

# 2022 Power Up! Annual Report

1 May 2023

*POWER UP!*



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# Acronym

<b>AAAS</b>	Ahmi Amchya Arogya Sathi
<b>FPE</b>	Feminist Popular Education
<b>C20</b>	Civil 20 Engagement Group
<b>CAL</b>	Coalition of African Lesbians
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CFR</b>	Community Forest Rights
<b>CMI!</b>	Count Me In!
<b>CRTD.A</b>	A Collective for Research and Training on Development- Action
<b>G@W</b>	Gender at Work
<b>FEA</b>	Feminist Economic Alternative
<b>FMB</b>	Feminist Movement Building
<b>FPE</b>	Feminist Popular Education
<b>FCRA</b>	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (India)
<b>G20</b>	Group of 20
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>GR</b>	General Recommendation
<b>IFR</b>	Individual Forest Rights
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>JASS (SEA/SNA)</b>	Just Associations (Southeast Asia, Southern Africa)
<b>KUPI</b>	Indonesian Women Ulema Congress
<b>LGBTQI+</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, + other minority sexual and gender identities <sup>1</sup>
<b>LRS</b>	Labour Research Service
<b>MFA</b>	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NSNP</b>	National School Nutrition Programme
<b>OBOL</b>	Our Bodies, Our Lives
<b>OECD DAC</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
<b>PEKKA</b>	Yayasan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga
<b>PoW</b>	Power of Women
<b>PU!</b>	Power Up!
<b>SADTU</b>	South Africa Democratic Teachers Union
<b>SHG</b>	Self-Help Groups
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual And Reproductive Health And Rights
<b>STUM</b>	Solidarity Trade Union of Myanmar
<b>TFWRGE</b>	Task Force Women's Rights and Gender Equality
<b>TOC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>ToT</b>	Training Of Trainers
<b>TWCC</b>	Tulkarem Women Community Center
<b>VAWG</b>	Violence Against Women And Girls
<b>VFH</b>	Volunteer Food Handlers
<b>WEE</b>	Women's Economic Empowerment
<b>WRO</b>	Women's Rights Organisation
<b>W/HRD</b>	(Women) Human Rights Defenders

<sup>1</sup> Acronym used to refer to all the communities included in the "LGBTQQIA" (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual) array



## Introduction

Power Up! (PU!) is a consortium of three womxn's rights organisations: **Just Associates (JASS)**, an international feminist movement support organisation rooted in the Global South; **Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL)**, a queer, Pan-African, feminist organisation; **Yayasan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA)**, a national womxn-headed family empowerment network in Indonesia; and **Gender at Work (G@W)**, an international feminist knowledge network. Power Up! engages with womxn,<sup>2</sup> womxn's rights organisations (WROs), and LBQTI+ groups, particularly those that represent constituencies that have been marginalised in their communities, and social movements (HIV+ womxn, sex workers, womxn workers, and rural and indigenous womxn).

The year was a challenging one for PU! as we navigated shifts in socio-political context as well as within our consortium. In the spirit of the partnership, and as part of our commitment to the issues of LBQTI+ women, we supported CAL in delivering the work they set out to do with their collectives. As part of the consortium's agreed set of principles, we committed to promote and practise a culture of openness, transparency and mutual accountability, and we adopted fair and practical solutions and dedicated the resources and creativity to support the close out of CAL with integrity and mutual respect.

We have organised this report according to our three strategic agendas, while acknowledging that women's experiences are intersectional, not siloed. In this annual report, we share and reflect upon our joint accomplishments and key learnings as PU! from 1 January - 31 December 2022.

<sup>2</sup> For PU!, 'womxn' includes young womxn, non-binary, intersex, and trans people because they, like womxn, face gender-based discrimination and oppression by the patriarchal system.

## Context: 2022 at a Glance

2022 continued to be a turbulent year for WROs and women human rights defenders (WHRDs), as the trends emerging from the preceding years have become further entrenched. Despite the easing in some COVID-19 impacts as most restrictions started being lifted, the deep social and economic impacts wrought by the pandemic continued to be felt, particularly by women in the global South. This has further exposed the inequalities within the global geopolitical landscape.

Globally, 2022 continued to see the growth and consolidation of right-wing movements – increasingly transnational in nature – fuelled by economic instability, fear and angry backlash against the political gains of historically marginalised groups. Fundamentalisms and nationalism are thriving, as authoritarian politicians consolidate their power leveraging their well-resourced and organised base/networks in many arenas. Increases in violence and decreases in civic space are being experienced globally across PU! and partners. Activists have had to strategise to enhance safety and protection across the board, with LBQTI+ and WHRDs on the front lines of and targets for conservative narratives and laws that prohibit and criminalise action.

However, while many movements are struggling and fragmented, feminist leadership and movements offer hope both as countervailing forces for positive change as well as alternatives and solutions to unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.. Throughout these increasing challenges, feminist movements have continued to strategise and organise, adapting as needed to survive and sustain their work. They nonetheless remain under siege in many contexts, and their work to base-build, sustain, and strengthen leadership, connect feminist activists and their networks, and catalyse space for agenda setting and strategy has never been more vital and in urgent need of support.

Based on these contextual changes and risks, we have identified new risks and elaborated our risk mitigation measures accordingly (see Annex 2).



# Summary of Results

While each consortium member and partner has worked on and achieved vastly different results targeting diverse stakeholders across many contexts, we have identified several commonalities in our shared journey in 2022. Our results build on the extensive work in 2021 to establish and strengthen relationships, connections, and foundations for our feminist principles, policies, and processes and converge around five primary focus areas:

1. Creating safe spaces to raise political consciousness as a foundation and catalyst for all other movement building work and impact, including stronger movements, facilitation and development of agendas, knowledge, and ideas by the people most affected by an issue, and contributing to bigger changes.
2. Claiming political spaces through local, national, regional, and global movement-led advocacy strategies, including using opportunities that arise to be more propositional with solutions.
3. Nurturing alliances to strengthen collaboration and collective power, mobilising strength in numbers and improving safety networks.
4. Using communication as a tool to amplify local-level work, create counter-narratives to move agendas, facilitate intergenerational dialogues, and to reclaim and raise awareness of Indigenous knowledge and practices.
5. Developing knowledge and building a shared strategy around feminist economic alternatives.

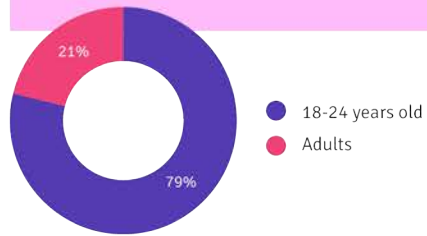
PU! is a consortium with a strong focus on feminist movement building (FMB). This approach means that we work with partner WROs and WHRDs over a long period of time. While we are excited to report on the new WHRDs and WROs reached through PU! this year in the indicators below, we also want to call out that, from a movement building approach to data, there are thousands of women worldwide that have seen their capacities strengthened through our existing relationships and partnerships over the years who are not reflected in the following results. It is important to highlight this since movement building is a long term process, which requires time and trust building; sustained numbers through time also reflect the longevity of the political projects that bring about systemic change.

MFA No.	Output No.	Indicator Description	Baseline	2022 Target	2022 Achieved
WRG049y	4.1.1a	# women (youth) who report increased confidence, political skills and consciousness	0	76	380
WRG049ny	4.1.1b	# women (non-youth) who report increased confidence, political skills and consciousness	0	1,351	1,582 (239 are LGBTQI+ women)
WRGE 5.2.1	4.2.1	# of WROs' (political and technical capacities) strengthened	0	135	165 (7 are LGBTQI+ groups)
WRGE 5.2.1	5.1.1	# of new/diverse alliances created	0	40	45
WRGE 5.2.1	5.3.1	# solidarity/urgent actions supported	0	39	73
SCS041	6.1.1	# of actions by women supported	0	93	57
WRGE 5.2.1	6.3.1	# of economic initiatives developed by women's collectives/groups	0	27	45



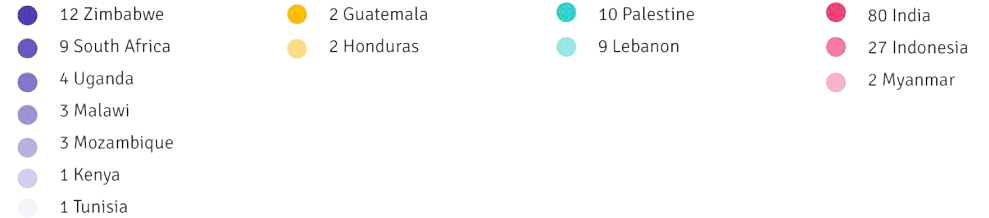
(WRG049y/WRG049ny/4.1.1)

**1,962 women and young women** reported increased confidence, political skills and consciousness



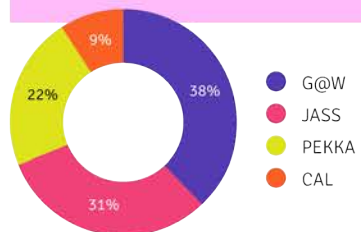
**165 WROs' political and technical capacities strengthened**

(WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1)



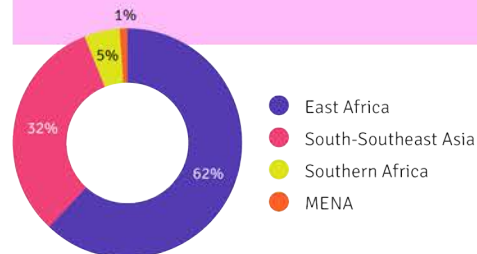
(WRGE 5.2.1/5.1.1)

**45 new/diverse alliances** formed



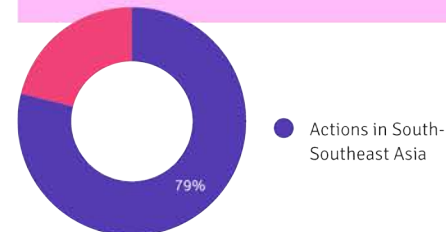
(WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1)

**67 solidarity/urgent actions** supported



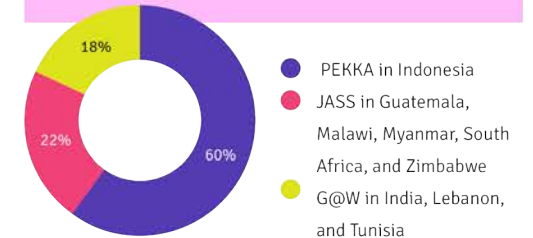
(SCS041/6.1.1)

**61 rights-based / advocacy actions** by women



(WRGE 5.2.1/6.3.1)

**45 economic initiatives** developed by women's collectives/groups



## Explanation of Targets and Results Achieved

Our targets and achievements are presented in this report for the consortium. As a consortium, we have exceeded our targets this year due to successes in FMB and the need to expand our reach in order to sustain movements, collectives, and alliances. The momentum built over the past two years has enhanced our visibility in many communities, leading WROs and the womxn we support to launch their own initiatives.<sup>3</sup> In fact, this has resulted in PU! already meeting our five-year target for the number of WROs strengthened (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1). This achievement is reflective of our movement building approach which focuses on sustaining capacities and relations with women's groups over time.

Similar to last year, there are significant differences across partners and countries. Indeed, where the results exceeded the overall target, some partners/countries did not meet their individual targets. These differences are largely attributable to the diverse foci and therefore the differing activities of each consortium member, but some are also due to internal and external contextual challenges (including close out of the CAL partnership and natural disasters) and re-prioritising of activities. As a consortium, we are taking note of these differences and utilising them as an opportunity for partners to learn from each other.

A key learning we have had this year related to target setting and reporting is the risks related to reporting that some of our partners experience. The challenging and repressive nature of contexts in many of the PU! programme countries mean that there is deep vulnerability and danger to the work the consortium supports. As a result, partners often do not document their work to prevent it being traced back to them. This leads to an under-reporting of some of our results in these contexts to protect personal safety and security of partners and/or the women/WROs with whom we work. In India, the government is deregistering or not renewing organisations that do not meet the restrictive compliance rules of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). For example, legally registered organisations cannot use the word 'advocacy' on any documentation or their application will be rejected because advocacy is perceived as anti-government. Similarly in Zimbabwe, the Private Voluntary Organisation Amendment Bill allows the cancellation of civil

society registrations that are deemed to have "political affiliation" and violations could lead to criminal prosecution. Also, in Myanmar and Kenya at Kakuma Refugee Camp, demographic data and other sensitive information including some specific outcomes cannot be reported as it puts partners at risk (e.g., imprisonment, assassination). In light of these risks, our partners' safety must be protected and therefore their reporting on activities must be done with caution or, in some cases, not done at all.

In terms of programming, there were several planned activities that were not implemented this year due to challenges in the context, or because of a restructuring/re-prioritising the phasing of our activities. For example, the degree of collaboration and coordination required in India across vast geographies resulted in implementation delays; similarly in South Africa, Indonesia, and Cambodia, the extent of collaborative conversations that needed to take place to come to consensus and get grounded in documenting and synthesising data and viewpoints took longer than anticipated. In some cases the momentum of specific activities required a re-prioritisation of other planned activities in order to capitalise upon opportunities to achieve significant outcomes, in Mesoamerica for instance, the positive momentum the CEDAW General Recommendation (see details in the Voices section below).

<sup>3</sup> Initiatives launched by womxn independently were not factored into the targets set in our 2022 annual plan; however, they are counted in the results. This contributes to our results exceeding the targets.



# Theory of Change

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The Power Up! Theory of Change (TOC) (see Annex 1) is that womxn play an essential role in bringing about lasting social change, but need political resources to build a cohesive and sustained feminist movement that can achieve long-term change. PU! works towards its outcomes and strategic programme objective through three interrelated pathways of change— building, organising and mobilising, and transforming power:

1. **Building power** happens through strengthening individual grassroots feminist leaders’ organising capacity and collective power through feminist movement-builder schools that foster critical awareness and political analysis, movement-building and advocacy skills, and shared leadership.
2. **Organising and mobilising power** systematically links the capacity building processes to sustained movement strategies that forge broader alliances and mobilise joint action.
3. **Transforming power** amplifies demands and women-led solutions through global solidarity, strategic communications and publications to impact policy and public debates, influencing agenda-setting, and shifting social attitudes and narratives that legitimise and reinforce discrimination and exclusion.

Together, we build, organise and mobilise, and transform power on three strategic agendas:

1. **Bodies:** Prevention and elimination of sexual and gender-based violence against womxn and girls.
2. **Voices:** Strengthening womxn’s leadership and womxn’s participation in (political) decision-making.
3. **Resources:** Strengthening womxn’s economic strategies for economic resilience and stability, including access to and control of resources and land.

As our work unfolds across regions, we can confirm that our strategies and pathways are interconnected, mutually reinforcing, and non-hierarchical. Our TOC is intentionally broad in order to encompass the unique work of each consortium member and purposively flexible to allow each partner organisation to best adapt it to their strategies and organisational change theories. Some key characteristics have emerged over the past two years of PU! implementation regarding how the pathways of change are perceived and implemented by all partner organisations such as:

1. **The pathways are non-linear and non-hierarchical;** they have different starting points based on the lived experiences of women and the cycle of the change process.
2. **The pathways are interconnected and intersectional** to address the multi-faceted needs of movement building in complex contexts that require comprehensive strategies connecting bodily, health, and economic rights.
3. **The pathways are iterative;** meaning, they involve repeated cycles that are constantly adjusted according to new learnings and to new needs to match the moment.



# Bodies

Under the Bodies agenda, we work to ensure that womxn (in all our diversities) enjoy bodily autonomy, are able to make decisions over our bodies, sexuality and sexual expression, reproduction, gender identity and experience sexual and reproductive health, freedom from violence, and well-being.

## Context in 2022: Bodies

Across many countries we continue to see intensifying attacks against democratic institutions and human rights, with governments promoting misogynist, xenophobic, and homophobic narratives to justify violence. In Kenya for example, there has been a growing manifestation of traditionalist and nationalist agendas that threaten the freedoms of sex-workers, HIV+ people, LGBTIQ+, and gender-non-conforming persons as well as any activist that stands against the fundamentalists views on families. In Mesoamerica (particularly in Mexico), the rise of the anti-trans narrative is creating lines of division in the feminist movement. Increases in violence and threats that are segregating out who is a “real” woman or not, creating polarisation of the political work and posing challenges for building common agendas and alliances.

New laws are emerging to criminalise LGBTIQ+ activists. In Uganda and Indonesia activists are experiencing a clamping down on groups and their spaces to organise, making it harder to reach constituents, get resources to groups, and move agendas forward. Throughout these challenges, partners have been organising to ensure LGBTIQ+ groups have the resources they need for safety and wellbeing and devising strategies to think about how to organise and strategise differently, going underground as needed in order to ensure greater safety. In India, the process of legalising same sex marriages is currently held at the Supreme Court level where the government is using conservative morality narratives to halt its passage.

In Myanmar, since the military coup in February 2021, killings, disappearances, sexual violence and beatings of HRDs have gone unpunished. Against the backdrop of the ongoing structural violence and discrimination faced by women in Myanmar under decades of military rule, WHRDs from ethnic minority groups in remote areas continue to be at high risk of sexual violence and torture. This has forced partners and activists to adopt safety strategies that include minimising their visibility in order to protect against further bodily violations.

Challenging injustices and facing backlash can have multiple impacts on well-being; including on mental health, which has been an ongoing and common thread across the consortium. In Indonesia for example, PEKKA has experienced backlash against the success of the Pekka leaders (as they represent a historically marginalised group: women-headed households) in certain communities, which has affected the mental well-being of those involved in the work and required additional support in terms of strategy from the national office. In Uganda and Kenya, the ongoing post-COVID recovery dynamics at community level have affected the mental well-being of women following the broadening of care work responsibilities, detracting from their ability to engage as activists. This has required additional space and resources and a centering of mental healthcare and well-being as a part of programming.

Nevertheless, some legislative successes have been witnessed: Indonesia passed the Sexual Violence Crimes bill, which, if implemented, represents a major step that criminalises acts such as forced marriage, forced contraception, and online sexual violence.





## Power Up! Results: Bodies

### I. Capacity Building with Women (WRG049y/4.1.1a & WRG049ny/4.1.1b) and WROs (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1)

PU! supports and builds the capacity of marginalised groups that are targets of increased violence and discrimination due to their gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or social status (LGBTQI+ people, HIV+ women, sex workers, and rural and indigenous women defending the environment) alongside those that have influence over their lives (e.g., trade unions, men). Most of our work in 2022 focused on strengthening the safety and security of individual women as they confronted the challenges of closing civic spaces, police brutality, and discriminatory and exclusive structures. For instance, JASS engaged LGBTQI+ groups and sex workers in safe circles to strengthen safety and security for activists and sex workers; the culmination of these meetings was the development of strategy documents which will provide a road map to address the mounting structural violence (WRG049ny/4.1.1b).

We also provided organisational political accompaniment<sup>4</sup> (e.g., strategy development, political analysis) at a collective level to support WROs/networks working on violence against women, sex worker rights, LGBTQI+ rights, gender and HIV, and sexual and reproductive health rights/access (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1). In Southeast Asia, 11 organisations across three countries benefited from JASS's solidarity resourcing mechanism, which was critical in ensuring that partner organisations were able to carry out advocacy campaigns on GBV and provide legal and non-legal assistance to survivors, including counselling (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1).

In a context of intersectional vulnerabilities of LGBTQI+ communities, including violence, economic insecurity and increased government directives of curfews and lockdowns in Kenya and Uganda, CAL partners focused on increasing confidence,

<sup>4</sup> We call it 'political accompaniment' rather than 'technical support' because of its focus on analysing, strategising, facilitating, and co-creating methods to organise together as opposed to skills development on things such as financial compliance alone (although technical skills can be a feature).

knowledge and skills to equip LGBTQI+ groups. For example, one of PU! East African partners conducted autonomy learning conversations for LGBTQI+ activists, sex workers, and leaders to sensitise them on how climate change affects bodily autonomy and fuels GBV. These sessions not only created awareness on how values and attitudes affect women's bodily autonomy, they also equipped LGBTQI+ women and sex workers with ideas about overcoming body violation, body shaming, corrective rape, mob justice, and other human rights violations (WRG049ny/4.1.1b).

PU! also engaged other stakeholders that hold power over women's bodies. For example, JASS held dialogue sessions and working groups in Cambodia with male union leaders to discuss ILO c190 – the convention concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work. A safe space was created that prioritised inclusivity, accessibility, and participation of young women union leaders to ask critical questions to the (male) leadership that they felt they did not have the right or space to otherwise (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). A safety and security guideline was co-created that will be integrated in union structures (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1).

### II. Alliance Building (WRGE 5.2.1/5.1.1)

Our work in this area has primarily focused on advocacy and building alliances that promote our shared advocacy agendas such as ending violence against women and LGBTQI+ persons. For example, JASS connected with a new ally (name withheld for security reasons) during the 4th Kopano Convening organised by the Other Foundation to critically consider the best ways to move forward with LGBTQI+ advocacy work. JASS will be working closely with them on translating the (revised) JASS Power Guide to action and will collaborate on issues related to gender minorities and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

Meanwhile in Indonesia, the Sexual Violence Crimes bill was passed into a law, shifting focus to its proper implementation, socialising the law with the public, and strengthening the capacity of law enforcers. PEKKA and JASS joined alliances that



aim to support the bill's passing and the law's implementation. For instance, through accompanying members of Women Ulema Congress to organise a mass prayer event for support for the enactment of the draft bill, which was attended by more than 3,000 participants virtually from 50 different cities across Indonesia and also supported by 331 institutions. Also, accompanying a new ally – Rumah KitaB – to organise the Alliance of Center for Gender and Child Studies in Islamic Universities, which has been a driving force to demand the enactment of the elimination of sexual violence from academia. However, PEKKA has observed that some of the original coalition disbanded after reaching their initial goal for the bill to be passed; this is a critical learning about a key challenge in sustaining collective gain.

### III. Solidarity and Urgent Action (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1) & Strategic Advocacy (SCS041/6.1.1)

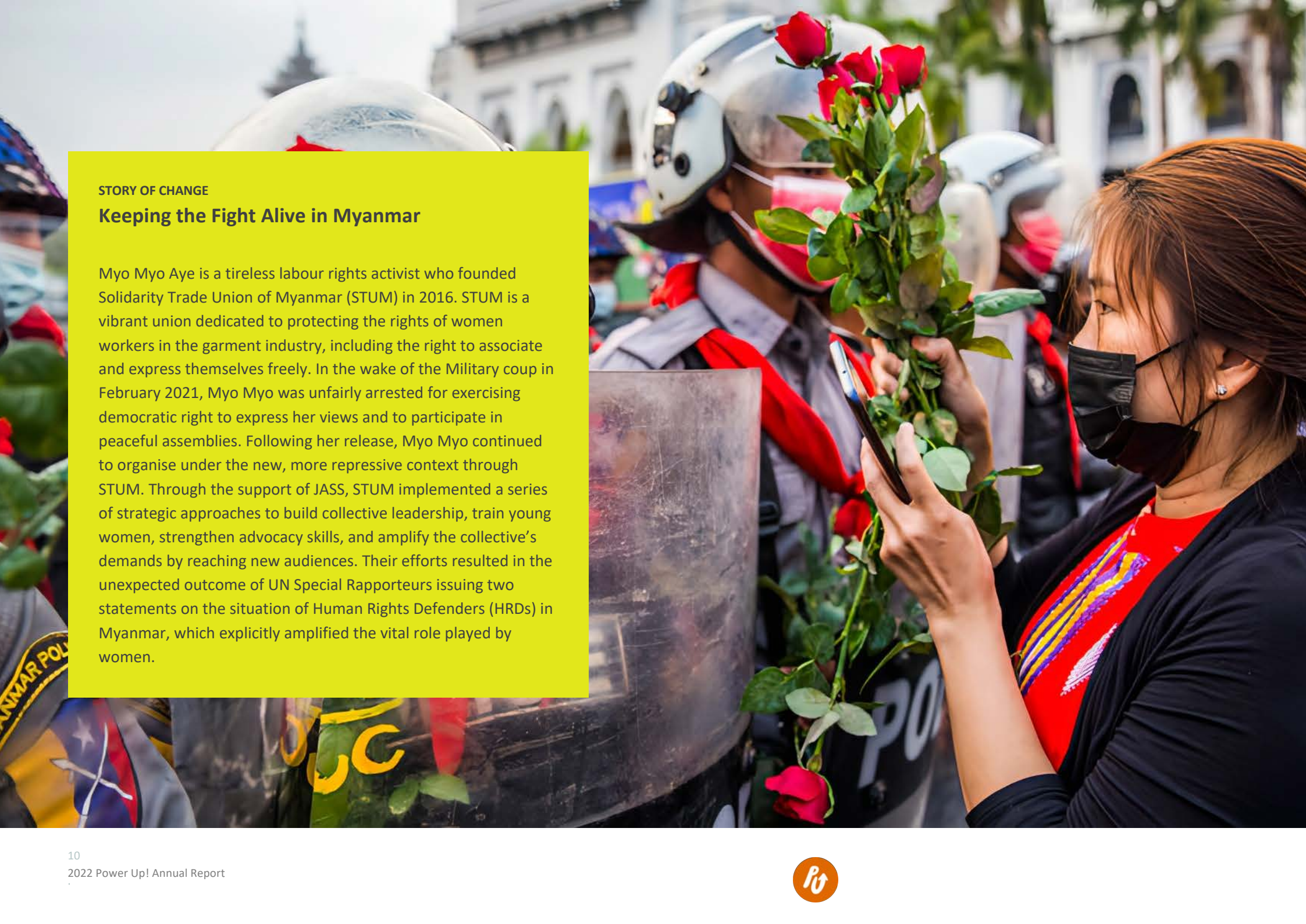
Oftentimes sensitive issues around women's bodies require solidarity actions amongst trusted organisations and groups to protect and defend each other from harassment, rape, and other violations. In these cases, urgent and solidarity actions must be undertaken to protect the dignity and privacy of the women affected. In India, for example, women forest dwellers defending or claiming their individual and community forest rights, including those trained by G@W's partner AAAS, are routinely subject to a range of violations and attacks. As women's rights awareness under the Forestry Rights Act increases, such incidents are prompting the mobilisation of women across communities to demonstrate against the violence perpetrated or condoned by State governments (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). In 2022, there were two incidents, one in Uttarakhand and the other in Chhattisgarh, which spurred acts of solidarity protests among women community leaders and local women's rights groups. In what became known as the [Helang case](#) in Uttarakhand, these protests led to an *influencing* opportunity with State actors for AAAS and other organisations and groups to create a discourse around women's forest rights by informing the State government on the provisions of the Forest Rights Act and by

advocating for its proper implementation from a feminist lens and one which considers the lived realities of women forest dwellers.

For the second consecutive year, CRTD.A in Lebanon (G@W's partner) launched a regional advocacy campaign to raise greater awareness of economic GBV as an "invisible" form of violence experienced by women in the home, workplace, in society, and in the law as part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. It highlighted discriminatory laws related to inheritance, divorce, and child custody that disadvantage women economically as well as the absence of support systems and services for women GBV survivors that enable women to exit violent relationships. Reaching approximately 125,000 people, the campaign helped to reframe the debate on culturally taboo issues through a more feminist lens (SCS041/6.1.1).

Solidarity actions toward women victims of violence have focused on individual support in other contexts. For instance, PEKKA assisted in six cases of women who were victims of violence this year – including cases of domestic violence, sexual violence, and violence against children (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). Grassroots women rarely report their cases due to patriarchal values that promote women's silence regardless of the level of violence they experience. This year, some women personally reported their cases to the PEKKA leaders rather than the village government. Now, when PEKKA members receive a case, they support the victim to report it to government bodies, the police, or the courts and they remain by their side throughout the reporting and prosecution process to ensure that survivors never feel alone or victimised. Meanwhile, another CAL's partner in East Africa facilitated dialogues between health providers and LGBTQI+ community members to deepen the understanding of the SRHR needs of LGBTQI+ persons (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). As a result, health workers are more aware of and committed to providing accessible, comprehensive, high quality, inclusive and respectful SRHR information and services.





## STORY OF CHANGE

### Keeping the Fight Alive in Myanmar

Myo Myo Aye is a tireless labour rights activist who founded Solidarity Trade Union of Myanmar (STUM) in 2016. STUM is a vibrant union dedicated to protecting the rights of women workers in the garment industry, including the right to associate and express themselves freely. In the wake of the Military coup in February 2021, Myo Myo was unfairly arrested for exercising democratic right to express her views and to participate in peaceful assemblies. Following her release, Myo Myo continued to organise under the new, more repressive context through STUM. Through the support of JASS, STUM implemented a series of strategic approaches to build collective leadership, train young women, strengthen advocacy skills, and amplify the collective's demands by reaching new audiences. Their efforts resulted in the unexpected outcome of UN Special Rapporteurs issuing two statements on the situation of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Myanmar, which explicitly amplified the vital role played by women.

# Voices

Power Up! aims to ensure that women's leadership and ideas are influencing the decisions affecting their lives. This requires that we shift power dynamics to ensure women are not excluded from decisions that affect them, and that we begin to transform social norms and values that hinder women's leadership.

## Context in 2022: Voices

As consolidations in authoritarian power and fundamentalist positions and narratives increase across all regions, civic space continues to be constricted and people, particularly women, are being criminalised as they attempt to speak out and resist. Histories, cultures, and memory are being disputed and challenged as conservative fundamentalism seeks to erase the knowledge of who women and WHRDs are, what they have survived through and achieved, and the power of their vision to transform the world.

Regions and countries are experiencing this in multiple and different ways. Guatemala is experiencing a total closure of dialogue spaces with the government as it becomes complexly co-opted by organised crime. This has led to the imprisonment of women activists and social mobilisers even as many people, such as those working within the UN system, leave the country for safety. In countries such as Indonesia, the use of identity politics to polarise people, including WROs, around religion/faith and ethnicity has led to divisions in agendas and approaches. Conservative and nationalist groups are also finding ways to instrumentalise women to bolster their narratives. At the same time, a rise in anti-Muslim narratives can be found in India and more broadly globally, funded and supported by powerful right-wing platforms that are also behind increased anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-abortion narratives.

The closing of democratic spaces has made the work of activists riskier with arrests leading to halts in movement building and increased work towards self-preservation. In Cambodia, the government has since 2021 installed a series of rights-abusing laws and bills, including the Sub-Decree on the Establishment of the National Internet Gateway, which since February 2022 allows the government to monitor all internet activities. In South Africa, increased political fragmentation has made solidarity and alliance building harder overall. Many countries (e.g., Honduras) have also experienced growing tensions within feminist movements as some activists have joined the government, leaving gaps in social mobilisation. In Mozambique and Zimbabwe, restrictive NGO legislation has had an impact on PU! partners with increased state repression, less access to resources, and less safety for activists overall. Partners in each of these countries have had to respond to protect their safety by having to go further under the radar, sanitise their activism, and refocus their work at local level instead of engaging with high level advocacy.

Ongoing challenges of nepotism, corruption, increasing conservatism and failed political promises around women's political participation and leadership continue to be pervasive in countries like Indonesia and South Africa, where cynicism about political organisation is contending with an overall lack of participation and ability to influence. This is recognised as a challenge globally. To mitigate against and combat these issues, partners continue to support localised interventions for women in decision making and within advocacy spaces where possible, but for the most part have moved towards more protective approaches that include less visible gatherings and also working to build (trans-)national alliances.

Amidst this, there have been some moments of hope. In Honduras, the election of a woman President has offered some optimism for activists after years of organising with opportunities for mobilising currently being scoped-out.



## Power Up! Results: VOICES

### I. Capacity Building with Women (WRG049y/4.1.1a & WRG049ny/4.1.1b) and WROs (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1)

Political conscious building and capacity strengthening has become more important as we sustain our movement building work, and continue to accompany women while they plan and act to counter authoritarian power, anti-rights and harmful narratives. Last year we witnessed one of the most important outcomes of the work of the [IxPop Collective](#): after 10 years of strategizing and pushing for the recognition of Indigenous Women's rights, the CEDAW General Recommendation (GR) on Indigenous Women and Girls [No.39](#) was adopted on 26 October 2022 (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1). The adoption of the GR was a groundbreaking achievement built upon ten years of capacity building and strengthening of the IxPop collective, coordinated advocacy. JASS and the four Ix-Pop Collective partners subsequently developed an operations and advocacy plan and co-organised a virtual dialogue to present progress on the passing of the GR. As members of the Ix-Pop Collective since its inception, JASS also joined numerous Indigenous womxn's groups and allies in the advocacy campaign which strengthened capacities and alliances among Indigenous womxn.

In Indonesia, JASS has been working with partners to support the Muslim womxn scholars (Ulema) movement on Islamic University campuses to build more gender-responsive institutions by co-facilitating workshops with 28 Ulema womxn to strengthen their leadership and holding a reflective workshop meeting with 10 new womxn Ulemas (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). The Ulema womxn shared that being part of a collective and participating in these co-organised workshops fostered their self-confidence and desire to further study Islam's recognition of gender equality, which is increasingly important as Indonesia has seen increased patriarchal narratives in the name of Islam. Some participants went on to promote the messages to their students and on social media, including one woman who started a weekly Instagram broadcast on womxn's issues in Islam.

In India, G@W's partner AAAS has focused on building the capacity of womxn's leadership on forest rights. In 2022, approximately 360 womxn forest dwellers across four states were trained on processes to assert their Individual (IFR) and Community Forest Rights (CFR) (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). Around 60 womxn have demonstrated their strengthened capabilities by leading campaigns and negotiating with political representatives and state actors to claim these rights. Moreover, approximately 80% of the trained womxn have engaged at the Gram Sabha (village council) level in 105 villages, which has enabled their participation in the decentralised gram panchayat development planning processes (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1).

While the majority of our work focuses on adults, we have engaged young people in a variety of capacity strengthening initiatives, including during the aforementioned work on the CEDAW General Recommendation. An (unplanned) interregional, indigenous youth consultation brought together 23 Mayan and Xinca girls between 13 and 17 years old to talk about their realities and how their perspectives could be taken into account in the recommendation draft. The encounter resulted in a [Manifesto for the CEDAW General Recommendation for Indigenous Women](#)<sup>5</sup> (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). Additionally, working through the Doria Feminist Fund, CRTD.A, G@W's main partner in MENA, supported the Ettijah Rap Group for Girls, the first all-girls hip hop collective in Palestine. The project, through PU!, aimed to increase and empower refugee girls' civic and community participation (WRG049y/4.1.1a). In a context where young people's access to public spaces are limited, CRTD.A's support enabled the creation of a safe space for 12 adolescent refugee girls from Dheisheh Refugee Camp in Bethlehem to assemble, learn, share experiences and express themselves creatively, using art, music and rap as a means of self-expression and civic engagement to voice feminist resistance and resilience. Young Palestinian refugee womxn were also provided with psychosocial support sessions to help them cope with refugee life and living under Israeli occupation.

<sup>5</sup> See supporting videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDEDAE1x1-g> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ph9QXa1b4>



## II. Alliance Building (WRGE 5.2.1/5.1.1)

We are working on a variety of initiatives and activities with new and existing allies. For example, in Palestine, the Doria Feminist Fund, G@W's partner, supported the Tulkarem Women Community Center (TWCC) in its role on the Tulkarem Community Accountability Commission, a body of CSO representatives working closely with the municipality of Tulkarem to plan and design community initiatives. As a member of this Commission, the TWCC increased the debate on safeguarding womxn's rights and priorities and contributed to planning activities that support womxn. JASS also joined social movement activists, allies, and donors to deepen analysis on energy, climate, democracy, and civic space during the African Social Movements Baraza. Also, CAL engaged an alliance in Kenya (the Kenya Alliance) to influence the work of 26 frontline activists to internalise and critique a methodology to increase advocacy activities aimed at amplifying LGBTQTI+ women's voices in policy and political spheres. In 2022, the alliance developed a compelling curriculum for such advocacy.

During 2022 we also encountered some shortfalls, for example in Zimbabwe alliance building was put on hold due to a capacity shortfall and instead the focus was put on reactivating circles and allies with whom JASS has previously worked. By re-focusing, we were able to successfully reconnect with 13 allies who work on human rights for sex workers, LGBTQTI+ communities, and land defenders. Also, the ongoing work in Zimbabwe to document the history of LGBTQTI+ people in the country in a positive way to show how they have always been there is strengthening our alliances with diverse groups of LGBTQTI+ nationwide and supporting our work on counter-narratives.

## III. Solidarity and Urgent Action (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1) & Strategic Advocacy (SCS041/6.1.1)

The challenging socio-political contexts and shrinking civic space have offered opportunities for PU! to harness the power of our collectives and continue our strategic engagement and advocacy work. In our second year of implementation, we have realised some significant progress in moving from building to organising and mobilising, and even transforming power. We engaged in a variety of local level actions as well as some national advocacy with international actors that has yielded results, such as:

- JASS worked in partnership with the Kakuma Block 13 solidarity group that support LBGQTI+ refugees in Kenya to activate Amnesty Kenya to use their political clout and challenge the government (and UNHCR), influencing the decision to halt the closure of the camp in June 2022 (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1).
- G@W's partner CRTD.A in Lebanon joined activists, civil society representatives, and WROs to advocate for the constitutional rights of members of the LGBTQTI+ community, including the right of free expression and assembly (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). This was in response to the unlawful banning of peaceful gatherings of LGBTQTI+ people by the Lebanese authorities and a wave of anti-LGBTQTI+ hate speech on social media. As a signatory to the Feminist Charter in Lebanon, CRTD.A supported the issuing of a statement condemning these human rights violations (SCS041/6.1.1). These efforts built toward the State Council, Lebanon's highest administrative court, suspending the execution of this unlawful ban on 1 November 2022.
- Womxn supported by G@W's partner AAAS in Chhattisgarh India protested against the Jindal Corporation for capturing their land without due process. The 'Pilwa Pali' case went to the court and the decision was withdrawn; the State government was compelled to withdraw the licence for the land granted to the Jindal Corporation (SCS041/6.1.1).



- Pekka womxn leaders in Indonesia came together to secure a portion of public budgets by sending formal funding requests for establishing weaving businesses, buying agricultural inputs, and purchasing sewing machines. Also, building upon work from the past two years, a Pekka group in Bima has succeeded in convincing the village and district government to issue regulations regarding the establishment and management of waste banks.
- The Kenya Alliance, supported by CAL, launched a Twitter campaign to promote the LBGQTI+ curriculum, which resulted in activists, donors, and community members to join the platform (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). The campaign both increased awareness and also surfaced the real needs for accessible and genuine LBGQTI+ programming that is available not only to the alliance, but to others who are interested in advancing its objectives.

We have also taken a direct approach with urgent and solidarity actions. For instance, JASS supported the set-up of online safe spaces through Telegram, Jitsi, and Signal for regular check-ins with two dozen WRHDs inside and outside of Myanmar to collectively develop a deep and up-to-date context analysis, share resources, and identify strategies for sustaining the movement (5.2.1). Ensuring these digital networks were safe was another advocacy objective: PU!’s partner in Myanmar exerted pressure on technology companies such as Telegram, which was being used by Junta to spread propaganda through open group chats. After just two days of a campaign to pressure Telegram to restrict harmful propaganda, these alleged group chats were closed (SCS041/6.1.1).

*“Funding alone might not be impactful, but JASS through Power Up! came with solidarity, you know, sort of sister. We are now connected to more women’s groups, workers unions, for example. And we can see what we are doing could be represented by these groups as well because these groups could easily participate in our campaigns.” –Myanmar partner*

Also, following capacity building and mobilising from years prior, PEKKA transformed power by supporting Pekka leaders to win seats in elected offices. This was supported in part in one village by a decision letter issued by one village head requiring the involvement of womxn in the village forum. For instance, Pekka womxn leaders are now on the Badan Pemusyawaratan Desa (Village Consultative Council), serving as the secretary of the village PKK (Family Welfare Program), as a village treasurer, and as Community Empowerment Agents, amongst other positions (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1).

#### STORY OF CHANGE

### Building Pride and Purpose in Passing on Skills to the Next Generation

Monjia is a 66-year-old woman from Mégrine Chaker, a rural area in Tunisia, who participated in an intergenerational initiative implemented by Kadirat, a national NGO and G@W partner. The initiative sought to enhance the social and economic resilience of impoverished older womxn by sharing their skills in traditional Tunisian handicrafts with younger, unemployed womxn. Monjia’s connection with the younger generations’ energy and ideas has renewed her sense of purpose and pride in her talents, and instilled in her the ambition to adapt her own skills. She expressed, *“I now have a dream.”* Young womxn were also positively impacted by the intergenerational collaboration. Not only did they deeply value the skills they learned from womxn like Monjia; but also began to see themselves as keepers and transmitters of cultural and traditional knowledge and skills for future generations.



# Resources

PU! is developing and expanding feminist economic analysis and alternatives (FEA) by supporting feminist participatory action research, exploring savings groups, cooperatives, and other economic alternatives that womxn can build together. We are strengthening womxn's organising and their participation in land use decisions as these will have a positive impact on sustainability, forest regeneration, and conflict management.

## Context in 2022: Resources

Across the consortium, PU! partners saw lingering effects of COVID-19 having multiple impacts on womxn's lives, especially on their ability to survive and protect the sources of income for themselves and their families due to increasing economic precarity and informality of livelihoods. This has made the challenge of supporting allies even more difficult in a climate when everyone is simply trying to survive economically. For example, in Lebanon, a country that is reeling from compounded pandemic, political and economic crises, or Palestine, which exists in a state of protracted conflict, it has become harder to mobilise womxn to work with due to economic pressures. Resource-related interventions have hence become more relevant and much-needed, validating the growing activities under this agenda, including the growing body of work that seeks to explore what feminist realities and alternatives can be galvanised to bring about systemic shifts away from the oppressions embedded in the current economic system.

As 2022 closed, many countries found themselves further in sovereign debt than ever before as countries struggled to shore-up flaying and in some cases collapsing economies in the wake of the pandemic. This has seen the further entrenching of neoliberal capitalism, which – against a backdrop of climate change and increased extraction – are accelerating displacement, food precarity, and loss of life sustaining ecosystems. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused an overall increase in the prices of basic necessities, exacerbating the already present issue of inflation and

economic inequalities to which the COVID-19 pandemic exposed and further contributed. In many contexts, including in Indonesia with PEKKA, the increased dependencies on local resources rather than imports saved community livelihoods and has provided a window to re-introduce local solutions and reimagine the future of our economies.

In South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Malawi, the energy and water crises persist, bringing a sharper focus for PU!'s programming on how to support affected communities. As daily energy needs go unmet, womxn are tasked with increased levels of care work due to gendered norms, while decreasing household food baskets (often managed by womxn) adds to the burdens carried. This is part of a wider fabric of gendered, structural, economic violence experienced by womxn within multiple and a global context of increased income and wealth inequalities and decreased social spending. Meanwhile, the past two decades had already seen the growth of wealth inequality as a small percentage of extremely rich people became even richer, further capturing the world's resources. The pandemic has seen this trend grow significantly, which only continued in 2022.

Capture of the commons continues to be a frontline struggle for many womxn, communities, and activists. In India, contradictory amendments and policies around forest conservation are diluting existing forest rights acts while further disenfranchising womxn from being able to understand the larger macro pressures at play within the struggle. The land deals between the national government and industrialists not only encroaches on forest dweller lands but also puts womxn at greater risk of violence and oppression. Across Honduras, Guatemala, Indonesia, and the Philippines, state violence related to extractivism against land defenders sees womxn consistently at greater risk. In response, PU! has been working with communities on safety strategies, alliance building, and womxn's leadership and organising at various levels, while simultaneously raising concerns collectively as a consortium with donors on the impact of their trade policies.





Climate induced disasters (e.g., cyclones and floods in Malawi, South Africa, Mozambique, and Guatemala and an earthquake in Indonesia) have increased the vulnerability of womxn, especially those living in rural regions. This has shifted focus away from longer-term development issues in the wake of destroyed homes and livelihoods. Communities in Indonesia have also become increasingly vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events with crop failure across communities resulting in food scarcity and poverty. In Malawi this year, emergencies increased and compounded with the cholera outbreak, cyclones, inflation, and power cuts – requiring PU! to alter plans and pivot to respond to emergency needs and adopt survival strategies which has meant diverting from strategic plans. This is occurring as high levels of inflation and the cost of living has become an even greater struggle, with those battling or recovering from climate change induced disasters have been particularly impacted. This has also led to an increased recognition for the need to incorporate climate justice into PU! work more concretely.

The multiple lasting impacts of COVID, rising costs of energy and food, and livelihood insecurity brought by natural disasters have made PU!’s work on FEAs more relevant than ever. Below are snapshots of what we achieved last year to turn these crises/challenges into opportunities for womxn.



## Power Up! Results: Resources

### I. Capacity Building with Women (WRG049y/4.1.1a & WRG049ny/4.1.1b) and WROs (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1)

A key strategy for PU! is supporting savings and lending cooperative management and collectives. A significant portion of our consortium’s work on capacity building on Resources is led by PEKKA in Indonesia with womxn’s cooperatives, as this work is core to their mandate. At the national level 200 womxn participated in the BISA KITA SIMPIN (Saving and Loans Community-Based Business) class, which teaches financial management and cooperative financial reports (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). The graduates of PEKKA courses form alumni groups and engage in post-graduation community activities to put their knowledge into practice (e.g., launching a waste bank, river cleanup activities, anti-violence campaigns, and more). PEKKA trained education coordinators and mentors through a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach<sup>6</sup> in two Paradigta Academy classes: Changemaker and Entrepreneurship. The womxn trainers travelled to their districts and conducted the Changemaker and Entrepreneurship classes. In total, 477 local womxn successfully graduated from the Changemaker class and 137 womxn are still taking the Entrepreneurship class and are anticipated to graduate in 2023 (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). Also, womxn in India are forming self-help groups (SHGs) following capacity building through the support of AAAS, G@W’s partner (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). The SHGs are learning to gauge market demand for their goods, make decisions on pricing, and negotiate better. This knowledge and improved confidence has led them to organise outside of the Prime Minister’s [Vandhan Scheme](#) so they can make their own pricing decisions without the influence of men.

<sup>6</sup> Changemaker Class: 15 education coordinators and 45 mentors from 15 districts were trained through the ToT. Entrepreneurship Class: 15 education coordinators and 15 mentors from 5 districts were trained through the ToT.



In many cases, PU! partners worked to make womxn’s contributions into the economy more visible and better recognised. For instance, in South Africa, JASS supported care workers through an FPE workshop to organise and improve their working conditions and advance their recognition as an integral part of the market economy. The care economy is largely written out of the discipline of economics and of everyday conceptions of economy, so this work is integral to PU!’s FEA approach (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). Also, LRS, G@W’s partner in South Africa, supported volunteer food handlers (VFH) working under the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Using a feminist pedagogy, LRS further strengthened the growing leadership, organising, and advocacy skills of the VFHs (Amakhozikazi womxn leaders) to aid their efforts in shifting both community and trade union views of their roles as *voluntary to that of essential workers* (the “hands and heart” of NSNP) (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). LRS convened a dialogue with [trade union representatives](#) and the Amakhozikazi womxn. The dialogue was designed as a platform where Amakhozikazi womxn could represent the importance and value of their work in schools and their communities *in their own voice* and present their key ‘asks’: access to a fair living wage, compensation for occupational hazards, and labour rights protection. By the end of the dialogue, the South Africa Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) committed to recognising the status of VFH as workers (not volunteers), thereby enabling VFHs to gain access to fair labour practices and build cross-sector alliances toward a collective voice for negotiating better work conditions, labour rights, and protection. As part of their advocacy strategy, the Amakhozikazi womxn also shared the Jabula song and video, “[A Day in the Life of VFH](#)”.

Learning spaces were also vital for building capacity on Resources. One such space was created by G@W in Mozambique to bring together a range of development actors with the support of the Dutch Embassy including but not limited to the British High Commission, GIZ, Oxfam, Fórum Mulher (national feminist network), and others to explore current approaches for addressing economic inequality and strengthen womxn’s economic resilience and stability (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). Participants discussed FEAs and interrogated dominant notions of womxn’s economic empowerment to shift the conversation toward alternative frames.

Through intergenerational dialogue in Tunisia and India, G@W’s partners enabled the exchange of traditional knowledge and skills. (WRG049ny/4.1.1b). The intergenerational space and dialogues convened by Kadirat in Tunisia, led to three key results: it has mitigated the social isolation of the older womxn and provided them with a source of income to raise their standard of living, enabled young womxn to gain new income generating skills to sustain them during periods of unemployment, and it has safeguarded and preserved local/traditional food knowledge for the younger generation (see more in the Story of Change above).

Due to the devastation left by the recurring tragedies resulting from multiple cyclones, a large part of the year has been spent in moments of deep solidarity through in-person meetings and sessions aimed at creating safe spaces to discuss the resulting challenges and trauma. In addition to regular FMB processes, JASS conducted 10 solidarity visits following the cyclones and reached 133 new womxn through six FPE workshops with the OBOL<sup>7</sup> initiative in six districts to build capacity for womxn to recover food gardens that were washed away by the floods and strengthen feminist economic alternatives and food sovereignty. FPE was also used in Cambodia through JASS’s sustained political support for trade unions exploring issues such as risk, wellbeing, and power analysis (WRG049ny/4.1.1b).

In addition to individual level capacity building, PU! provided organisational political accompaniment and strategy support to WROs/networks working with unions and those supporting womxn workers’ rights, WHRDs, womxn’s associations, womxn’s cooperatives, and a grassroots economic forum (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1). In Indonesia, for example, the grassroots economic forum *FEMILA* (supported by PEKKA) supports networking of womxn leaders and mobilisation during key policy and political moments by ensuring that every time there is an event about womxn, the network steps in to voice their experiences and policy positions on economic justice (WRGE 5.2.1/4.2.1).

<sup>7</sup>The Our Bodies, Our Lives (OBOL) campaign is an 8,000+ womxn-strong initiative to demand accountability and improve healthcare for HIV+ people.



## II. Alliance Building (WRGE 5.2.1/5.1.1)

The bulk of our new alliances under the Resources strategic agenda in 2022 have occurred in Indonesia. Locally, the goal of most PEKKA alliances is to showcase small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) run by womxn to local and district governments so that they may be prioritised in accessing government funds. While some alliances were launched in 2021, 2022 saw the expansion of more alliances into more districts and the coming together of alliances across districts to network and initiate cooperative activities.

PU! members' and partners' engagement in national fora also played an important role in strengthening new and diverse collaborations this year. G@W in Mozambique participated actively in the Women's Worlds Congress in Maputo, amplifying the voices and themes on economic alternatives for womxn displaced by conflict, entrepreneurship, and womxn-led solidarity tents. The Congress enabled the project to expand its network and influence among academics and activists and to capture debates that would not have been possible otherwise.

In the countries in which we did not cultivate new alliances, we deepened and strengthened relationships with existing alliances. For example, in Malawi, we strengthened our work with OBOL womxn on land management and food security.

## III. Solidarity and Urgent Action (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1) & Strategic Advocacy (SCS041/6.1.1)

Many of our urgent actions this year occurred in response to the devastation brought about by climate disasters. In Malawi, JASS conducted 10 solidarity visits and FMB processes with OBOL members in 6 districts to build capacity for womxn to recover the food gardens that were wiped out by the cyclone. JASS accompanied these solidarity actions with a Cyclone Appeal Letter highlighting the plight of displaced families, and which received a positive response from a German funder who committed US\$20,000 (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). PEKKA also responded to later

effects of a flash flood by initiating a tree planting effort in a village that was previously hit in East Flores District, Indonesia (SCS041/6.1.1).

Womxn have demonstrated increased actions to use their collective power to increase access to resources in many PU! countries, but particularly in Indonesia. Through the support of PEKKA, community womxn leaders established 19 new waste banks. Pekka leaders manage the waste bank, sort what is collected, then sell to other parties for it to be processed into useful products (SCS041/6.1.1). Moreover, Pekka leaders shared their experiences and methodologies for cooperative management with an LGBTQI+ organisation in Bandung. This inspired the organisation to launch their own savings and loan activity modelled off of PEKKA's cooperative principles (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1).

PU! members also took action at the national level through strategic advocacy in two countries. First, G@W supported OPHENTA, a Mozambican feminist association, to convene the Northern Forum on Gender (2nd edition) in Niassa, one of Mozambique's poorest provinces. The Forum – attended by WROs, activists, government officials, and CSOs – featured sessions on economic empowerment alternatives, the impact of climate change on womxn's livelihoods and safety, and womxn's access to land. Key outputs of the meeting included a position document and an advocacy plan to influence the regional development approach that the government of Mozambique is seeking to adopt (WRGE 5.2.1/5.3.1). Also, PEKKA leveraged a cross-movement strategy to connect with Indonesian Women Ulema Congress (KUPI), culminating in the formulation of a fatwa (Islamic ruling) by KUPI that demands the involvement of civil society in ensuring the sustainability of the environment.

<sup>8</sup>Select examples of PEKKA local alliances include: GOW (Women's Organization Association), IWAPI (Indonesian Women Entrepreneurs Association), and district-level PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment Organization) in Pacitan District. / PKBM (Center for Community Learning Activities) for training on sewing and other trades to make products to sell in Asahan District iKOBER (Brebes Joint Community) in Brebes District, which focuses on increasing the capacity of each alliance organization / AMAN (Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago) in Mamasa District LP2M (Institute for Research and Community Service) in Mamasa District / Forestry Service of Bolaang Mongondow District to support the production of products for house assistance through Pekka Production.

<sup>9</sup>The Waste Bank is a collective movement to collect non-organic waste at the household level and then the surrounding community can deliver it to the Waste Bank Officer.



PU! consortium members led global action this year in collaboration with the Count Me In! (CMI!) consortium, which convened 45 people in a hybrid session at the office of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to shine a light on feminist economic alternatives (SCS041/6.1.1). The [FEA Roundtable Discussion and Learning Event](#) built upon the significant consortium-level investment in learning about and strategising for creating FEAs (see 6.3.1 below). Some of the key takeaways included a push for greater policy coherence, centring womxn as the main drivers and carers of the economy, rethinking how we measure and track economic success, amongst other insights. For additional details, see Strategic Partnership below. In another moment of global advocacy, the G20 Presidency was hosted in Indonesia and PEKKA participated in the associated C20 Forum. At the forum, PEKKA explained its role in overcoming the economic downturn, especially for grassroots womxn-headed families post-pandemic, and illustrated how government policies that tend to be less pro-marginalised groups could become more inclusive. Also, in the G20 Conference (2022), PEKKA spoke on the ‘care economy’, underlining care work remains unpaid work despite its importance.

#### IV. Strategy: Economic Alternatives – Creating feminist economic alternatives (WRGE 5.2.1/6.3.1)

As a consortium, we made a significant investment in building our knowledge, approach, and strategies related to FEAs<sup>10</sup> this year. We conducted a global mapping and literature review on FEAs, including mapping the FEA approaches that consortium members and our partners are already advancing, and created learning spaces to discuss ‘solutions’ within the Consortium and partners. This investment is important to us because we see our work on FEAs as a means to bring about deep-rooted structural change at multiple levels, challenging the patriarchy inherent within neoliberal economics and centering care for both people and planet. By developing a consortium-wide strategy that details our objectives, ambitions, strategic priorities, and actions and commitments and an approach paper outlining our joint definitions, principles, and priorities, we have put in place a strong foundation for the implementation of FEAs in 2023 and beyond.<sup>11</sup> Further, PEKKA in Indonesia convened 500+ womxn across the different provinces for a [week-long national forum](#) that celebrated 22 years of PEKKA’s existence, bringing increased solidarity, learning and inspiration among womxn heads of households. During these convenings, womxn from the different communities exchanged experiences with female village leaders, womxn head of cooperatives and livelihoods champions to learn more about the importance of womxn leadership, community organising and on supporting FEAs across Indonesia.

*“Our hope is to relay the knowledge shared in this Forum to the other women in our communities. We encourage all women in Indonesia to create their own women’s groups, as strong as ours so we can help develop our own communities. If we create a strong PEKKA in each village then we can contribute to our prosperous nation.” –PEKKA woman member sharing her closing remarks during the PEKKA national forum*

<sup>10</sup> FEA as a concept is an umbrella term for multiple expressions of resistance, imaginings, and solutions that address the need for just economic transformation from a feminist perspective. FEAs are a broad spectrum of approaches that seek to address patriarchal power relations and structural oppressions through multifaceted approaches for systems change with economic and gender justice at their heart.

<sup>11</sup> JASS SNA and Mesoamerica have each also separately undertaken learning exercises to prepare for their work on FEAs: JASS Mesoamerica created a concept document to map the FEAs in the region and JASS SNA in Zimbabwe developed an FEA strategy document that prioritised key strategies.



While 2022 was primarily a year for learning and planning related to this strategy, some tangible results have been achieved in several countries:

- In **Indonesia**, PEKKA introduced PEKKA Produksi (small, locally resourced enterprises) that sell their products through PEKKA Mart supported by a community-owned capital institution (PEKKA Simpin), so that the results of the business can be enjoyed by the people who own the business. In 2022, four new Pekka Marts were formed<sup>12</sup> and two new Produksi units were established in addition to 19 new secondary cooperatives, one primary cooperative, and one national-level cooperative were formed this year. Another re-imagined alternative model that emerged in 2022 was the Barter Market (see Story of Change below). Finally, PEKKA groups started making and selling their own coconut-based cooking oil in response to the price of (palm) cooking oil skyrocketing and the supply becoming very limited. This also combats the use of extractive palm-based cooking oil.
- In **Malawi**, FEAs centred on food justice were prioritised including conducting a workshop on organic farming (soil management and manure making) to end the dependence on commercial fertilisers and restoring five food gardens<sup>13</sup> that were destroyed by the Ana and Gombe cyclones.
- In **Myanmar**, Burmese internally displaced womxn were supported to produce reusable menstrual hygiene products that were distributed free of charge to womxn in refugee camps and were sold to shops in Thailand or online. The womxn were paid for the products they made, helping them tremendously as they had no income in the camps.
- In **Lebanon**, CRTDA, G@W's partner, supported two womxn-led cooperatives to increase their processing and production of local and traditional foods. Amidst the country's consecutive crises and governance vacuum, rural cooperatives have provided womxn with vital sources of income that have allowed them to sustain their families and communities, through local job creation. Being able to leverage their traditional food knowledge and skills to support their families has also instilled a sense of pride among womxn.

- In **India**, G@W's partner AAAS leveraged a collective wage labour model through cooperatives, marketing of local products (e.g., grass baskets, salt, cinnamon, spices), passing down traditional knowledge (e.g., seed storage), and intergenerational collaboration to define joint agendas and actions to address ecological challenges.

#### STORY OF CHANGE

### Reinvigorating indigenous economic solutions by launching a barter market in East Flores, Indonesia

Women-headed families supported by PEKKA in Adonara Island, East Flores Regency, Indonesia initiated a community barter market – a trading system of exchanging goods – that allowed them to overcome the economic precarity brought about by the pandemic. The market successfully facilitated the exchange of essential items including oils and other household goods. It also promoted the use of local produce by Pekka cooperative members and others within the region. For instance, women living in the mountains bring their home-grown vegetables and meet with women in coastal areas, who are bringing fish, then they exchange their products through an agreement. The market was adopted by the wider community and has been recognised and given support at local and district government levels. The initiative has also been garnering attention at the national level, generating ongoing discussions on whether the concept can be rolled-out to other regions.

<sup>12</sup> In Brebes, Asahan, Bireun, and Ogan Komering Ilir districts

<sup>13</sup> The food gardens restored were located in Balaka, Zomba, Thyolo, Chiradzulu, and Phalombe.



## 2022 Key Lessons Learned

Opportunities for PU! joint consortium-wide learning took place during the first in person gathering in September 2022, as well as collective reflection sessions held by the PU! Executive Committee and within each partner organisation.<sup>14</sup> The insights from these joint reflection sessions highlighted the connectivity of our work across countries, revealing the potential for exciting future collaborations and learning opportunities.

### Lessons for our Programming

This year has brought several key learnings to the fore about how to make our programming more contextually relevant and responsive. The most critical elements that we will address and incorporate include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The solidarity and urgent actions that were rolled out this year as a result of climate disasters helped PU! to make a stronger and clearer link between climate change and the creation of feminist economic alternatives as a means to think of more sustainable ways of living and as safety nets for womxn in the face of global warming and increasing inequalities. However, ongoing risk analysis and environmental scans are needed going forward so we are better prepared for emergencies.
- The process of integrating adolescents into building, mobilising and organising, and transforming power (e.g., CEDAW recommendation process in Mesoamerica, young refugees in Lebanon, female rappers in Palestine) taught us about creating safe spaces free from adultcentrism, and to put youth voices and proposals at the centre of decisions that will affect their lives.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://genderatwork.org/resource/listen-to-what-i-have-to-say-learning-from-power-up-programme-strategies/> and <https://genderatwork.org/resource/create-spaces-not-occupy-them-co-creating-learning-pathways-in-power-up/>

- Reclamation of herstories and indigenous knowledge is a vital component of our programming that cuts across all contexts and themes. We have successfully incorporated them into a range of interventions and plan to expand upon this approach in the coming years.

The focus of our joint consortium work in 2022 has been on our collective analysis of feminist economic alternatives: how economies work or do not work for different womxn, mapping the alternatives that our partners are already advancing, and creating political and programme space to discuss solutions. We have started (and will continue) to create cross-movements spaces, linking womxn to regional and international fora, in order to better understand the impact of womxn's leadership on promoting economic equity and resilience. Furthermore, we will tap into and learn from PEKKA's experience of promoting economic alternatives in Indonesia, including promoting solutions that centre the *needs* of the people using the alternative economic model – such as prioritising exchange rather than profit alone. While this learning journey has only just started, three core ideas have already emerged:

1. **Womxn's bodies are the first sites of resistance.** In Mesoamerica, indigenous womxn claim that no real change will happen until we acknowledge that womxn's bodies are the first territories in dispute. Therefore, any economic alternative requires *womxn's* autonomy and control over their own lives and *bodies*.
2. **Economic justice is intertwined with access to land rights.** JASS Southeast Asia's experience demonstrates that "economic justice is always linked to the struggle for land." Likewise, in Mesoamerica JASS partners see in their resistance to extractive projects an alternative itself to an extractive economic model. Thus, any alternative vision for economic justice needs to centre climate, care, community, and collective wellbeing.



3. **Importance of building womxn’s political presence and voice.** Reimagining economic models requires critical reflections on the deep patriarchal structures womxn confront on a daily basis and the social norms change required at multiple levels. This means our capacity building strategy is a key part of the process.

## Lessons for our Consortium

*“There is an assumption that womxn’s rights organisations are ready and able to come together in seamless harmony to work together. The reality is that the consortium model is challenging and even messy at times” – reflection during PU! in person meeting, September 2022*

Building an operationally and politically strong consortium<sup>15</sup> is not an easy journey in our challenging contexts. We witnessed how precarious and fragile partnerships are when working to fit into a consortium model that has constant pressure to deliver and multiple upward and downward accountabilities. Specifically, with the departure of one consortium member and the resubmission of the proposal to the MFA, we exemplified feminist solidarity and support by ensuring we closed out the partnership with integrity and transparency.

We recognise the precarity of feminist organising, especially for LGBTQTI+ organisations, and the need to build and model partnerships based on trust, strong leadership, and feminist principles of care, especially when dealing with traumatic organisational experiences, and the emotional burdens that impact mental health when organisations and networks fall apart. There is still much work to be done to understand how to make our process of working as a feminist consortium.<sup>16</sup> The last two years taught us that the ability of WROs and LGBTQI+ collectives to drive forward their change agendas also depends on their readiness for collective action.

<sup>15</sup> PU! learning question 5: What are we learning about what it takes to work together and build collective power in the consortium model?

<sup>16</sup> The Partnering Initiative and Bond (2021). [Effective consortia working: Literature review and priorities for future research.](#)

<sup>17</sup> In 2022, JASS, PEKKA and G@W held reflection sessions to take stock of our learnings based on the PU! learning agenda. G@W, in particular, initiated a learning process to harness lessons about the strategies being implemented by in-country partners.

Likewise, this means that consortium partners may not be immediately ready to act and may require additional capacity building, leadership and organisational strengthening and other support when working in a consortium.

Little knowledge and specific tools for building and working in a consortium model exist, so we believe that there are valuable lessons<sup>17</sup> to be learned from the principles that guide PU! collective work and politics:

1. **We are linked by curiosity and generosity.** We learnt that constantly seeking synergies and building on each other’s capacities shape our understanding and appreciation of each consortium member’s unique added value and strength that they bring into the partnership. In times of internal crisis, we hold on to our shared feminist values of care, mutual respect, and integrity (as adopted during the close out of CAL partnership).
2. **We embrace tension.** Tension is inherent and important for the work we do as feminists and as partners. We do not seek to immediately resolve tension but rather seek to understand how to navigate across the ebbs and flows of tensions particularly those related to inherent power dynamics.
3. **We mitigate power dynamics.** We experience power dynamics between the different types of partners within PU!. To mitigate these dynamics, we practise shared leadership, take collective responsibility for our consortium positioning, and leverage our complementary strengths and experiences.
4. **We acknowledge privilege.** We recognise that those involved in programme implementation have access to privilege that differentiates them from those whose lives they seek to change. We are committed to locating ourselves in our privilege when making choices about who is in a room, making sure the most important voices are heard for each issue at hand.
5. **We carve our own safe spaces.** Now that we can reclaim physical meeting grounds, we are moving towards carving out more spaces to hold innovative, radical discussions that go beyond reactive responses to the demands we deal with as organisations.



6. **We prioritise intentional learning.** Our learning processes embody key feminist principles and commit to intentional and slow learning in benefit of WROs and their agendas, including through more peer exchange between consortium members and partners, activists, and WROs.
7. **We place care at the centre.** We prioritise individual and collective wellbeing and see it as part of the political work. This requires us to create understanding and trust between all of us.
8. **We step back and reflect.** We seek to frame, break frame, and reframe our ideas and notions on a continuous basis. We are moving towards greater stability through processes that allow us to step back and think about the political agenda that we want to push together.

*“We can create alliances and get to certain spaces that grassroots activists cannot get to. The question is how we do that, in whose name, whose voice and whose needs do we take to those spaces? Or do we end up claiming those spaces for ourselves because we want to retain our access, privilege and power?” – Katia Taela, G@W Associate, Mozambique*

## Review of Strategic Partnership and Local Ownership

### Engaging with the Dutch MFA and Embassies

Despite the time and energy intensive and complex process, and with the support from the Dutch MFA, we were able to close out our partnership with one consortium member with integrity, respect, and mutual understanding. Our engagement with the Task Force Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (TFWRGE) in the partnership close out facilitated discussions around what it takes to support feminist consortia in a context where organisational issues are symptomatic of the larger, fragile political and funding environment for LGBTQI+ groups. Our feminist values and practice helped us demonstrate our resilience and commitment to pursue the PU! agendas, especially in regard to our support to the LGBTQI+ communities.

Our annual strategic dialogue with the Dutch MFA provided an opportunity to evolve a deeper understanding of each consortium member’s work and added value, update each other on our engagement with the Dutch embassies, and agree on a way forward to improve our future engagement. Last year was an opportune time to engage the TFWRGE/Dutch MFA on a dialogue around the importance of feminist economic alternatives given the long term socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on the diversity of womxn with whom we worked. The roundtable dialogue called for donors including the Dutch MFA to address both opportunities and challenges facing WROs and feminist funders in supporting FEAs. It also highlighted the importance of bringing local partners and organisations (not just academics and policy-makers) into the conversation on FEAs as their perspectives and solutions are important in framing the complementarity between the macro and micro economic models. Ensuring a space for local organisations is crucial in creating a feminist economic vision that aims at shifting systems and structures.





At a consortium-level, we participated in Dutch embassy strategic partnership meetings in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Mozambique, Lebanon, Costa Rica, and Indonesia. We also engaged in the Strengthening Civil Society baseline research for Lebanon and Palestine, as well as globally (as a potential case study on international advocacy). At the request of the TFWRGE, we also provided strategic inputs to a number of international policies, including the Dutch government's new Foreign Trade and Development Policy, its upcoming Feminist Foreign Policy, the Dutch MFA's Africa regional strategy and the multiannual country strategy for Kenya and Mozambique. In addition, as part of the OECD DAC peer review of the Netherlands, we provided our assessment of the Dutch government's development policy. PU!, including our partners, also actively participated in different online dialogues and learning sessions organised by the Civil Society Division of the Dutch MFA.

## Engaging with Local Partners

Power Up! consortium members engage with local partners and collectives in various ways: ongoing context analysis, joint planning, strategic initiatives (i.e. FEA), FPE activities, collective reflection and learning sessions, as well as engagement with Dutch embassies. Because of our embeddedness in local communities and social movements, we as well as our partners are able to identify and nimbly respond to contextual shifts/change and therefore to remain accountable to womxn's emerging priorities and needs. We are also mindful of and acknowledge both visible and invisible power dynamics at play between consortium members and local partners. As part of our feminist approach to partnerships, we are invested in transforming these power hierarchies by building relationships of trust, mutual collaboration, solidarity and allyship; ensuring that PU! supports our partners to lead the change and define what success looks like in their context; as well as bringing our partners into collective and strategic spaces to influence priorities and agendas.

Engaging in Dutch embassy convenings in many of our country contexts has proven to be another avenue for building the power not only of PU! consortium members but also for our partners and the constituents with whom they work, particularly those that have not had prior access to donor spaces. We recognise the importance of brokering this role and in engaging embassies in dialogue around the importance of making discretionary funds more available and directly accessible to local organisations.



## Moving Forward

The year was a test of our ability to continually innovate to respond to challenging and changing contexts (both internally and externally) while still maintaining the integrity of our movement building work for our target constituencies. We are proud of the way in which we were able to successfully transition to a consortium of three partners while adhering to feminist principles and maintaining the integrity of our commitment to LGBTQI+ groups. We are also excited about the opportunity that 2022 gave us to generate a brand identity as Power Up! by developing a logo and other shared materials. These two pivotal moments for the consortium demonstrated our persistence and ability to not only sustain, but also to build our joint work together as a consortium.

Our continued and renewed commitment to supporting LGBTQI+ organising and wider LGBTQI+ alliance building and solidarity is a priority in 2023, particularly for JASS and G@W. JASS recently convened a cross-country (Malawi, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa) movement dialogue as part of PU's due diligence process with LGBTQI+ partners to build/deepen relationships. G@W –through consultations with leading Africa-based human rights and LBQTI+ advocates and activists and regional grant-making institutions supporting LBQTIQ+ organisations – is developing a strategic framework of engagement on LBQTIQ+ rights protection issues in Africa to inform its programming and advocacy and to guide its partner identification and selection process in Benin, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Tunisia. G@W will couple this strategy with a series of “listening conversations” with prospective partners to better understand their priorities and needs. JASS used the power framework methodologies to feed PU! context analysis, which will further inform our overall strategies. This served as an opportunity for us to share our political offer and approach and promote synergies and solidarity with LBQTIQ+ organisations. We took this approach, rather than a traditional due diligence process, to select partners to ensure that we have the commitment to building and organising power in a sustained way over time. Through this JASS regional convening, and a series of

dialogues with LGBTQI+ groups, PU! will formalise our partnership agreements with 16 organisations (including nine new organisations) in Africa and MENA.

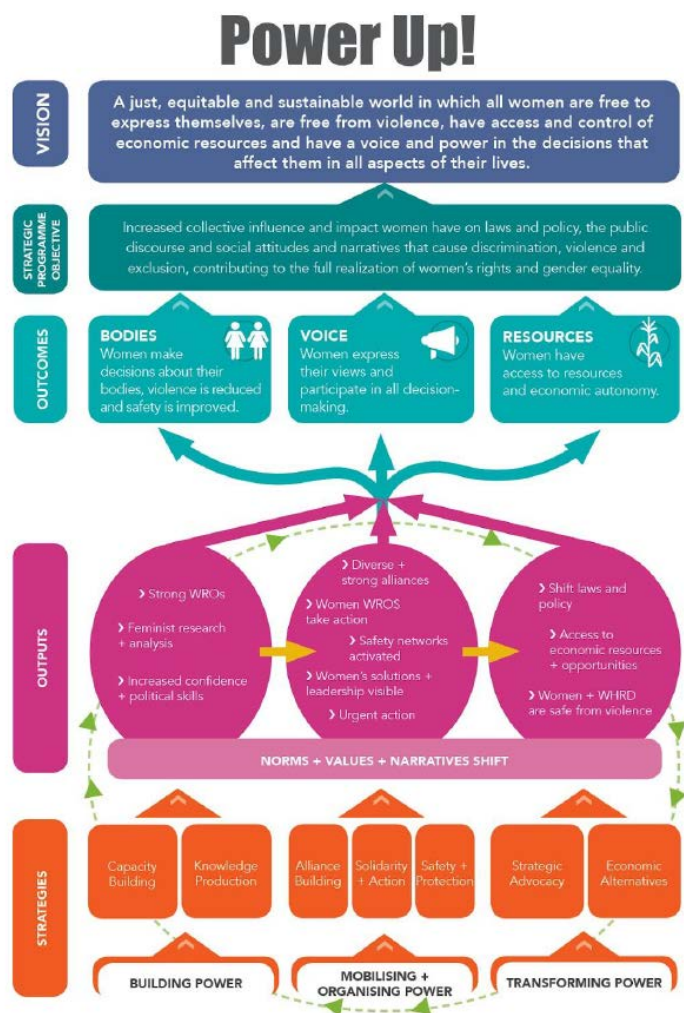
We will be continuing to implement our Dutch MFA and embassy engagement strategy keeping in mind our thematic priorities on FEAs and safety and protection of WRHDs. We will engage both the TFWRGE and Dutch embassies in Kenya and Uganda (and the regional impacts this may unfold) in monitoring the status of the anti-homosexuality bill and in addressing (emerging/shifting) safety and protection needs of LGBTQI+ womxn and their groups in collaboration with our strategic allies.

Later this year, as informed by the findings of our mid-term review (MTR) and through the support of a new Senior Advocacy Coordinator, PU! will co-create a broader strategic engagement and advocacy strategy, including an LGBTQI+ specific strategy that both support partners to move their agendas forward and maximise the potential of PU! as a global consortium. The MTR process and our planned cross learning activities on FEAs in 2023 will offer opportunities to expand and deepen our learning on the PU! strategic agendas.



# Annexes

## Annex 1: Theory of Change



## Annex 2: Power Up! Updated Risk Assessment and Mitigation Measures

Category	Risk	Mitigation Measures
Programmatic risk	<p>Anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda and criminal code reform in Indonesia, if enacted/adopted, will shrink space for LGBTQI+ groups to organise, pushing them to go underground.</p> <p>High risks of physical violence and psychosocial impacts on LGBTQI+ persons as clampdowns and arbitrary arrests will be heightened.</p>	<p>Shift work out of urban areas to lower surveillance</p> <p>Provision of emergency grants to LGBTQI+ groups; coordinated efforts with strategic allies to respond to specific safety and protection needs of LGBTQI+ persons.</p> <p>Request timely support of the Dutch embassy, if needed.</p>
Programmatic and organisational risks	<p>Multiple compounding risks related to backlash and negative impacts on LGBTQI+ organising due to increasing anti-rights movement in Kenya, Uganda (and East Africa region) and impact of climate-related risks (cyclone in Malawi &amp; Mozambique; floods in Indonesia). These compounding risks stretched organisational capacities of consortium members. It also impacts on womxn's organising as focus shifts to meeting survival needs of womxn.</p>	<p>During annual planning, integrate activities that improve readiness of local partners to use organising capacity to mitigate/respond to the impacts of including integrating safety strategies and sharing concrete examples of feminist economic alternatives while continuing the implementation of activities in other ways.</p>
	<p>Increase reach and influence of anti-rights movements and local to national responses of other NGOs (in Uganda, Kenya) on these increase risks for programme staff even if PU! is not visible in these responses.</p>	<p>Monitor the political developments in Kenya and Uganda and continue to engage with different groups in the countries and those working the region in terms of tactical alliances for safety and urgent action responses.</p> <p>Use presence of strategic allies in the countries to ensure efficient coordination of response to ensure safety and security of programme staff when risks escalate. Request timely support of the Dutch embassy, if needed.</p> <p>PU! will follow up requests for the assistance of the Dutch MFA and embassies (in Kenya and Uganda) to convene dialogues that promote alternative narratives to the on-going dominant anti-rights narratives and movements that ripple across Africa.</p> <p>Global context monitoring and promoting cross regional solidarity; PU! members will use our partnerships and movement allies to share political and risk analyses, as well as adopt tools on collective safety measures while we continue to engage in solidarity initiatives with LGBTQI+ groups/collectives.</p>



Category	Risk	Mitigation Measures
<b>Programmatic and organisational risks</b>	Increased (forecasted) influx of refugees (including LBQTI+ womxn) from Uganda coming to Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya will push PU! members to do more strategic engagement and visible responses, thereby increasing risks for LBQTI+ persons, programme staff and local partners who are in the frontline.	Identify and monitor specific risks faced by programme staff and local partners; design and implement mitigation measures using presence of strategic allies in Kenya.  PU! will follow up request for support from the Dutch embassy in Kenya: - to coordinate with the EU in ensuring that prejudices/discriminatory practices and anti-homophobic actions at the borders (during the reception of migrants) will be mitigated to enable LBQTI+ persons to travel safely; and; - to respond to the specific protection needs of LBQTI+ persons and dialogue with other missions to support opening up of borders as we foresee an increased influx of refugees coming to Kenya.
<b>Programmatic risk and organizational risks</b>	Power cuts / energy crisis (in Southern Africa, Lebanon) increased burden for womxn (care work), limiting their ability to participate in the PU! activities.	PU! is framing this energy crisis as structural violence against womxn. Work related to the Women Manifesto in Zimbabwe will continue; cross-country and cross regional organising with partners to amplify voices and raise demand to address specific impacts of the energy crisis on womxn.  Provide power supply back-up devices and surge protectors for PU! Partner staff.
<b>Programmatic risks</b>	Increase in anti-rights narratives in the Mesoamerica region is devastating feminist organising: increasing exclusionary practices and threats of violence between trans and feminist movements.	Creation of safe spaces and facilitate conversations between trans and wider feminist movements.
	Privatisation of forest lands (India) and increased state violence (sexual violence) against land defenders (India, Honduras, Guatemala, Indonesia)	Continue organising work to fight against land deals (take the case to courts – India); raise concerns towards the government regarding violence; work with local communities on safety strategies; psychosocial support to womxn survivors of violence through creating space for healing and conversations.

## Annex 3: Stories of Change

### BODIES Story of Change: Keeping the Fight Alive in Myanmar

Myo Myo Aye is a tireless labour rights activist who founded Solidarity Trade Union of Myanmar (STUM) in 2016. STUM is a vibrant union dedicated to protecting the rights of women workers in the garment industry, including the right to associate and express themselves freely. In the wake of the Military coup in February 2021, Myo Myo was arrested for exercising the democratic right to express her views and to participate in peaceful assemblies. Following her release, Myo Myo continued to organise under the increasingly repressive context through STUM. Through the support of JASS, STUM implemented a series of strategic approaches to build collective leadership, train young women, strengthen advocacy skills, and amplify the collective's demands by reaching new audiences. Their efforts resulted in the unexpected outcome of UN Special Rapporteurs issuing two statements on the situation of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Myanmar, which explicitly amplified the vital role played by women.

#### Significance

Myo Myo spent six months in jail following her arrest where she witnessed the suffering of womxn, including torture and sexual violence. The violence perpetrated on womxn's bodies on the frontline of resistance escalated as they became targets to murder, torture, rape, police brutality, and arbitrary detention. Once released from jail, Myo Myo realised she needed new strategies to deal with the changed context, which led to the development of a new approach to leadership. Through this transformative process, Myo Myo has gained renewed energy to champion womxn's labour rights.

STUM transitioned towards a collective young leadership approach to organising that offers greater safety, resilience, and sustainability in the face of new volatilities and dangers. The change has transformed the labour movement by training young womxn, regenerating leadership and ensuring the continuation of the movement. Now, young womxn workers from the provincial levels are the next-in-line leaders of STUM. This is critical as womxn's leadership and decision-making in labour unions and federations in Myanmar remains largely dominated by men despite womxn comprising the majority of the workers in the garment sector.

One of the key strategies exercised by STUM to mobilise urgent action has been to put pressure on regional and international human rights agencies. This strategy has already yielded unexpected results: Myo Myo and STUM's work was recognised by the UN Special Rapporteurs on HRDs, which has been a major step in highlighting and amplifying the vital role played by womxn workers and womxn HRDs specifically in the larger pro-democracy movement in Myanmar. This is significant because of the rarity of global policy level engagement given the isolation that the country is experiencing as a result of the military takeover.

#### Contribution of PU!

JASS has accompanied STUM and Myo Myo since 2016. Over the years, she has become a champion for workers' rights in Myanmar. In 2022 through PU!, JASS has been able to continue to support her to adapt STUM's ways of organising to challenge the military coup, the structural inequities they face, and to train young womxn. The continued engagement demonstrates the long-term nature of successful movement building.

STUM created 18 videos in Burmese with English subtitles that provided a deeper understanding of the political context, the role of womxn workers and WHRDs, and exposed and exerted pressure on companies that are committing workers' rights violations. The promotion of the videos helped garner solidarity and support, generating views from more than 10,000 people.



### **VOICES Story of Change: Building Pride and Purpose in Passing on Skills to the Next Generation**

Monjia is a 66-year-old woman from Mégrine Chaker, a rural area in Tunisia, who participated in an intergenerational initiative implemented by Kadirat, a national NGO and G@W partner. The initiative sought to enhance the social and economic resilience of impoverished older womxn by sharing their skills in traditional Tunisian handicrafts with younger, unemployed womxn. Monjia's connection with the younger generations' energy and ideas has renewed her sense of purpose and pride in her talents, and instilled in her the ambition to adapt her own skills. Young womxn were also positively impacted by the intergenerational collaboration. Not only did they deeply value the skills they learned from womxn like Monjia; but also began to see themselves as keepers and transmitters of cultural and traditional knowledge and skills for future generations.

#### **Significance**

Although Tunisia has a comparatively strong legal framework in place for gender equality, many policies lack effective implementation. Social norms and practices also act as barriers to gender equality, as womxn seldom file complaints and they may face obstruction at police stations while trying to do so. Lawyers and judges often lack the necessary knowledge of legal protection mechanisms to effectively protect and support gender equality policies. The lived realities of womxn and other vulnerable communities are not valued; thus, older womxn like Monjia often experience high levels of isolation, invisibility, and an absence of voice when it comes to their needs and aspirations for a more hopeful future.

While the handicraft training initiative increased Monjia's income, she felt that the more significant change she experienced was an internal transformation. When asked what had changed in her, she responded: *"I now have a dream."* She has gained confidence, more hope, and has found an empowered voice. This is a significant change as the formal and informal structures that tamp down womxn's empowerment have held her back in her life. She felt useful for the first time in a long time. She values knowing that she can train others with her skills and feels proud to be a facilitator of the preservation of her traditional heritage.

Monjia's story of empowerment was also echoed among many of the participants of handicraft training initiatives in Lebanon and Tunisia, where other womxn like Monjia feel that they gained a voice. One woman said, *"It's the first time I feel heard."*

#### **Contribution of PU!**

The changes that Monjia experienced have been a direct result of the PU! supported intergenerational handicraft initiative. This collaboration provided the space for the intergenerational dialogue and exchange that led to Monjia's transformation. Vulnerable womxn of various age groups felt that the project gave them a safe space to voice their needs through the feminist approach used by the initiative. These voices would have gone unheard had it not been for Kadirat enabling and providing a feminist, reflective space.

### **RESOURCES Story of Change: Reinigorating indigenous economic solutions by launching a barter market in East Flores, Indonesia**

Womxn-headed families in Adonara Island, East Flores Regency, Indonesia initiated a community barter market – a trading system of exchanging goods – that allowed them to overcome the economic precarity brought about by the pandemic. The market successfully facilitated the exchange of essential items including oils and other household goods. It also promoted the use of local produce by Pekka cooperative members and others within the region. For instance, womxn living in the mountains bring their home-grown vegetables and meet with womxn in coastal areas, who are bringing fish, then they exchange their products through an agreement. The market was adopted by the wider community and has been recognized and given support at local and district government levels. The initiative has also been garnering attention at the national level, generating ongoing discussions on whether the concept can be rolled-out to other regions.

#### **Significance**

To address a shortage of cash flow and essential items, womxn and womxn-headed families successfully rolled out a feminist economic alternative model at the local level, where they were able to access essential items through barter and exchange. They were also able to sell their local products through the market when cash was available as the economic precarity subsided. When households faced an oil crisis in 2022, locally produced coconut oils became lifelines for many families and the barter market acted as the main access point to local oils for the community. Also, the womxn sold woven products they made, which also contributed to an increase in material production by local youth. Even prior to the pandemic, many womxn – whose incomes are often generated from within the informal economy – struggled to access certain goods. The barter market offers an alternative economic model for increasing womxn's access to resources.

Barter already had a long cultural tradition in the region, but had fallen out of use with the introduction of modern markets. This revival of an indigenously rooted solution to address precarity cultivates a stronger economic model where local womxn producers are flourishing through an approach that has meaning and greater sustainability.

The initiative has also resulted in active district government support for womxn's woven products and local food procurement. In the process of establishing and facilitating the market, new and diverse alliances were built at village, district, and national government levels. The cooperative leadership took a transformative role by creating spaces to provide and access goods and promoting womxn's leadership, leading to womxn's increased decision making in the civic and public spheres.

#### **Contribution of PU!**

Through the support of Power Up!, the PEKKA Foundation facilitated the East Flores Pekka cooperative to hold meetings and strategic advocacy actions from the village to the national level to discuss various issues, including the economic challenges faced by womxn-headed families. A video explaining bartering was made for the community to discuss at the community level. PEKKA's facilitation of training and events allowed cooperative leaders to advocate successfully at the district government level, supporting the womxn in their mobilisation. This also included transforming power by influencing traditional and religious leaders as well as the government, leading to the establishment of a policy where the barter market is now routinely on the village agenda. While PEKKA's work in East Flores on economic resources with the womxn's cooperatives has been long established, PU! resources helped to accelerate the realisation of an initiative like the barter market far sooner.



Power Up! Consortium  
2022 Annual Report

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