



2021–2026

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



**Global
Justice Center**

Human Rights Through Rule of Law

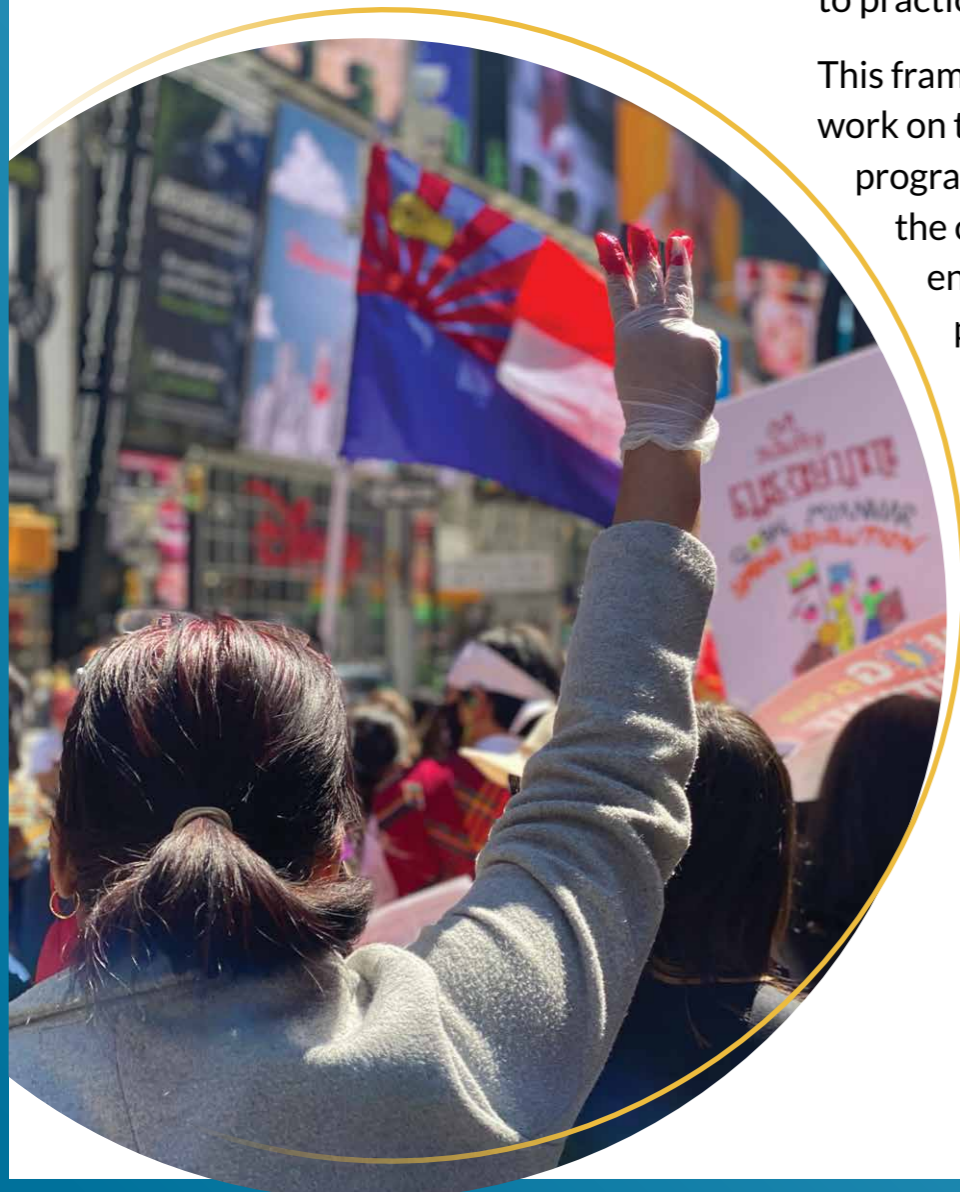
Introduction

The Global Justice Center began 2021 in a global advocacy environment more dynamic and tumultuous than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic only intensified existing threats to human rights, including shrinking spaces for civil society, rising nationalism, and attempted dismantling of the international human rights system.

Despite these obstacles, advocates have made significant advances for the rights of women in recent decades. Yet the hard work of turning these gains into lived and sustainable gender equality

remains unfinished. GJC occupies a critical space by identifying gaps in implementation and using a feminist interpretation of international law to transform human rights from paper to practice.

This framework will guide GJC's work on the execution of our programs and projects for the coming five years. It encompasses both our overall programmatic goals as well our guiding principles, including our vision, mission, and theory of change. **At its core, it is a constitution for GJC.**



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Letter from the Staff Strategic Planning Committee

We are proud to present this new strategic framework not only as a blueprint for GJC's future, but also as a watershed moment in our evolution as an organization. The last few years presented historic challenges for GJC, both internally with the loss of our founder and externally with global attacks on human rights. But these struggles have only strengthened our resolve. Over the next five years, GJC will continue our groundbreaking legal and advocacy work with a focus on three major issues critical to the achievement of gender equality: (1) a feminist multilateral system; (2) the protection of abortion access; and (3) gender-competent responses to violence.

Creating this framework challenged us to think critically about our place in the world, and how we can best leverage our skills, privileges, and expertise to achieve our vision. It also puts our progressive feminist values front and center, and gives us the flexibility to ensure that GJC remains a dynamic organization, including in our ability to respond to new and unforeseen challenges. With this new framework in hand, GJC marches forward in the struggle for human rights more prepared and energized than ever before.

GJC Fundamentals

VISION

A gender-equal world where every person lives free from violence, has full bodily autonomy, and has the power to access justice to protect and promote their human rights.

MISSION

Creative feminists using international law to achieve gender equality and dismantle systems of oppression.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Achieving a gender equal world requires systemic change and transformation of patriarchal structures through complementary strategies and approaches.



- ▶ Women deserve justice for violations of their rights, and **states and institutions must be held to account** when they fail to ensure gender equality.



- ▶ The **progressive interpretation** and application of international law and human rights are a strong foundation for gender equality in law and in fact.



- ▶ **Multilateral institutions** must be grounded in a feminist approach to effectively defend and advance human rights around the world.



- ▶ Change must be driven by those who are most affected, which requires global north organizations to uplift and share power with feminist **grassroots actors** around the world.



Core Values

Women are not a monolith and face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression, based on (among others) their race, ethnicity, nationality, migratory status, religion, disability, age, class, sexual orientation, and gender expression and/or identity.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights are a comprehensive package which cannot be broken apart; certain rights cannot be traded away for reasons of political will and acceptability.

Women need to be equally represented in all spaces where decisions are being made, but parity is not a substitute for, nor the same as, gender equality.

How We Work

Our goals are best achieved using a **diverse, integrated set of tactics** that utilize our unique skills and values to create maximum impact. These methods, refined over years alongside trusted partners, allow us to employ a wide range of strategies that are carefully targeted, yet always designed to move the needle toward our vision of a gender-equal world.



Who We Serve and Work With

GJC collaborates with a wide range of individuals and groups, from the grassroots to the international level, to move our mission forward.

- ▶ **Grassroots Partners**—we work with grassroots groups and activists—like women’s groups in Myanmar—to uplift local voices in international spaces as well as provide capacity development and technical assistance. These invaluable partnerships greatly influence the direction of GJC’s engagement with national and international mechanisms.
- ▶ **Coalitions and Alliances**—we are part of several collaborative working groups—such as the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security, the NGO Working Group on the Security Council, and Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Crises—that bolster our global advocacy.
- ▶ **State Governments and Experts**—we engage with governments and experts around the world to ensure that they are adhering to their international human rights obligations.
- ▶ **Multilateral Institutions**—we utilize our unique position as an organization with UN consultative status and access to mechanisms, such as the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council, to advocate for an inclusive gender perspective and ensure that gender is a priority in their agendas.



INNOVATIVE LEGAL ANALYSIS

Through scholarly publications, digital media, and public events, we lead conversations within the legal community and beyond on how to use international law to promote gender equality. Here, we serve as a **think tank that uses creative interpretations** of the law to achieve our feminist goals.



STRATEGIC ADVOCACY

Progress requires both **interaction and confrontation** with power. At powerful bodies like the United Nations, we work behind the scenes with powerful stakeholders to shape international policy. Yet we also serve as activists, regularly and directly challenging these stakeholders to shift public opinion.



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS


Gender equality is won through solidarity and partnership. We work in close concert with **peer organizations and grassroots organizations**, providing capacity development, technical assistance, and access to international venues in order to strengthen and amplify women’s voices for change at all levels of society.



Where We Work

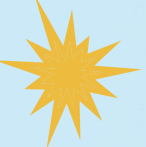
We focus on two main issues—access to abortion and justice for gender-based violence—that are central to making gender equality a reality. Our efforts are amplified through partnerships with policymakers, experts, fellow NGOs, and local actors.

We identify how and when to engage in new areas of work based on alignment with our areas of expertise, whether our unique approach can make an impact, and availability of organizational resources.



Multilateral institutions like the United Nations have the power to create lasting, positive change. But when these bodies reproduce the very prejudice and inequality they were designed to combat, they cannot create sustainable solutions to the world's most pressing problems. We engage with these institutions in order to:

- ▶ **Uplift and promote** the interests of our grassroots partners to ensure their inclusion in international policymaking
- ▶ **Influence the agendas** and outputs of these institutions to promote and protect gender equality as a human right
- ▶ **Promote progressive interpretations** of international laws that create real change on the ground, not just on paper



Extreme gender inequality is a precursor to conflict, and women are often at the center of protest and reform movements—yet their interests are excluded from peace negotiations. We work in post-conflict and transition settings because they offer a unique window to radically restructure legal and political systems in order to enshrine gender equality and create sustainable peace.

GOALS

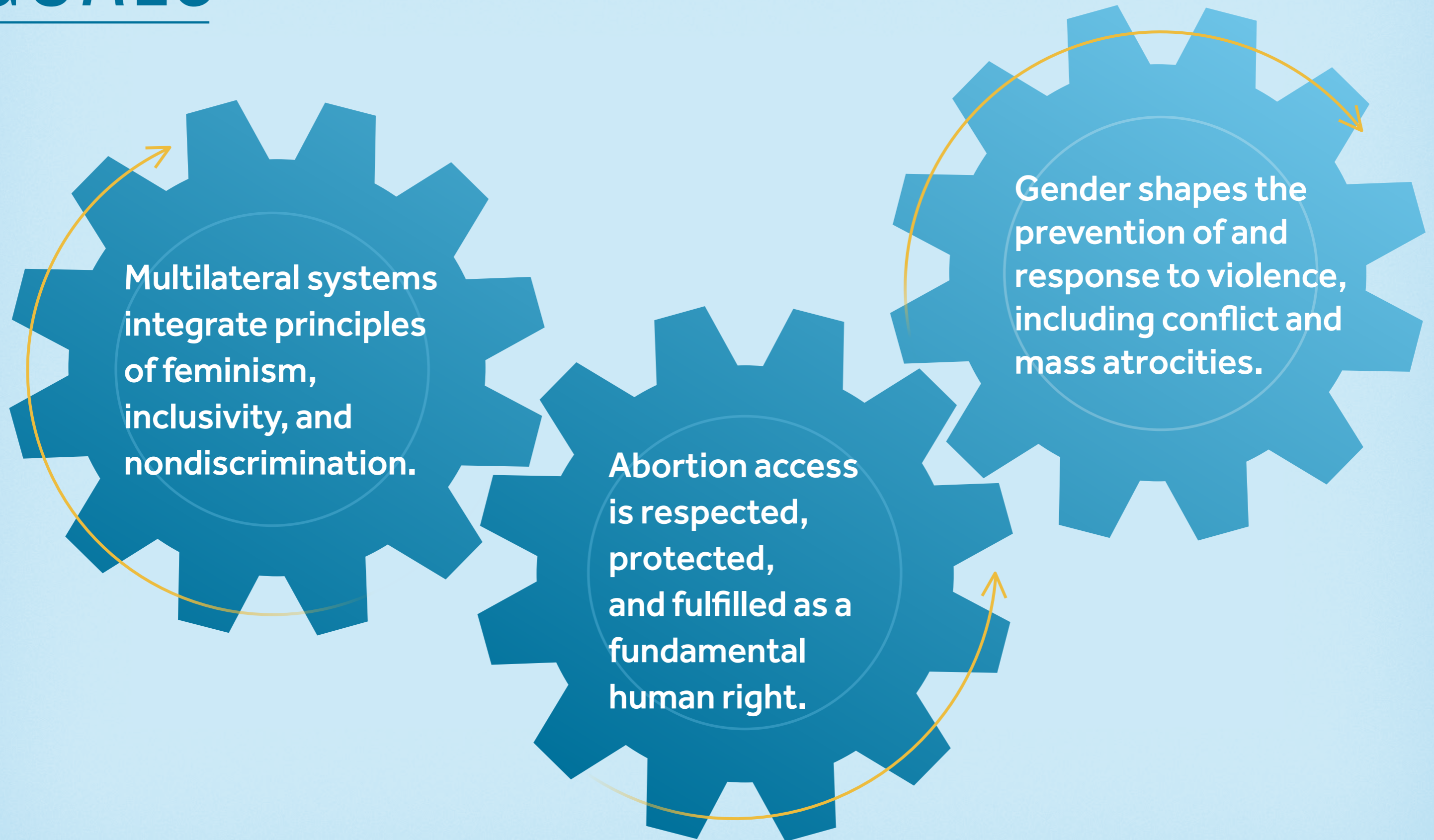




Photo © UN Women/Ryan Brown

Multilateral systems integrate principles of feminism, inclusivity, and nondiscrimination.

The **multilateral system** has been a venue for great progress on issues of human rights. Institutions like the United Nations have enabled the creation of foundational frameworks for gender equality, and in turn, activists around the world have leveraged these systems in their own countries. However, these systems were established with an inherently patriarchal understanding of diplomacy, law, and power, alienating many and contributing to a crisis of trust, credibility, and authority. A feminist approach seeks to dismantle the patriarchy underpinning these systems and rebuild them based on values of equality and non-discrimination.

- ▶ The **international community** promotes inclusive, feminist, and holistic approaches to policymaking and problem-solving, replacing principles of militarism, nationalism, and imperialism.
- ▶ The central imperative to **ensure human rights protections** for all without discrimination guides domestic and international policy.
- ▶ Multilateral systems like the **UN** are accessible to a diversity of civil society and enable their safe and meaningful participation.
- ▶ **Feminists** engage with multilateral systems on a wide variety of issues, not only those explicitly related to women's issues or gender equality.

Abortion access is respected, protected, and fulfilled as a fundamental human right.

Safe abortion is a fundamental part of the sexual and reproductive health and rights framework and must be accessible to all pregnant people.* And yet, abortion has been singled out, stigmatized, and targeted, including as a test run for broader assaults on human rights. Abortion is not a bargaining chip that can be negotiated for reasons of political acceptability: it is an absolute necessity for the achievement of gender equality. In order to make access to safe abortion a reality for all who need it, it must be respected as a human right.

- ▶ State and international funding ensures and explicitly protects **universal access** to abortion services.
- ▶ The **international legal framework** ensures and protects access to abortion on demand and without discrimination, and states comply with these legal obligations.

* While the majority of people who can become pregnant and require abortion services are cisgender women, people who are intersex, non-binary, two-spirit, and/or gender non-conforming, and transgender men, also need safe abortion services.





Gender shapes the prevention of and response to violence, including conflict and mass atrocities.

Sexual and gender-based violence is, at its core, an expression of discrimination, patriarchy, and inequality. While the last 20 years have seen an increasing recognition of the occurrence of sexual and gender-based violence, the international community continues to fail to connect instances of violence to structural gender inequality. Therefore, effectively preventing and redressing violence requires holistic efforts that seek to address and transform its root causes and the patriarchal legal systems that enable it.

- ▶ Reach an international consensus on the necessity of a **structural, gendered approach** to preventing and responding to mass atrocity crimes.
- ▶ **Gendered perspectives** shape accountability processes for sexual and gender-based violence at every stage, and all investigatory bodies and their officials possess a systemic understanding of gender inequality.
- ▶ Progressive frameworks based on **international human rights standards** replace patriarchal domestic laws to enable justice for sexual and gender-based violence and dismantle structural gender inequality.

A Secure, Sustainable, and Effective Organization

Our mission, vision, and programmatic goals cannot be achieved without a strong and sustainable organizational infrastructure. GJC has diversified our revenue streams and built significant reserves and an endowment to ensure the organization's financial stability. Like our programmatic work, we are resourceful and nimble in our financial and operational strategies to achieve the greatest possible impact.

- ▶ Continue to **expand and diversify our funding sources**—including both individuals and foundations—as well as exploring new avenues for funding through corporate and government sources.
- ▶ Strengthen and **update internal financial systems and processes**, to efficiently track and manage funds, with long-term organizational security and sustainability in mind.
- ▶ Ensure that values of **equality, non-discrimination, and feminism** are fully incorporated internally and externally, including through the development and implementation of a clear diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategy.





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