

# GENDER & DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



## ANNUAL REVIEW 2022-2023



# Table of Contents

Message from the GADN co-chairs .....	3
Introduction.....	5
Who we are .....	6
Strategic objectives.....	6
Gender and Development Network Strategy 2023-26.....	7
Activities .....	8
UK Government accountability.....	8
Racial justice and decolonisation .....	9
Feminist economic alternatives.....	11
Gender equality at the G7.....	12
Our network.....	13
Working with our members .....	13
Membership and network structures .....	14
Communications and publications.....	15
How we are governed.....	18
Board of Trustees .....	18
Secretariat .....	18
Advisory Group.....	18

## Photos on front page:

First row (L-R): GADN Members' Meeting March 2023, GADN Strategy Day May 2022, GADN at Parliamentary Event February 2023

Second row (L-R): GADN Members' Meeting September 2022, GADN Members' Meeting March 2023, GADN Secretariat September 2022

## Message from the GADN co-chairs



The last year has been one of reflection and learning for the Gender and Development Network (GADN) as we developed our new three-year strategy. We are grateful for the support and challenge our members and allies provide as we strive to be more feminist, anti-racist and decolonial in all our work.

We are particularly proud of the paper, [‘What is the role of Northern organisations in global](#)

[justice advocacy?’](#) that provokes reflection on the responsibilities of those of us based in the Global North. The insights from this paper, and the discussions it facilitated, helped define our new strategy and the role we should play as part of global feminist movements seeking to end global injustices. Meetings and workshops throughout the year also provided learning space for members wanting to become more anti-racist and decolonial.

Holding our government to account is central to our role as a UK-based organisation. As the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) developed its new International Women and Girls Strategy, we played a coordination role, facilitating the input of members and Southern women’s rights organisations. Our collective voice called for a more holistic approach to addressing structural barriers to change.

Working collaboratively with allies around the world to promote feminist economic alternatives continues to be a priority. Through our advocacy work with the UK Government and international institutions, we promoted the analysis of Global South feminists, reflected in our report [‘Lessons for a feminist Covid-19 economic recovery: multi-country perspectives’](#). Together with others, we successfully raised issues of care, public services and decent work with G7 leaders.

In the coming year, we look forward to promoting gender equality and women’s and girls’ rights as priorities for the FCDO, ensuring that their new strategy mainstreams gender-responsive implementation across all their operations. Our new briefing on [‘Reparations as a pathway to decolonisation’](#) will also provide the basis for further collaboration across the sector.

Our achievements and highlights in the last year would not have been possible without the hard work of a small but committed staff and volunteer team at GADN as well as a

supportive, feminist board. Cooperative working continues to remain vital to the success of our collective goals. We look forward to working with valued GADN members and allies in the coming year.



Disha Sughand  
Co-Chairs, GADN  
July 2023

and



Piyumi Samaraweera

For any further information about GADN or to become a member, as an organisation or an individual, please visit our website ([www.gadnetwork.org](http://www.gadnetwork.org)) or contact:

**GADN Coordinator**

Gender and Development Network  
c/o ActionAid UK  
33-39 Bowling Green Lane  
London EC1R 0BJ  
Email: [coordinator@gadnetwork.org](mailto:coordinator@gadnetwork.org)



GADN members at a GADN Members' Meeting on 'Building effective anti-racist and decolonial practices' © Angela Gokani Brasier

# INTRODUCTION

## GADN ANNUAL REVIEW

### Who we are

The Gender and Development Network (GADN) is an influential network of UK-based NGOs and experts. Together, we promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls in all their diversity around the world. We collaborate with feminist organisations in the Global South, amplifying their analysis and priorities to global policymakers, and we hold the UK Government to account for its impact on the rights of women and girls internationally. In everything we do, we aspire to feminist, anti-racist and decolonial principles.

### Strategic objectives

**Our vision** is a world defined by social justice and gender equality where women and girls everywhere are able to claim and enjoy their rights, and live free from oppression, prejudice and discrimination.

**Our goal** is to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls in the Global South who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, putting their voices and priorities at the centre of policy-making.

**Our understanding** is that change happens by influencing and challenging those with power, and also by building collective, positive power by working in alliances. As a network, we build and support collaboration among our members to maximise our combined influence. We recognise that how we work is important, pushing ourselves to be more feminist and anti-racist and adapting our methods to reflect new learning.

**Our commitment** as a feminist organisation is to challenge and change the unequal power relations created by patriarchy, white supremacy and colonialism that frame and shape our work. We recognise and seek to disrupt the intersecting oppressions and discrimination that shape the lives of women and girls in different ways. As an organisation located in the UK, we acknowledge our responsibility to hold the UK government to account for colonial legacies and to challenge the international economic systems that perpetuate inequality. In promoting alternatives, we strive to be led by the analysis and demands of feminist organisations and movements in the Global South.

## Gender and Development Network Strategy 2023-26

In 2022-23, in consultation with our members, allies and stakeholders, GADN revitalised its three-year strategy. Our strategic aims, detailed in our new 2023-26 strategy, are shown below.

**Aim: To collaborate with feminist organisations and movements globally in challenging unjust international economic systems and promoting feminist alternatives**

- Strategically influence and challenge the international decision-making processes, policy assumptions and practices that reinforce unequal international economic systems.
- Through mutual learning and cooperative working, support the building and promotion of positive feminist alternatives, recognising the intersectional nature of discrimination and oppression and the neo-colonial context in which we operate.

**Aim: To work cooperatively with members to deliver effectively on gender equality and the rights of women and girls internationally**

- To increase the effectiveness of members' advocacy by enabling collaborative strategising and joint advocacy, and facilitating access to UK decision makers.
- To support and encourage feminist working among our members by enabling the exchange of feminist analysis, learning and information and facilitating respectful collaboration with feminist organisations and movements globally.
- To act as a critical friend to member organisations, providing thought leadership and encouraging best practice and brave action promoting gender equality and women's rights including on anti-racism and decolonisation.

**Aim: To hold the UK government to account for its responsibility to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls globally, and to atone for past and present harm**

- To shift UK political agendas in the long term towards support for transformative feminist policies, including decolonisation and atonement for past and present harm.
- To strengthen the UK government's commitment, policy and practice towards achieving women's and girls' rights and gender equality in its international work providing technical expertise and creating engagement space for our members and for feminists from across the Global South.

**Aim: To build a network capable of achieving our aims**

- Continue to become more actively feminist, decolonial and anti-racist in the ways that we work.
- Maintain and strengthen a membership base that works together cooperatively.
- Secure, and sustain sufficient resources including finances, staff and reputation and use them responsibly.
- Uphold an effective and transparent management and governance structure for the network.

# ACTIVITIES

## GADN ANNUAL REVIEW

The past year was marked by rapid and unexpected changes with inflation surges around the world, record-breaking heatwaves, droughts and flooding, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the escalation of attacks on the rights of women and girls around the world. GADN has continued to deliver successes in its goal to put gender equality and women's rights at the centre of international development policy and practice. We have advanced some of our core priorities, while also supporting members to continue to improve their policy and practice in this important area and ensuring that the views and voices of feminists from the Global South were amplified.

### UK Government accountability

Compared to the previous few years, the past year has seen many more opportunities to engage with the FCDO and GADN has made use of this, working with our members to engage in numerous meetings and informal discussions.

The Network has provided coordination and leadership, facilitating the engagement of members and Southern women's rights organisations in consultation processes as the FCDO developed a new [International Women and Girls Strategy](#). Our collective voice has promoted an approach that addresses structural barriers to change, taking a holistic approach across a range of issues.



GADN staff hear from Theo Sowa at the launch of FCDO's International Women and Girls Strategy

GADN released a [response](#) to the Strategy, welcoming the new commitment to combatting rollback and recognising the importance of women's rights organisations and movements. However, concerns remain over the framing of the Strategy and its combining of important priority areas of women's economic empowerment, women's participation and leadership and sexual and reproductive health and rights, all under the banner of 'Empowering women and girls and championing their health and rights'



which together with 'Educating girls' and 'Ending gender-based violence' form what the Strategy terms the '3Es'.

Our members had the opportunity to hear about and discuss the new Strategy and its implementation, raise concerns, as well as build long-term relationships with the FCDO's Gender Hub staff at a GADN Members' Meeting titled 'The new Women and Girls Strategy - a conversation with the FCDO' held soon after the Strategy's publication.



Panel at GADN Members' Meeting 'The new Women and Girls Strategy: A conversation with the FCDO' (L-R): Sophie Efange, GADN; Jessica Woodroffe, GADN; Disha Sughand, Womankind Worldwide, GADN Co-Chair; Diana Dalton, FCDO; Claire Ambrose, FCDO © Angela Gokani Brasier

With our members, we have also been engaging with the Labour Party to encourage the development of a truly transformative Feminist Development Policy as part of its proposed international development priorities.

## Racial justice and decolonisation

We released the new learning paper - ['What is the role of Northern organisations in global justice advocacy?'](#) alongside a related Members' Meeting titled ['Interrogating the role of Northern international development organisations in combatting global injustices'](#). The meeting featured learning from the newly released paper with two contributors to the paper, Priyanthi Fernando (IWRAW-AP) and Dinah Musindarwezo (Womankind Worldwide), sharing their reflections.

Another Members' Meeting focused on 'Building effective anti-racist and decolonial practices.' It was a vital space for members to exchange some of their key learnings on anti-racism and decolonisation over the last few years. They also shared ideas of good practice across a range of thematic issues including partnerships, policy, advocacy, research, programmes, and organisational culture.

To further equip our Chairs of Working Groups to create an inclusive, safe space within GADN Working Groups, we hosted a workshop on 'Creating brave, safe, anti-racist spaces for Working Groups'.



GADN Chairs of Working Groups and GADN Secretariat at the workshop led by Esua Goldsmith © Freya Woodroffe Northover

In June, Parliament's International Development Committee (IDC) released a long-awaited report on '[Racism in the Aid Sector](#)'. This report recognised the way in which Britain's colonial legacy has shaped the aid sector and is a significant call to action for both the UK Government and the organisations and people working in the international development sector. After a lengthy delay, the FCDO released its response to the IDC report. In GADN's [response](#) to the FCDO, we welcomed their ongoing and intended measures to address some of the concerns raised in the IDC report. However, overall, it is clear that more work is required to fully comprehend and sufficiently respond to the scale of the problems identified within the IDC's findings.

As part of our decolonisation work, in May 2023, GADN produced a briefing on '[Reparations as a pathway to decolonisation](#)'. It highlights different 'reparations approaches' and their value in ensuring transformative responses, stresses the need not just for financial compensation but also for the transformation of the global structures and paradigms that perpetuate injustice and concludes that international development organisations must create political and analytical space for reparations approaches as part of their decolonisation efforts. This briefing was the product of extensive discussions with reparations scholars and activists over the space of the last year, as well as a consultation with some of our key allies who are also exploring the possibilities of working on reparations within the sphere of global (economic) governance.

## Feminist economic alternatives

GADN's programme 'Feminist Reframing of Macro-level Economics' (REFRAME) continues to propose feminist economic alternatives to the global economic policies that perpetuate global inequality. Working with feminist allies internationally, we promote public services and decent work as part of the better provision of care, and fairer international tax, trade and investment rules.

Working respectfully and in collaboration is important to us and we spend time reading and listening to the analysis of feminists in the Global South, which was also the primary purpose of our attendance at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2023.



GADN attends the launch event of the Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative as part of CSW67

We were pleased to work with the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) in its African Feminist Macroeconomics Academy (AFMA). AFMA supports African feminists to better understand and work on feminist macroeconomics with the intention of building a cohort who are able to influence macroeconomic policies on the continent and globally.

As a UK-based organisation, we see it as our particular responsibility to raise concerns about international economic policy to the UK Government. Their recent Wilton Park conference provided an opportunity to debate issues with government officials from the UK and elsewhere. GADN was able to work closely with Southern women's rights organisations, pointing to the need to broaden the individualistic approach of 'women's economic empowerment' to tackling the structural barriers that stand in the way of 'women's economic justice'.

We also aim to promote feminist economic alternatives in international decision-making spaces. At the start of the year, we continued to publicise our report '[Lessons for a feminist Covid-19 economic recovery: multi-country perspectives](#)', promoting the analysis of Global South feminists across our advocacy work. We also work with allies to hold the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to account, most recently by coordinating with other civil society organisations in response to the World Bank's new Childcare initiative.

## Gender equality at the G7

During Germany's Presidency of the G7 in 2022, GADN [responded](#) to the [G7 Leaders' Communique](#) and highlighted progress made on the Leaders' understanding of gender equality, specifically on care. The G7 Communique included the language GADN had been asking for, recognising the importance of the care economy. However, practical action fell short, with commitments limited to investment in the World Bank's *Invest in Childcare* initiative.

As a Women 7 (W7) Advisor, GADN co-chaired the W7's Covid Economic Recovery Working Group, ensuring our core messages on economic justice, care, and decolonisation are presented as part of W7 communications. GADN also presented to the G7 Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment with representatives of the German, Japanese and Canadian governments and attended the W7 strategy and evaluation meeting in Berlin at the time of the Gender Equality Ministerial meeting.



GADN joins feminists from around the world to speak to G7 Gender Equality Ministers in Berlin © Heidi Scherm/Women7

We continue to coordinate with key gender equality advocates within G7 countries, developing more efficient mechanisms for international coordination as well as including and amplifying the demands of Southern feminists and women's rights organisations within the W7 and G7 processes. GADN has also been working with this year's Civil Society 7 (C7) Economic Justice Working Group to ensure that our core demands are synchronised across both G7 civil society engagement groups, and with the Labour 7 (L7) representing trade unions.

Our work on the G7 continues under the current Japanese Presidency, ensuring that feminist economic alternatives remain on the agenda.

# OUR NETWORK

## GADN ANNUAL REVIEW

### Working with our members

Supporting and working collectively with our members lies at the heart of everything that GADN does. Our members' surveys help us ensure we understand and meet our members' needs. In our 2021 survey, our members reported that GADN is a safe space for gender equality advocates. Among other things, they welcomed GADN's incorporation of an anti-racist and decolonial lens and supported our commitment to sharing space with Global South-based feminists and women's rights organisations.

We hold four Members' Meetings per year, creating space for members to connect and network as well as to hear new ideas and analysis. As part of the process of developing our new strategy, we held our first in-person Members' Meeting since the start of the pandemic 'Catching up & Looking ahead' - which enabled us to collectively reflect on our achievements, as well as on the challenges and priorities that we collectively face going forward. Our other Members' Meetings last year covered: 'Building effective anti-racist and decolonial practices', 'Interrogating the role of Northern international development organisations in combatting global injustices' and 'The new Women and Girls Strategy: A conversation with the FCDO'. We also keep our members up to date through our weekly notices and publications on our website.

GADN Working Groups have been active over the past year, sharing learning and strategy on violence against women and girls (VAWG), women's economic justice, humanitarian issues, women's participation and leadership, and programming. Meetings and workshops covered a range of topics, including:

- Women's economic justice, with presentations from the Bretton Woods Project on the World Bank Spring meetings and from the International Rescue Committee on the 2022 G7 and W7.
- Gender equality programming, with a focus on programming with and for young people, co-facilitated by ActionAid and Restless Development, hearing from speakers from Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Colombia about sharing power with young people.
- VAWG, with a sharing of knowledge on the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) summit with a presentation from the International Rescue Committee and the co-chair of the PSVI Working Group.
- Women's economic justice, hearing from Laura Turquet from UN Women on COVID-19 recovery.
- Women's political participation and leadership, with Bea Parkes, Senior Governance Advisor at the FCDO discussing priorities on women's political leadership in the coming year.
- Gender equality programming, about programming with and for older women, as part of a short series on age co-hosted with Christian Aid and building on a recent research paper, 'Grandmother, breadwinner, caregiver, widow,

entrepreneur: Covid-19, older women and challenges for the implementation of the women's economic empowerment agenda'.

## Membership and network structures

Our **membership** currently stands at 169 individual members and 66 organisational members. Of these, three organisations and 57 individuals are based overseas. GADN is a UK-based network and the support we provide to members is primarily aimed at those situated in the UK. However, overseas individuals or organisations wishing to join can apply for the status of "GADN overseas supporter". For a complete list of organisational members, see our [website](#). Joining instructions can also be found on our [website](#).

Our **Working Groups** bring GADN members together on critical themes. Led by members, the groups provide spaces to learn, share best practices, network and collaborate on advocacy. In recognition of the intersections between our various areas of work, our groups are increasingly collaborating on joint initiatives and contributing to the work of the Secretariat. Our current active working groups are:

- Humanitarian
- Programmes
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (email list only)
- Violence Against Women and Girls
- Women's Economic Justice
- Women's Participation and Leadership

GADN supports the **Women of Colour Forum**, recognising that women of colour need their own spaces to gather, free from the marginalisation and discrimination so often found in places of work and across British society more broadly. The current co-lead is Rayana Rassool and former co-lead Saranel Benjamin stepped down in November 2022. Membership of the Forum is open to all self-identifying women of colour who are either individual or organisational members of GADN. To find out more, email [comms@gadnetwork.org](mailto:comms@gadnetwork.org).

## Who we work with

Working collaboratively and respectfully with organisations outside of our own membership and across the Global South is vital to our work.

We are funded by and work closely with the [Bretton Woods Project](#), [African Women's Development and Communication Network \(FEMNET\)](#) and The [Nawi-Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective](#).

GADN continues to work with UK networks including [Bond](#), [Gender Action for Peace and Security](#) (GAPS), and the UK Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health. Targeting the G7, we are also part of [Women 7](#) (W7) with other organisations, including [Deutscher Frauenrat](#) (German Women's Council), [Equality Fund](#), [Equipop](#), [Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative](#), [Fòs Feminista](#), [International Center for Research on Women](#) (ICRW), [Japan Civil Society Network on SDGs](#), [Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning](#) (JOICFP), [Oxfam Canada](#).

Increasingly we ask others to help us review our outputs, remunerating them for their time. Other organisations we have worked with over the course of the past year, particularly for our latest [learning paper](#), include [African Women's Development Fund](#) (AWDF), [Arab Watch Coalition](#), [Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development](#) (APMDD), [Association for Women's Rights in Development](#) (AWID), [Center for Economic and Social Rights](#) (CESR), [Debt Justice UK](#), [DIVA for Equality](#), [Equidad de Género](#), [Gender and Trade Coalition](#) (GTC), [Global Alliance for Tax Justice](#) (GATJ), [International Women's Development Agency](#) (IWDA), [International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific](#) (IWRAP-AP), [Just Associates](#) (JASS), [Mama Cash](#), [Public Services International](#) (PSI), [Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice](#) (RESURJ), [Red Latinoamericana por Justicia Económica y Social](#) (LATINDADD), [Regions Refocus](#), [Society for International Development](#) (SID), [Women's Environment and Development Organization](#) (WEDO), [Women's Major Group](#).

## Communications and publications

GADN continued to use its website to share resources and host a searchable [consultants directory](#) as well as a searchable [global database of feminists working on macroeconomic issues](#). Across our website, we strive to highlight feminist voices from the Global South.

On [Twitter](#), GADN's followers increased from 7,450 to 7,725 in 2022–23. Our audience on [Facebook](#) grew from 24,328 to 24,463 and our [LinkedIn page](#) attracted 4,452 new followers over the last twelve months. Additionally, our website had over 45,000 visitors in 2022–23 while our weekly newsletter continues to achieve above-average opening rates of around 30 per cent.

Our publications are widely circulated and read amongst our target audiences of members, allies and decision-makers in the UK and around the world. The most read publication this year was our learning paper, '[What is the role of Northern organisations in global justice advocacy?](#)', which attracted nearly 3,500 unique visitors in 2022–23.

### GADN's 2022-2023 publications include:

- Response: [Is the new International Development Strategy good news for gender equality?](#) (May 2022)
- Survey report: [GADN Membership Survey Report 2021](#) (May 2022)
- Response: [Response to the 2022 G7 Leaders' Communique](#) (June 2022)
- Annual Review: [GADN Annual Review 2021-22](#) (July 2022)
- Learning paper: [What is the role of Northern organisations in global justice advocacy?](#) (December 2022)
- Response: [Response to the FCDO's reply to the IDC's report on Racism in the aid sector](#) (January 2023)
- Response: [Response to the FCDO's International Women and Girls Strategy](#) (March 2023)





GADN members and FCDO staff at GADN Members' Meeting 'The new Women and Girls Strategy: A conversation with the FCDO' © Angela Gokani Brasier

# HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

## GADN ANNUAL REVIEW

More information about our structure is available on our website as well as in [GADN's handbook](#), which provides complete information on the structure, policies and procedures of the network and its constituent parts.

### Board of Trustees

GADN's trustees are Disha Sughand (co-chair), Piyumi Samaraweera (co-chair), Caterina Mansueto (treasurer), Leila Billing, Chiara Capraro, Alexandra Gough, Lata Narayanaswamy, Bryony Timms (returned from maternity leave in October 2022) and Lee Webster. One trustee stepped down during 2022-23: Naana Otoo-Oyortey (October 2022).

### Secretariat

GADN's current Secretariat staff members are Jessica Woodroffe, Director; Sophie Efange, Head of Policy; Yamina Ouldali, Senior Communications and Policy Officer and Katie Frank, Network Coordinator (since September 2022). Since April 2022, GADN has benefitted from a number of volunteers: Claudia Calvert, Tabitha-Levis Jarsdel, Clara McGrane and Sara Gvero. As ever, our volunteers' work has been vital to the continuation of the network.

### Advisory Group

The Advisory Group works with the Secretariat to implement GADN's annual work plan and leads on issues not covered by our working groups. It comprises representatives of the different parts of the network.

# FUNDING

## GADN ANNUAL REVIEW

Our membership fees and core grants from member organisations are crucial to allowing us to work flexibly and respond to changing external circumstances. In 2022-23, we received core funding from ActionAid UK, Christian Aid, WaterAid and Plan International UK. ActionAid UK also makes a substantial contribution to the network by continuing to host the GADN Secretariat at their offices.

We are grateful to all our member organisations and donors for their contributions to our work. We would also like to acknowledge the contribution that the staff of our member organisations make to the success of GADN.

In 2022-23, GADN's total income was: £256,921.

GADN received core funding from the following sources in 2022-23:

- Membership subscriptions and donations: £25,419
- Members' core grants: £13,500
- GW Cadbury Trust: £30,000

GADN received additional funding for our work on feminist macroeconomics in 2022-23 from:

- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- Bretton Woods Project
- FEMNET
- Nawi – Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective

For more information on GADN's funding and finances, please see our 2022-23 financial report, available on our [website](#).