



WEDO's Vision and Purpose

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2021-2024





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Kelerayani 'Kele' Gavidi of femLINKpacific Media Initiatives for Women, Fiji, one of the 2019 feminist advocates supported to COP25 via WEDO and the Women and Gender Constituency, leads a morning advocacy session of the women's caucus.

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Who We Are

A global women's advocacy organization for a just world that promotes and protects human rights, gender equality, and the integrity of the environment. WEDO advances feminist leadership and solutions towards the creation of a just and healthy planet for all.



Maria Nailevu, Gbemisola 'Titi' Akosa and Claire Greensfelder march for climate justice as part of the Women's Global Call for Climate Justice at the start of COP21.

PHOTO BY LINDSAY HUGHES /
SURVIVAL MEDIA AGENCY

WEDO was founded in 1991 by an extraordinary group of women's human rights and environmental activists, including U.S. Congresswoman Bella Abzug, Nobel Laureate Dr. Wangari Maathai, Dr. Vandana Shiva, Thais Corral and many others. WEDO recognized that the hard-won policy commitments to women's rights that emerged from the major UN conferences of the 1990s would require rigorous and iterative work to improve women's daily lives and advance true transformation for social justice.

Over its 30-year history, WEDO has worked to bring feminist and environmental justice analyses into—and center the voices of frontline and grassroots women's rights advocates and leaders in—global and national policy dialogues. WEDO's work is centered on caucus-building: creating spaces inside policy processes and movements where feminists and women's rights activists can build joint agendas, map entry points and intersections and voice demands in collective.

WEDO coordinates women's rights caucuses in international policy spaces like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and builds coalitions around the gender dimensions of environmental issues, such as forest degradation, land ownership, biodiversity loss, and disaster risk reduction. The work that WEDO does is predicated on understanding the need for systems change; investing in the knowledge, expertise and experiences of local communities; and manifesting collective solutions through feminist principles of care, justice and regeneration.



The Women and Gender Constituency of the UNFCCC, of which WEDO is a founding member and key supporting implementer.

PHOTO BY ANNABELLE AVRIL/WECF

Our Advocacy Ecosystem

WEDO works towards an “ecosystems-based” approach to advocacy—building power across our movement. In this approach, our partners are situated around the world—with a strong emphasis on uplifting and empowering regional representation, diversity and leadership—across key advocacy coalitions centered on specific global issues and processes. Examples include the Women’s Major Group, which coordinates inputs into the Sustainable Development Goals process, and the Women’s and Gender Constituency, which coordinates global feminist engagement in the UNFCCC process. Below is a quick snapshot of some of the coalitions WEDO works in collective with, serving to mobilize resources, lead implementation and deliver strategic support.



Creating Change in Our World

The world is facing intertwined crises of biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and social inequality— fueling increasing climate chaos and social injustice. At present, the COVID-19 pandemic is revealing the deep fault lines in the creation of resilient societies that uphold social protection, while further entrenching deep historical inequalities. Accelerating these crises are emboldened political ideologies of unfettered economic growth, nationalism, and exploitation. These are all the symptoms of the same root cause: broken political and economic systems that fail to center an ethic of care for people and planet.

Across all this and at the heart of where WEDO works, multilateralism is fractured, a mirror of a deeply inequitable world that fails to build global consensus and solidarity towards real transformation of our social systems for a more just world. WEDO works to repair these fractures by creating connections, building bridges and advancing feminist, gender-just solutions.

The time for bold feminist solutions is now. With great social unrest also comes a time for deep movement building and education to lift up alternatives to face our current crises. In recent years we have witnessed feminist-led, peaceful uprisings around the world demanding gender, racial,



economic and ecological justice. The current pandemic is revealing what feminists have been highlighting for decades: only when we value the work of care as essential and protect the environment from degradation and exploitation will we be able to build healthy societies that work for all and not just the few. Increasingly, we are seeing explicit recognition and uptake of feminist governing frameworks. Movements centered on abolition and divestment, not just from fossil fuels but from cycles of violence, militarism, and a carceral state, provide opportunities for real transformation in our economic systems.

Together, feminist advocates and movement allies are building new visions for how to live, create and provide care—in the workplace, household, community, country—and in multilateralism.

Fierce feminists Tetet Lauron and Lean Deleon teach chants and songs to the feminists at COP25.

PHOTO BY ANNABELLE
AVRIL/WECF





How We Work

Commitment to Systems Change

Systems-level change requires systems-level interventions:

“Systems change aims to bring about lasting change by altering underlying structures and supporting mechanisms which make the system operate in a particular way. These can include policies, routines, relationships, resources, power structures and values.”
(Foster-Fishman, P., 2002)

WEDO’s advocacy is deliberately feminist and intersectional. By this, WEDO understands that “*the overlapping systems of oppression and discrimination that women face are based not just on gender but on ethnicity, sexuality, economic background and a number of other axes*”—**Kimberlé Crenshaw**. Further, the work of creating gender equality is inextricably linked to dismantling the systemic root causes of oppression, whether these be capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, extractivism or militarism.

Therefore, WEDO’s goals are geared towards structural change and our strategies emphasize the collective over the individual.



“There is no such a thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

AUDRE LORDE

WEDO's Role

WEDO's strengths can be illustrated through roles that it plays, which are applicable across themes, processes and program areas and which can support and build a movement at all levels to shift behavior, change global and local systems and promote justice for all.

Advisor

Guiding government and UN agencies on implementation of a gender-just approach to sustainable development in policy and practice

Example: WEDO engages in consultations with a range of governments working to ensure their climate policies at national level are gender-responsive.

Advocate

Leading global advocacy for women's human rights and environmental justice across policy spaces

Example: WEDO supports the development of advocacy strategies for women's rights and feminists advocates in policy spaces such as the UN climate change negotiations and the Green Climate Fund.

Facilitator/ Convener & Organizer

Partnering with, and bringing together diverse organizations/individuals to demand a just and sustainable future across policy spaces including administering logistical and coordination support for women advocates to participate and engage in international processes and campaigns, and connecting partner organizations to small project grants

Example: WEDO funds the training and travel support for 10-20 grassroots activists per year, to engage in the activities of the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) at the UN climate negotiations. WEDO also helps to organize and convene meetings of the WGC throughout the year.

Knowledge Creator

Analyzing processes, actions and outcomes and producing and promoting knowledge products

Example: WEDO collects data and information on the integration of gender issues into countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and shares this data via the Gender Climate Tracker.



Jamila Idbourrous and Chouchouna Losale participate in training and mentorship session on scaling gender just climate solutions.

PHOTO BY ANNABELLE AVRIL/WECF

Trainer

Delivering leadership development, orientation to complex processes and advocacy skills training to hundreds of women each year

Example: WEDO conducts regional trainings for Pacific women on how to negotiate under the UNFCCC climate change process.

Resource Ally

Supporting the fiscal space for feminists collaboratives, including administration and reporting on collective grants, as well as the delivery of sub-grants to partners in the collectives

Example: WEDO serves as the Secretariat for the Women's Major Group, managing the collective grant, providing administrative support to the WMG objectives, and delivering sub-grants to its seven regional Organizing Partners.



Our Feminist Values

Accountability

The 'we' in WEDO is not our staff & Board, but the networks, movements and feminist leaders on whose work our epistemology and movement strategies are built. We are deeply accountable to these groups and leaders in all advocacy work as well as in the processes we develop to ensure dynamic and consistent consultation and consent.

Agency

As Arundhati Roy states *"There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard."* In actions and language, WEDO's work centers the agency and power of individuals to speak for themselves, develop their own solutions, shape collective demands and drive change.

Collective Liberation

Collective action and power is the root of change. Individual models of leadership do not create sustained and lasting change. WEDO's activities and strategies aim towards systems change and collective liberation.

Ecological Health

WEDO maintains the inherent value in and works towards the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide, centering ecological integrity, resilience, and regeneration at the heart of our programming.

Justice

WEDO practices inclusion and anti-racism, while working to dismantle white supremacy and privilege towards the decolonization of movement spaces. We center the leadership of Black and Indigenous women, non-binary and gender-non-conforming people, women with disabilities, women of color, queer feminists, and young feminists and activists, particularly from the Global South, across all work to ensure more just futures for generations to come.

Solidarity

As an organization based in the United States, we recognize and commit to dismantling imperialism and white supremacy and their interplay with patriarchy and militarism. Our work and struggle centers global justice and is always in conversation and solidarity with our partners in the Global South. WEDO is working to repair historical harms and the violence that is often present in transnational policy and movement spaces.



Our Words



Here is a brief glossary of some of WEDO's key terminology, informed by our partners and key movement glossaries such as the [Feminist Movement Builders Dictionary](#) and [NGOs and Women's Human Rights Activists at the UN and CSW](#).

Environmental justice: A fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, climate justice, and societies that respect human rights and planetary boundaries.

Gender justice: The systemic redistribution of power, opportunities, and access for people of all genders through the dismantling of harmful structures including patriarchy, homophobia, and transphobia.

Gender-just climate solutions: Encompass a range of activities that aim to address climate change mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage or overall resilience while also supporting the systemic redistribution of power and providing opportunities and access for people of all genders. In particular, ensuring that activities do

not reinforce harmful gendered norms. For example, projects that engage women as beneficiaries in relation to agricultural management but do not address women's legal rights/access to and ownership of land.

Feminist leadership: An evolving way of thinking about leadership in which power and positions of authority—among individuals, in organizations and within movements—in the state and elsewhere—are used to create inclusive processes and structures that privilege people who have been traditionally excluded, foster democratic participation, and operate on the basis of authenticity, legitimacy and accountability to constituents or stakeholders. (Batliwala, 2011a)

Multilateralism: Institutions and processes where multiple countries come together to seek collective agreement and commit to shared action to address key global issues, from climate change and gender equality, to global health, trade and debt.

Environmental integrity: Following our intrinsic valuation of natural elements, biotic and abiotic, as well as their interactions and emerging properties, our concept of environmental integrity and the associated value placed on continuity and preservation over time extends to any scale, from communities to ecosystems to the planet as a whole. The IUCN definition for ecological integrity is relevant for an ecosystem perspective: “maintaining the diversity and quality of ecosystems and enhancing their capacity to adapt to change and provide for the needs of future generations.” A system that is whole, resilient and adaptive, able to continue its ecological processes and functioning, has integrity.

Equity vs. Equality: At WEDO, we prioritize the language of **gender equality**, and use the notion of substantive equality. Please see here the [foundational paper](#) on this that guides our language choice from a human rights based analysis.



Our Story of Change

OUR VISION

A just world that promotes and protects human rights, gender equality and the integrity of the environment.

OUR PURPOSE

To advance feminist leadership and solutions towards a just and healthy planet for all.



Conditions for Transformation

What conditions need to exist in order for WEDO's vision to be realized?

- Leadership at all levels is diverse, representative, feminist and intersectional;
- Policies center ecological health, human rights and gender justice;
- Feminist solutions to creating a regenerative economy are implemented across countries and communities;
- Fundamental human rights, including the right to food, water, land, housing, healthcare and education are universally realized;
- Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights for all are fully achieved.



Our Framework

Moving **POWER**

GOAL:

Build collective power of feminist leaders and movements to create solutions for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGIES:

Grow grassroots leadership

Foster feminist, gender-responsive governance

Ensure equal participation in all processes

Moving **MONEY**

GOAL:

Implement a feminist economic agenda for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGIES:

Increase access to and influence over multilateral financial instruments

Mobilize funding for gender just climate solutions

Foster gender-responsive and climate compatible financial systems

Moving **MINDS**

GOAL:

Showcase gender-just solutions, uplift grassroots experiences and share data.

STRATEGIES:

Increase knowledge and data at the intersection of gender equality and environment

Transform discourse on gender and environmental justice

Approaches

Advocacy and Influence:

Engage in policy processes to ensure policy and actions center gender equality and sustainable development

Capacity Building and Training:

Build capacity and facilitate space for women/ feminists to exercise their political voice, power and influence at local, national and international levels

Knowledge Production and Outreach:

Build and maintain knowledge base related to feminist analysis and approaches to implementing gender equality, women's human rights, environmental and climate justice across geographies and sociopolitical environments

Redistribute Resources:

Support coalition partners to engage in global advocacy and undertake local and regional advocacy activities via sub-grants

Majandra Rodriguez Acha brings a strong young feminist voice to collective action at COP21, pictured alongside Gbemisola 'Titi' Akosa.

PHOTO BY CHRISTINE IRVINE / SURVIVAL MEDIA AGENCY



Moving POWER

GOAL:

Build collective power of feminist leaders and movements to create solutions for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGY:

1. Grow grassroots leadership

Grassroots feminists and activists, particularly women of color, Black women, Indigenous women, people with disabilities, LGBTQI folks, people from the Global South, migrant and refugee communities, and youth, are at the frontlines of climate change impacts. They have been, and continue to be, the drivers of transformative social change through movements that center people-power and collective action. There can be no climate justice without building up and centering the leadership of grassroots communities.

WEDO will promote, support, and resource grassroots women/ feminist leaders in key leadership roles in halls of power, movement convenings, coalitions, and other civil-society spaces, including via support for young grassroots feminist leadership.

Moving POWER

GOAL:

Build collective power of feminist leaders and movements to create solutions for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGY:

2. Foster feminist, gender-responsive governance

Explicitly feminist, gender-responsive policy frameworks aim to move beyond gender mainstreaming to challenging systems of power that uphold and reproduce those inequalities. Feminist frameworks allow for a deeply important conversation around the inadequacy of efforts to deliver on gender equality so far. Without these frameworks, conversations around ongoing gender inequality are often delinked from systemic root causes, whether trade, corporate power, environmental destruction or militarism. In the last few years, around seven governments have made or indicated they are developing Feminist Foreign Policies, and increasingly, activists around the world are developing feminist action blueprints such as recovery plans to respond to the current COVID-19 pandemic and gender-responsive national climate strategies.

WEDO will engage in the development and implementation of explicitly feminist, gender-responsive governance and policy frameworks, specifically those that aim to deliver on climate and environmental justice.

Moving **POWER**

GOAL:

Build collective power of feminist leaders and movements to create solutions for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGY:

3. Ensure equal participation in all processes

Equal participation and voice in decision-making is not simply a matter of numbers; it is an issue of fundamental human rights and dismantling entrenched power dynamics that undermine justice-oriented policies and actions designed to benefit all people regardless of race, sex, gender, ability or religion.

WEDO will strengthen its work in supporting equal participation and voice in spaces such as the UN climate change negotiations and other multilateral spaces through training, capacity building, leadership skills and travel support. WEDO will align this work with our core principles on justice to uplift the leadership of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) and ensure that the voices in these spaces include those of women, girls, and gender-non-conforming and non-binary people in all their diversity.

Moving MONEY

GOAL:

Implement a feminist economic agenda for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGY:

1. Increase access to and influence over multilateral financial instruments

Billions of dollars are allocated through global funding mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), ostensibly designed to address the global challenges facing humanity and the planet, yet the people most in need of these resources have little access to these resources, and an often muted voice in the processes of allocation.

WEDO will create pathways for advocacy for women rights/ feminist advocates across all major climate financing instruments, including strategic entry points for change within fund governance to ensure greater inclusion, as well as fund implementation, for enhanced access to financing for local groups and feminist/women's organizations and funds.

Moving MONEY

GOAL:

Implement a feminist economic agenda for a just and healthy planet.

STRATEGY:

2. Mobilize funding for gender just climate solutions

Hundreds of community-led solutions centered on gender equality are addressing environmental degradation, including climate change, in transformative and sustainable ways around the globe, but they are drastically underfunded.

WEDO will create financial opportunities to support the work of gender-just climate solutions through addressing gaps in gender-responsive-ness within multilateral funding instruments, convening funders to consider barriers and opportunities, and building capacity among implementing partners to access funding to scale as well as replicate their work.

Moving MONEY

GOAL:

Implement a feminist economic agenda for a just & healthy planet.

STRATEGY:

3. Foster gender-responsive and climate compatible financial systems

Capital has been increasingly concentrated into the hands of the few at the expense of democracy, human rights and the planet. To promote alternatives, advocates are actively building power in global spaces such as the UN climate negotiations and in conversations around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the financing for development (FFD) process and climate financing mechanisms. However, there is a critical need for building evidence and creating a collaborative and powerful strategy to foster the enabling conditions that will promote systemic change in our economic system, and tackle issues such as tax justice, trade and global debt, which are inextricable to our environmental challenges.

WEDO will renew its work in the broader economic justice arena via convenings and campaigns with unique and diverse partners, including global tax and trade justice advocates, gender-impact investing specialists, fossil fuel divestment campaigners, and experts in gender-responsive budgeting that creates fiscal space for social protection.

Moving MINDS

GOAL:

Showcase gender-just solutions, uplift grassroots experiences and share data.

STRATEGY:

1. Increase knowledge and data at the intersection of gender equality and environment

Gender data gaps—at all levels, across sectors—are barriers to effective policymaking and implementation, including across environment-related sectors and spheres. Increasing the collection, analysis, communication, use of, and learning from cross-sector data and information at the intersection of gender and environment is critical to constructing and implementing gender-just climate plans and policies. While some sector-specific data exists and is further emerging and increasing, there is much work needed to support the collection, curation, and communication of this critical information.

WEDO will leverage its partnerships across grassroots activists, UN institutions and Member States to support the collection, synthesis and dissemination of knowledge and data at the intersection of gender equality and environment, including support for training and capacity building on the collection and use of this data.

Moving MINDS

GOAL:

Showcase gender-just solutions, uplift grassroots experiences and share data.

STRATEGY:

2. Transform and enhance discourse on gender, environment and climate justice

Gender injustice, climate and environmental injustice, colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, and racial injustice are all deeply implicated and intertwined, yet they are often portrayed as separate or add-on struggles. These systems of injustice shape the way the world understands and approaches the climate and environmental crises, including what solutions are put forth and funded. Many of the proposed “fixes” are rooted in the same political economic paradigms and worldviews that created the current climate and ecological crises; they often not only impose great environmental risks themselves, but also threaten to gravely deepen existing gender, racial and global inequalities.

WEDO will be a home for intersectional feminist analyses, data collection, and public information-sharing regarding the environmental and climate crises. WEDO will tell the stories of systemic transformation and impact that have been blooming in the margins. We will share the feminist alternatives and solutions that work to dismantle oppression and address issues at the root, foregrounding collective action, care, intersectionality, justice, and regeneration. Amid world systems built on extraction, austerity, capitalism and colonialism, feminist leaders offer analyses and alternatives based on care, community, solidarity and liberation.



Our Key Activities 2021–2024

Moving POWER

Moving MONEY

Moving MINDS

GLOBAL:

Local to Global Feminist Climate & Environmental Advocacy

- Advance implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan, including via the Women Delegates Fund (WDF), work with National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points (NGCCFPs) and the Gender Climate Tracker.
- Bolster the capacity of grassroots and indigenous women and women's rights groups working at national and regional levels on climate change and environmental issues;
- Building on WEDO's co-leadership role, create a strong platform for feminist action on climate justice via broad engagement in implementation of the "Feminist Action for Climate Justice" Action Coalition blueprint, launched as part of the Generation Equality Forum (GEF).

Gender-Responsive Climate Compatible Finance

- Build out WEDO's Grassroots Women's Climate Finance Action Hub;
- Provide technical support and resources to the solution-drivers in a collaborative feminist environment;
- Seed and implement the Gender Just Climate Solutions Scale Fund.

Gender and Environment Data and Information Nexus

- Support the development and implementation of the newly established Gender and Environment Data Alliance (GEDA). Conceptualized and initiated at the Generation Equality Forum.

Gender Just Climate Solutions

- Showcase and share feminist climate solutions and alternatives via storytelling, media and outreach.

NATIONAL:

U.S. Feminist Advocacy

Create a robust framework for implementation of feminist principles in environmental policy, research, actions and movement building in the United States, including via the Feminist Green New Deal and Feminist Foreign Policy in the U.S.



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