

Women's Funds in action: Examples from practice

Women's Funds supported by the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA) fund women's environmental activism, and they engage in lobbying and advocacy to ensure that local women's environmental solutions are embraced and implemented.

Since 2016, Women's Funds supported by GAGGA have been 1) building and adapting their funding portfolios and approaches, 2) conducting research and creating learning platforms, and 3) developing new partnerships – all to address the climate crisis. The following four examples highlight how Women's Funds are providing tailored support and targeted lobbying and advocacy to ensure that local women's expertise and solutions inform local and national responses to the climate crisis.

Bolivia: The Apthapi Jopueti Fund in Bolivia supported and accompanied an initiative by the Cohana Women's Youth Centre to mitigate the negative health impacts of the environmental pollution of Lake Titicaca. The project emphasised the ability of organised women's groups (students, teachers and mothers) in Bahia Cohana to take care of water, protect a clean environment, promote food security, and jointly influence public policies of rural municipalities. Working in four communities, the project trained 777 people and over 5,000 people listened to their radio programmes. As a result, ten municipal authorities included programming and campaigns for water care and reforestation in their agendas for 2018.

Mongolia: For over a year, the Mongolian Women's Fund (MONES) cultivated relationships and engaged in advocacy with the Ministry of Environment in Mongolia. In 2019, the Ministry requested that MONES and one of its local partners support them in revising their gender policy, which had been done five years prior by a group of consultants. The revised policy contains a fundamental shift – away from simply creating an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming, and now speaking directly to equal rights and opportunities for women.



Students of Cohana were trained on pollution and mitigation strategies, environmental justice, and adaptation to climate change. Photo by La Voz del Titicaca.



MONES offers a training to the Mongolian Ministry of Environment. Photo courtesy of MONES.



Nepal: Located in a migrant settlement area northwest of Kathmandu, the women's saving's group Srijansil Mahila Samaj prioritised waste management and restoration activities for the highly-polluted Mahadev Khola River. With financial support and advocacy training from Tewa, the Nepalese Women's Fund, the group applied for and received a 1 million NPR (~US\$9,000) grant from the municipality to build a retention wall to reinforce the river bank, as people and houses were at increasing risk during floods. In addition, the women's group mobilises community members to collect waste from the river and surrounding areas on weekends, while continuing to lobby the municipality for regular waste collection.

Mexico: The global Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indigenas (FIMI) formed a coalition with Indigenous and rural women and other women's organisations concerned about the vulnerability that Indigenous and rural women with disabilities face due to the lack of legislation, public policies, and specific programmes to ensure their access to land and territories. In collaboration with the Autonomous University Chapingo and with the support of the International Women's Forum and the International Coalition for the Land, the coalition authored an alternative report for Mexico delivered for consideration by the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Women's Funds across all three of GAGGA's regions - Africa, Asia and Latin America - recognised that engaging effectively in the nexus of women's rights and environmental justice required a range of investments, and these are investments they are committed to continuing. With the support of GAGGA, Women's Funds have adjusted and sharpened their strategies, funding modalities, staffing, and skill base, as well as mobilised new resources to address the climate crisis.



Members of Srijansil Mahila Samuha participate in a community cleanliness campaign. Photo courtesy of TEWA.