and country, regardless of social background.⁴¹

Gender justice: The full equality and equity between women and men in all spheres of life, resulting in women jointly, and on an equal basis with men, defining and shaping the policies, structures and decisions that affect their lives and society as a whole.⁴²

Human rights-based approach: A conceptual framework for the progress of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. A human rights-based approach seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress and often result in groups of people being left behind.⁴³

International non-governmental organisation (INGO): A non-profit organisation that provides services in low-income and lower-middle-income countries. INGOs are international because they raise funds in high-income countries but utilise these funds in other countries. INGOs may operate in different sectors and work with a range of issues, including economic development, humanitarian aid, environmental concerns and human rights.

38. UN, 2006: ‘The International Forum for Social Development: Social Justice in an Open World; The Role of the United Nations’.

39. This definition is inspired by the definition feminist professor and author bell hooks formulated in ‘Feminism is for everybody’ (2000).

40. During this strategy period, we will continue to develop our understanding of feminist peace as an approach that includes intersectionality, contextualised power analysis of social inequalities and movement-building to change those inequalities.

41. This definition is based on the UN Women ([link](#)) and also includes points from the Istanbul Convention ([link](#)). This definition is based on that of UN Women ([link](#)) and includes points from the Istanbul Convention ([link](#)).

42. Oxfam: ‘Gender justice and women’s rights’ ([link](#)).

43. UN Sustainable Development Group: ‘Human rights-based approach’ ([link](#)).

Intersectionality: A theoretical approach that recognises that different systems of oppression and discrimination are interdependent and overlap, based on identities such as race, gender, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etcetera. The term was coined by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989.

LGBTQI+: A common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex communities. Many LGBTQI+ people of all ages and in all world regions are exposed to human rights violations because of deeply embedded homophobic and transphobic attitudes, often combined with a lack of adequate legal protection against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Racism: Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through society's institutional policies and practices and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.⁴⁴ Racism has many dimensions: it is both macro and micro, institutional and individual, and has conscious and unconscious elements. Racism differs from racial prejudice, hatred or discrimination.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR): Rights that enable all human beings to decide over their own bodies, have healthy social relations and good reproductive health. SRHR relate to our most intimate relations, health and family life. Everyone should have the right to decide if, when and how many children they want. Everyone should be able to express their gender identity and sexual orientation without facing violence or discrimination. Access to good maternal health, comprehensive sex education, affordable contraceptives and free and safe abortion are important measures that enable sexual and reproductive health for all.⁴⁵

Shrinking space: A situation of increasing criminalisation and bureaucratisation of human rights work, aimed at making life difficult for and preventing the work of women human right defenders and civil society organisations. Authorities may directly restrict freedom of association and assembly or use alternative legislation to harass and prosecute human rights defenders.⁴⁶

Women: We define women as all persons who identify as women.

Women's economic empowerment (WEE): A transformational process that increases women's power and influence, enabling women to live safe, meaningful and fulfilled lives. Power is at the heart of this feminist interpretation: the focus is on the relationship between economic markets and women's autonomy, agency, choice and decision-making.⁴⁷

Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs): Anyone (regardless of their gender) who works on gender issues or defends women's rights. The UN's Declaration on Human Rights Defenders recognises the important role of human rights defenders, including WHRDs, and outlines the rights of human rights defenders and the obligations of states. WHRDs face the same types of risks any human rights defender faces, but as women, they are also the target of gender-specific threats and violence. The reasons behind this are multi-faceted and complex, and depend on the specific context the individual WHRD is working in. Often, the work of WHRDs is seen as challenging traditional notions of family and gender roles in society, which can lead to hostility, stigmatisation and ostracism by the general population, authorities, community leaders, faith-based groups, families and communities, who consider (the work of) WHRDs a threat to society's religion, honour or culture.⁴⁸

Women's rights organisation: A women-led organisation that is part of civil society and relatively free from state influence, and that supports women to understand, access and demand their rights. Women's rights organisations may work to increase gender awareness and change norms and discriminatory practices by people of any gender.

Women's rights movement: An organised set of actors pursuing a shared political agenda of change through collective action.⁴⁹

44. Racial Equity Tools Glossary ([link](#)).

45. This definition of SRHR is based on the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission's definition ([link](#)).

46. Kvinna till Kvinna, 2018: 'Suffocating The Movement: Shrinking Space for Women's Rights'.

47. Kvinna till Kvinna, 2021: Position paper Economic Gender Equality.

48. Kvinna till Kvinna, 2020: Programme Handbook.

49. *ibid*.



Photo: Liliana Samuila

FOR ALL WOMEN'S RIGHTS, IN EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD