



The UPDATE

An International Fund for Women and Girls | July 2016



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Left: Bakashana increased access to computers and computer literacy trainings to enhance the employment skills of women and girls.

MEASURING THE COMMUNITY IMPACT OF VGIF-FUNDED PROJECTS

In November 2015, VGIF's Palmer Fellow, initiated a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) pilot project with VGIF's six 2015–2018 multi-year grantees. The goal is to develop a framework to evaluate the contribution of grantees to gender based change across regions and topics. VGIF chose to work with multi-year projects to track and evaluate the effectiveness

of the framework over three-years, and elicit in-depth feedback from participants.

The first step was to identify an approach to gender based change that addresses the complexity of VGIF projects and the various ways they affect change in their communities. Concepts like "Women's Empowerment" and "Gender Based

Change" are central to the mission and work of women's organizations around the globe, but are difficult to measure due to both terms lacking clear definitions. For example, does gender based change occur primarily at the level of laws and institutions? Does it begin with the individual or the family, or does it start with the community?

The Change Matrix stood out for its approach to gender based change, and its focus on formal and informal power structures. The Matrix illustrates that achieving gender based change relies on changes in formal laws and policies, and changes in deep seated socio-cultural beliefs and practices that uphold patriarchy at a local level. Only individual changes in consciousness and attitudes and in individual control over public and private resources can affect these changes. The Matrix's four categories — individual consciousness, women's

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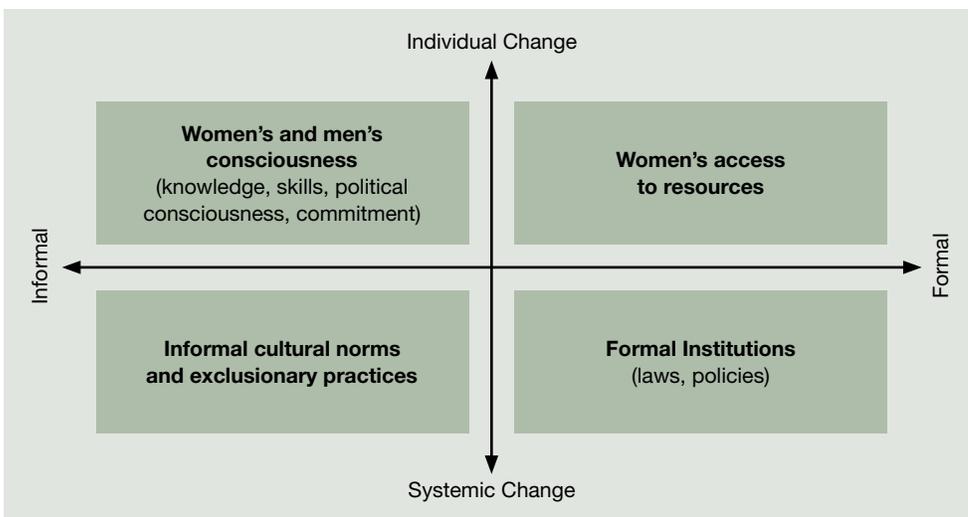


Diagram: **The Change Matrix**

It Happened at the Board Meeting

April 2016

VGIF Board and Committee Members, members, and general supporters attended the Board and Annual Meeting in New York City from April 15–16, 2016.

The Board approved funding for 45 one-year grants in 26 countries.

A complete list of new projects can be found in the accompanying insert. Many thanks to previewers and members of the Project Grants Committee for their review of letters of intent and applications, and most importantly, thank you to Maggie Ford for her calm leadership.

Thirteen members were voted onto the VGIF Board of Directors during the Annual Meeting.

We are pleased to welcome Leslie Wright as Executive Vice President; Maggie Ford, Louise McLeod, and Susan Russell continue for a second term; and Susannah Dhamdhere, Lisa A. Fleming, John McInerney, Raime Leeby Muhle, Dr. Eleanor Ann Nwadinobi, Nicholas Rispoli, Dr. Gerlinde Sarkar, Dr. Jacqueline Buckman Shahzadi and Andrea Torrico were elected as new Board Members.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



This edition of the VGIF Update sings with the energy of the work being done by the greater VGIF community: encouraging and motivating news from our grantees, the results of months of hard work by many people to review and propose funding for this year's cohort of single-year grants, growth and change in the membership of our Board and the successful completion of the Strategic Plan for 2016–2018.

At the Board and Annual Meeting in April, we recognized 36 major donors, whose contributions support VGIF in many ways. At the event, I was reminded — again — how much people care about VGIF and about the work of our grantees around the globe. People get connected to VGIF in many ways, as previewers reading multiple grant proposals each year, as UN interns observing and reporting on the activities at the UN, as Board Members, as financial supporters and

as staff. Each supporter works with us in different ways and may go on to other things, but they stay connected. It makes VGIF a richer community in every way.

The Strategic Plan for VGIF (which is posted on our website) is an expansive document which will focus our efforts in the coming years. There is a lot of substantive work identified in our goals and strategies and we will be calling on many of our constituents to help us accomplish those goals. The document calls for annual reporting of our progress and our responses to changes that may arise in the course of our work. I look forward to sharing those results.

The 2016 Mid-Year meeting will be in Seattle, Washington. As you plan your fall travels, please think about joining us there.



Jeri Rhodes
President

Leading the Way with VGIF's Strategic Plan

VGIF's Strategic Plan for 2016–2018 was approved at the April Board & Annual Meeting. The document guides VGIF's growth in fundraising, network building, and grant making over the next three years. VGIF staff are working with Interim Director, Carrie Gallagher, and members of the board to implement the various goals and their components. Of the plan, Mary McGovern, Vice President of the Strategic Plan, says, **"I am excited that the VGIF Board has adopted the new Strategic Plan. While this plan identifies ambitious goals for VGIF to accomplish over the**

next three years, I am confident that it moves VGIF in the right direction, with appropriate strategies and achievable objectives. I am optimistic that in three years, VGIF will be a stronger organization with increased capacity and a greater ability to improve the lives of women and girls around the world."

Our thanks to members of the Strategic Planning Task Force for their hard work in producing the new Plan!



RWANDA

Increased Income from Beekeeping

“Now I’m feeling so happy and lucky. I wish everyone with similar living conditions can get involved in this cooperative. I would say the bees made for me a kitchen and my house. Whatever I didn’t reach I will reach it, none is impossible,” says Anna, a longtime participant of *Let Little Children Come to Me (LLCCM)* of Rwanda. In the first year of multi-year funding, LLCCM trained and provided resources for women widowed by the Rwandan genocide to become beekeepers to enhance their economic status. The group focused on improving their honey productivity through processing and selling. Reproductive health education was also offered to reduce unintended pregnancies among young participants.



GUATEMALA

Raising Awareness through Community Radio

COMPPA (*Comunicadoras y Comunicadores Populares por la Autonomia*)’s radio project in Guatemala and Honduras increased indigenous women’s participation and leadership

in community radio and broadened the dissemination of information on issues faced by indigenous, Campesina and Garifuna women. COMPPA staff started the project by meeting women from each group to define goals and strategies. Co-coordinator, Anna, says, “We wanted to find out from them what they wanted. Their input was important to the project design. For example, for indigenous people, community radio is really a tool to resist violations, like taking their land.”

Elena, a participant and local teacher, has attended COMPPA trainings since 2014, and now leads trainings and speaks about community problems from a gender perspective to encourage partners to participate in community life and decision-making. Of the project, Elena says, “**Es importante que nosotras sepamos cuales son nuestros derechos como mujer (It is important that we know what our rights as women).**”



INDIA

Transforming Communities through Sustainable Farming

Rural Organization for Social Education (ROSE), of India, increased women’s access to nutritious and balanced diets and a sustainable environment through training in eco-friendly and sustainable farming practices and technologies. During a site visit in early 2016, Project Director Ahila praised the advances made by participants. She said, “**Nowadays the women farmers are involved in**

planning. Planning of crops, planning for their children’s education, planning what to invest their savings in. They are also discussing the future of the next generation. It’s a great transformation. They see the linkages between different issues. Not only for planning. They see the connections between our ecology, our environment, themselves, everything. Before this they never thought about it. This is a very good change.”



PAKISTAN

Literacy Education Results in Salary Increase

Learn – Empower-Act-Promote (LEAP), in Pakistan, trained women in literacy, leadership and managing and saving money to enhance their economic opportunities. Kiran, a participant, experienced this first-hand. She told VGIF that her salary increased considerably after sharing the program certificate with her employer. She also passed a written test and showed that she easily understood the operating manuals of the factory machines where she is employed. Kiran says, “**Now I am well respected within my family and my parents include me in decision making which is an honor for a girl within our society. The leadership and financial management course also gave me confidence and courage to lead my entire life successfully. I am very grateful to LEAP and VGIF for making me respectable and a role model for other girls of my society.**”

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access to resources, social-cultural norms and practices, and formal laws and policies — interact, and a change in one category relies on changes in one or more of the others. Its strength to monitor and evaluate VGIF projects is that it provides broad, universal categories to map individual project outcomes and goals, and corresponding indicators can be developed.

The Palmer Fellow worked closely with the six multi-year projects to map their outcomes onto the Change Matrix, and to develop specific indicators to measure outcomes at the end of each year of the project cycle. When asked about using the Matrix, Project Directors agreed that it's a useful way to clarify their project goals and activities and to develop concrete categories of impact measurement. As Rose Wamalwa, Project Director of Women in Water and Natural Resources Conservation in Kenya says, "The tools are useful since they clearly show the major project implementation indicators that we can use to show whether the project is successful or not and what measures can be put in place to make sure that the project's goals and objectives are met." We look forward to sharing more information about the project as we receive interim reports from the grantees using the Matrix.

MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It is my privilege to have joined VGIF in March as its Interim Executive Director. As a long-time member and leader, VGIF has touched my heart and complemented my lifelong passion for equality and equity for women and girls around the globe. Being at the VGIF office lets me leverage my expertise in nonprofit management to help guide the organization through its current transition in staff leadership.

At the core of VGIF is our shared belief that small grants for local projects and programs will better the lives of women and girls. It motivated our founders and continues to inspire our members in all regions of the world. These last months, our professional staff and members of the Project Grants Committee with its previewers poured through thousands of 'letters of intent' and then hundreds of proposals to choose those which promise the most impact. Forty five projects were chosen for funding. Each year, this process demonstrates VGIF's commitment to local women with vision whose organizations will make a difference in the lives of women and

girls in their communities, regions and countries.

We were happy to welcome new members to VGIF's Board of Directors at April's Annual Meeting. VGIF will continue to grow with their support, the enthusiasm and dedication of past and ongoing Board and Committee leaders, the professionalism and commitment of our staff, the engagement of local student interns, and because of you, our members and donors. We will all be part of VGIF's future success.

For now, keep in touch with us and know that we welcome your continuing support for our mission and our grantees worldwide.



Carrie Gallagher
Interim Executive Director

Deceased Members

VGIF regrets to inform you of the passing of long-term supporters and former Committee Members in 2016. Our deepest sympathies to the friends and family of the following individuals:

Robert Brooks
Kazuko Hirano
Mary Kane

If you would like to make a donation in memory of these supporters, visit the VGIF website at vgif.org.

Get involved

The next VGIF Board Meeting will be held on October 28-29, 2016 in Seattle, WA. All members are welcome to attend.

Please like us on Facebook at facebook.com/vgif.org and follow us on Twitter @VGIF.

Sponsor a Project

You can make a real difference in the lives of women and girls around the globe by sponsoring a VGIF project. Your funding will support a designated project grant that is aligned with your areas of interest, and you will receive reports of their accomplishments over the grant year.

To learn more, contact info@vgif.org.



Small Grants – Local Action – Better Lives

11 Broadway, Suite 510, New York, NY 10004
(212) 213-0622 www.vgif.org

ONE-YEAR GRANT HIGHLIGHTS: 2016–17



Life Bloom Services International (LBSI)

LBSI will provide a strength-based training program for women leaving the sex work industry. They will utilize peer mentoring to help participants create a new source of income for themselves, raise their standard of living, and support their households.



Radhakrishnan Charitable Trust (R.K. Trust)

R.K. Trust will provide education and awareness on legal rights and processes so that women feel empowered and able to demand justice and accountability for human rights violations.

NEW ONE-YEAR GRANTS: 2016–17

Human Dimension

Improvement of the Quality of Life of Rural Women through Health and Nutritional Education *Albania*

Asociación de Mujeres Migrantes y Refugiadas en Argentina (AMUMRA)

Strengthening the Process of Empowerment for Migrant Women *Argentina*

Association for Capacity Building in Health and Environment (CASE)

Accelerate Safe Motherhood to Save Lives *Burkina Faso*

Group of Women that Strengthen their Own (ITEGWA)

Strengthening of the Traditional Agriculture System (Chagra) of the Indigenous Association *Colombia*

Pillar to Vulnerable Women Active in DR Congo (PIFEVA)

Professional and Economic Reintegration of Girl Victims of Sexual Violence in Bukavu *Democratic Republic of Congo*

Jeunes Methodistes Libre pour le Developpement

Renforcement Economique des Filles Mere Dans le Quartier Songo *Democratic Republic of Congo*

SOS Jeunesse En Detresse (SOSJD)

Bring Justice to 157 Rape Victims *Democratic Republic of Congo*

The Feminists Initiative Foundation

Improving Employability Skills for IDP Women and Girls *Georgia*

Sirigu Women's Organization for Pottery and Art (SWOPA)

SWEEP: Sustainable Women Entrepreneurship Empowerment Program *Ghana*

Integrated People's Service Society (IPSS)

Community Level Intervention to Reduce Anemia among Young Pregnant Women *India*

Radhakrishnan Charitable Trust (R.K. Trust)

Legal Aid and Consciousness on Human Rights of Women *India*

Rural Women Development Trust

Rehabilitating 120 Released Women Bonded Laborers through Bamboo Basket Making *India*

TRY Center for Training and Education

Clarifying GBV for Future Journalists: From Self-awareness to Gender-sensitive Reporters *Jordan*

Union of Women Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan

Institutional Development for Expanded Technological Capabilities *Kazakhstan*

Life Bloom Services International

Awakening the Giant Within *Kenya*

Chariots of Destiny Organisation

Tech-abled: Empowering Disabled Women Through Technology *Kenya*

Maasai Awareness Organization

Sustained Agribusiness for Healthier Livelihood *Kenya*

Pamoja Tujijenge Self Help Group

Building Resilience among Women Farmers in Kieni, Nyeri County *Kenya*

Nafisika Trust

Dagoretti Rehabilitation Centre: Youth Venture Program *Kenya*

Community Integration Naryn

Empowering and Educating the Future Female Leaders of Kyrgyzstan *Kyrgyzstan*

Vision Women

Breaking the Silence *Liberia*

Women Care

Save Their Future *Liberia*

Teams Advancing Women in Agriculture

Dowa South East Girls Education Project *Malawi*

Sain Tus Center NGO

Against Domestic Violence *Mongolia*

Movimiento de Jóvenes Lidia Espinoza

The Power of Narrative *Nicaragua*

Women and Children Development Initiative

Empowering Women through Training on Value Addition Root and Tuber *Nigeria*

Enabled to Enable (E-Enable)

Expanding Employment Opportunity for Women and Girls through Technology and Literacy Training *Nigeria*

Association of Consultants and Experts on Social Economy Romania

START Social Entrepreneurship for Women! *Romania*

Women Development Initiative (WDI)

Women Technology Education Centre Project *Rwanda*

Women Initiative for Society Empowerment (WISE)

SGBV Prevention and Response Project *Somalia*

Dabindu Collective

Empowerment of Female Garment Workers to Live with Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and Dignity *Sri Lanka*

TEAPI USAGARA

Bio-intensive Production for Household Food Security and Income Generation to Rural Women *Tanzania*

The Association of Free Legal Aid Against Sexual Violence

Free Legal Aid for Syrian Refugee Women *Turkey*

Public Health Ambassadors Uganda (PHAU)

Improving Menstrual Hygiene Management among School-going Adolescent Girls in Wakiso District *Uganda*

Community Women's Enterprise Network

Women on the Shelf *Uganda*

Good Samaritan Women's Group

Improving Nutrition among Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Kalungu District *Uganda*

Zinunula Omunaku Women's Group

Income Generation Project *Uganda*

Youth Initiative for Community Empowerment (YICE)

Women Education and Soap for Health Project *Uganda*

Zaam Community Based Health Development Organisation (ZACHEDO)

Economic and Social Empowerment of HIV+ Single Mothers *Uganda*

Integrated Women and Children's Development Activities

Improving Safe Motherhood through Prevention of Obstetric Fistula in Iganga District *Uganda*

Budondo Intercultural Center

Prevention of Maternal Mortality and Obstetric Fistula in Luuka District *Uganda*

Peace Initiative of Internally Displaced Women Association

Purchase of Solar Energy System to Improve Rural Girls' Education in Kakaro Primary *Uganda*

Friends of Nature Association

Mushroom Cultivation for the Empowerment of Rural Marginalized Teenage Mothers *Uganda*

NGO "Center of Civic Society Development Source"

Women: A Driving Force of Change *Ukraine*

Family-In-Need Trust of Zimbabwe

Addressing Gender-Based Violence through Girls' Sport in Sakubva Slum *Zimbabwe*