



Colmena fund
for Women's Political Power

Accelerating Women's Political Power in the Global South

Summary

Colmena Fund commits to invest \$9,000,000 USD over the next two years to accelerate the power of women in politics and to deliver transformative social, economic, and environmental changes for their communities, across the Global South. During this period, the fund will resource at least 50 organizations working in over 20 countries that are nurturing women political leaders, especially those from marginalized and diverse backgrounds, enabling them to thrive and succeed throughout their political careers.

Approach

The Colmena Fund is non-partisan. It is the only fund dedicated to bring critical resources and infrastructure to advance feminist and democratic women's leadership in formal political spaces across the Global South.

The fund reimagines power through the leadership of diverse women who champion democracy and human rights. With an approach grounded in lived experience and deep philanthropic expertise, Colmena mobilizes and provides funding to partner organizations, while strengthening the enabling environment to advance the power of women political leaders.

Colmena supports partners in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Thailand, Philippines, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, and Uganda to implement projects serving diverse and historically marginalized communities, including youth, LGBT+, Afro-descendant, Dalit, Indigenous women. These initiatives address critical issues through a wide range of strategies, including coalition building, targeted training programs, the development of technological tools, and narrative change through storytelling.





Colmena fund
for Women's Political Power

In the coming years, Colmena's grantmaking portfolios will focus on critical areas such as:

- Countering technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) to deliver transformative democracies
- Women leading peace, transition, and democratic futures
- The transformative power of women's political leadership in climate action
- Amplifying the political leadership of African and Asian women

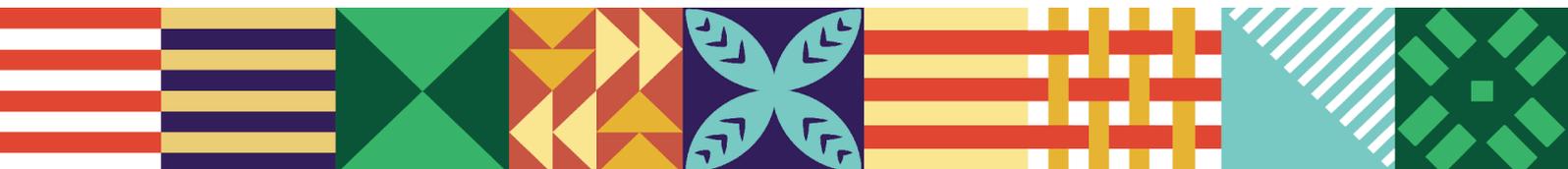
Background

Women political leaders from marginalized and diverse backgrounds are crucial for driving transformational change in formal politics. However, they face institutional and cultural barriers, as well as violence and discrimination, that prevent them from entering and sustaining their roles in formal politics.

In 2024, a record number of countries held elections, but the global share of women parliamentarians rose only minimally, from 26.9 percent to 27.2 percent (IPU Parline, 2025). Out of 31 presidential contests, only 5 produced female winners: Iceland, Mexico, Moldova, North Macedonia, and Namibia (Brechenmacher, 2025).

These barriers are aggravated in the context of concerted global and transnational efforts against achieving gender equality; escalating conflicts worldwide; increasing climate disasters; undermining bodily autonomy; shrinking civic actors and democratic spaces; and significant reductions of budgets for advancing gender equality, climate action, democracy, and human rights.

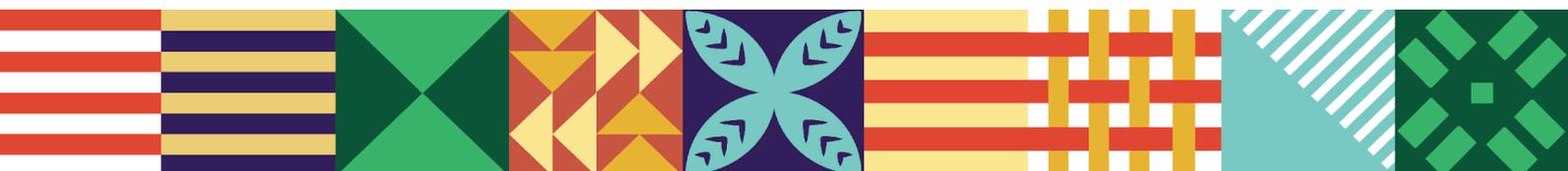
Despite these adversities, women political leaders from marginalized and diverse backgrounds promote inclusive policies, advance economic empowerment, foster environmental sustainability, and secure lasting peace and stability. They continue to go against the status quo and remain vital in dismantling long-standing systems of oppression.





Grantmaking portfolios

- Asia regional portfolio: Support 10 organizations working with diverse women in politics and those seeking to enter formal politics at local and national levels over three years to seize democratic openings to advance democracy, human rights, and political representation of women, especially those from marginalized communities.
- Contexts of conflict and transition: 1) Implement a co-creation convening that calls for proposals with key diverse stakeholders in the Global South to understand and scale effective strategies to increase protection of women political leaders; 2) Issue call for proposals to invest in innovative initiatives that advance women's political leaderships in contexts of closed democratic spaces and/or in conflict and act upon opportunities of democratic openings over three years.
- Countering technology-facilitated gender based violence: 1) Implement a co-creation convening for proposals with key stakeholders in the Global South to understand/scale effective strategies to protect women political leaders from TFGBV; 2) Issue a call for proposals to invest in innovative initiatives that counter TFGBV, provide timely support, assistance, and training to help women political leaders navigate TFGBV over 2 years.
- Africa regional portfolio: 1) Implement a co-creation convening to inform the call for proposals with a diverse array of key stakeholders across Africa; 2) Issue a call for proposals to invest in innovative initiatives that leverage democratic opportunities and build sustainable political infrastructure.
- Promoting climate policy and action portfolio: 1) Co-create convenings with key diverse climate justice stakeholders from the Global South to explore parameters and priorities for investments; 2) Issue call for proposals to invest in organizations that are strengthening capacities needed for meaningful engagement in climate decision-making spaces and negotiations; and facilitate access to climate negotiations and decision-making spaces at local, national, regional, and international levels.





Colmena fund
for Women's Political Power

Partnership opportunities

To advance this commitment, the Colmena Fund seeks increased investment from public and private donors to advance the intersections of democracy, women's political leadership, and civic engagement.

The fund aims to establish partnerships with frontline organizations within the women's political leadership ecosystem. These organizations, which are led by individuals from historically marginalized communities, provide technical assistance, strengthen leadership skills, and work directly with women political leaders from the Global Majority.

Furthermore, the Colmena Fund endeavors to expand its engagement and mobilize greater support by forging strategic alliances with changemakers, civic leaders, philanthropic organizations, governments, and women in politics. These partnerships will help scale financial resources, foster collaboration across the entire ecosystem, and influence the platforms and campaigns that shape women's political participation.

