



FEMINISM: ACTIONS AND MOBILISATION
FOR AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

Executive Summary

Diagnosis of the capacity-building needs of feminist civil society organisations



En partenariat
avec



1. Context and approach

The **Feminism: Action and Mobilisation for an Inclusive Economy (FAME)** project is a feminist intermediary fund project led by an international consortium comprising Geres, the lead partner, and CARE, CONLACTRAHO (Latin American and Caribbean Confederation of Domestic Workers), Empow'Her Global, SAWDF (South Asian Women's Development Forum), and WACSI (West African Civil Society Institute). Supported by AFD and MEAE as part of the Feminist Organisations Support Fund, the project's main objective is to **strengthen the empowerment and agency of women, LGBTQIA+ people and feminist CSOs** through both financial and technical support to CSOs working for the economic empowerment of women and LGBTQIA+ people. Over four years and in 10 countries, it aims to support feminist CSOs so that they can be actors in an ecological and inclusive economic transition. FAME primarily targets organisations led by women, with the aim of contributing to gender equality, which are small in size or in need of structuring.

A needs assessment of CSOs was carried out in 2024-2025 and is available on the FAME platform, identifying priorities for organisational and technical strengthening to better support the economic empowerment of stakeholders in Guinea, Togo, Benin, Morocco, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.¹

The approach was mixed and participatory, combining:

- A quantitative survey (218 CSO respondents, typical targets of the FAME project).
- Interviews and focus groups in nine countries: Togo, Morocco, Benin, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bolivia, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic.
- Collective workshops to present and co-develop recommendations.

2. Key findings

The feminist CSOs interviewed for the assessment show great diversity but share several common features. Most are **small organisations deeply rooted in their local areas**, often recently established, especially in Africa, and **operating with limited resources**. Their strength lies in **strong community mobilisation**, supported by **extensive volunteer work**. Nearly half have no paid staff at all and rely on committed activists working part-time. This commitment fosters solidarity and closeness, but also makes it difficult to ensure continuity of work. The teams are predominantly made up of women and report **organisational fatigue** and a lack of training for staff.

The types of projects carried out reflect this close connection with the field. Many CSOs develop clubs, discussion groups and activities to address gender-based violence, leadership, and sexual and reproductive health. The strong concentration on these themes (GBV and SRHR) also shows how inseparable they are from women's and LGBTQIA+ people's economic autonomy. At the same time, the CSOs organise vocational training in sewing, cooking, crafts, food processing or recycling, and provide psychosocial and legal support. Others promote feminist entrepreneurship, awareness-raising campaigns on gender norms, or creative advocacy initiatives. The inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people remains only partial, often constrained by legal and social contexts.

The CSOs highlight **significant internal structural difficulties**. Most struggle to access stable funding that would allow them to cover recurring costs such as salaries, rent and management tools. While the projects they propose

¹ The findings presented relate only to the feminist civil society organisations (CSOs) surveyed by members of the FAME consortium as part of the project and therefore do not necessarily reflect all civil society organisations in these countries.

generally remain consistent with the organisations' values and priorities, **funding arrangements often lack flexibility**, limiting their ability to adapt activities to the specific needs of their contexts. This way of operating weakens long-term planning. The organisations also report a **lack of technical skills** for preparing strong proposals, identifying partners or formalising their practices. At the same time, governance often remains weakly structured. Internal decision-making mechanisms are sometimes unclear or insufficiently horizontal. Several teams express the need to strengthen transparency, update their governance manuals and promote more participatory forms of leadership.

External obstacles exacerbate these challenges. **Many CSOs operate in politically unstable environments**, where state surveillance, administrative restrictions or political pressures hinder their work. Some report **instances of harassment or threats** because of their engagement. A lack of support from public institutions, discriminatory laws, particularly regarding land rights or rural women's access to resources, restrictive social and religious norms and persistent gender stereotypes further complicate their mission. **Intersectional discrimination** is especially pronounced against LGBTQIA+ people and women from Indigenous or Afro-descendant communities. Added to this are **economic and material barriers**, including limited access to credit, inadequate infrastructure, intra-community tensions and a lack of collaborative networks between CSOs, which are often isolated or competing for the same funding.

In terms of organisational skills, the assessment reveals solid but uneven foundations. According to the CSOs' self-assessment, **community mobilisation, communication and project management are well developed**, but **financial management, fundraising and monitoring and evaluation still need strengthening**. Few organisations have precise tools to measure the impact of their projects, and evaluation is rarely systematic. This limitation undermines their ability to demonstrate results and to access larger sources of funding.

The **digital divide** represents another major challenge. While most CSOs use computers, smartphones or social media, **access to equipment remains uneven and their mastery of digital tools is limited**. Many lack training in website management, newsletter creation or the use of professional messaging applications. There is a strong expressed need for support in digitalisation, cybersecurity and the strategic use of digital tools.

The **ecological dimension** is now present in the vast majority of these CSOs, but **its integration remains often sporadic and poorly supported**. The CSOs report a growing interest in feminist ecology and a just transition, but highlight a **lack of access to green funding, networks supporting the sustainable economy and partnerships with actors in ecological development**.

The CSOs carry out strong **local advocacy actions**, including public campaigns, institutional advocacy and media initiatives, but they lack formalised strategies, communication plans and tools to evaluate the impact of their interventions. **Alliances between organisations remain fragile**, and many express a **desire to strengthen regional feminist coalitions**, develop their skills in strategic communication, storytelling and crisis management, and benefit from spaces for sharing experiences and good practices.

3. Conclusion and Key Recommendations

The diagnostic highlights a community with shared concerns, feminist CSOs rooted locally and driving social change, but facing common structural challenges: a lack of sustainable funding, over-stretched teams, weakly formalised governance, limited management tools, and a persistent digital divide.

To address these challenges, the FAME consortium has identified a set of recommendations on which it has based its strategy for supporting CSOs, both at the global level and tailored to the specific needs of CSOs in each country of intervention. To date, more than 80 CSOs are benefiting from support tailored to their needs. We share these recommendations with technical and financial partners who support feminist civil society organisations, focusing on seven areas:

Tailored Capacity Strengthening

- Combine technical training, strategic support and mentoring.
- Value practical learning and peer-to-peer exchange.
- Offer hybrid and multilingual formats, including in-person, e-learning, coaching and mentoring.
- Raise awareness of intersectional discrimination and LGBTQIA+ issues within training tools and community projects.

→ *FAME offers tailored technical support with teams dedicated to providing individual support to CSOs and organises training courses tailored to the needs expressed by CSOs.*

Inclusive ecological transition

- Promote local ecological initiatives and develop skills in feminist ecology through sustainable resource management, women-led green cooperatives and access to green funding.

→ *FAME enables CSOs, including cooperatives, to finance environmentally friendly projects and ecological agricultural or energy experiments.*

→ *FAME assists supported CSOs in developing their environmental charter.*

Sustainable and Feminist Funding

- Support access to funding aligned with structural needs.
- Promote economic diversification through income-generating activities such as crafts, paid workshops and solidarity restaurants.
- Improve access to climate funds and inclusive financing mechanisms.

→ *FAME offers access to financing based on needs, including structural needs.*

→ *FAME offers capacity building on fundraising and supports CSOs in formalising their resource mobilisation strategy.*

Inclusive Digital Transition

- Strengthen digital skills and cybersecurity.
- Provide training in collaborative tools, websites and social media.
- Fund basic equipment and internet access.

→ *FAME enables CSOs to finance equipment, operating costs and staff training.*

Strengthening Collective and Inter-Organisational Learning, Exchange and Mentoring

- Promote intergenerational knowledge transfer.
- Support cooperation between local organisations to share resources, tools and good practices.

→ *FAME encourages skill-sharing and alliances between CSOs by organising joint training sessions, communities of practice and providing spaces for joint advocacy.*

Structured Feminist Advocacy

- Promote institutional recognition of CSOs.
- Value their knowledge, narratives and local practices as levers for political influence.
- Support the development of advocacy strategies.
- Strengthen capacities in strategic communication, storytelling and crisis management.
- Create tools to monitor and measure the impact of campaigns.
- Encourage CSO participation in public and political spaces.

→ *FAME supports CSOs in strengthening their monitoring and evaluation capacities and structuring their communication and advocacy.*

→ *FAME funds collective mobilisation actions to encourage CSO networking and skills development in the field of advocacy.*

Recognition and Security of CSOs

- Assist CSOs in understanding and analysing their legal environments.
- Strengthen the physical, digital and psychosocial security of teams.

→ *FAME supports CSOs in developing their risk identification and mitigation plans, particularly with regard to backlash.*