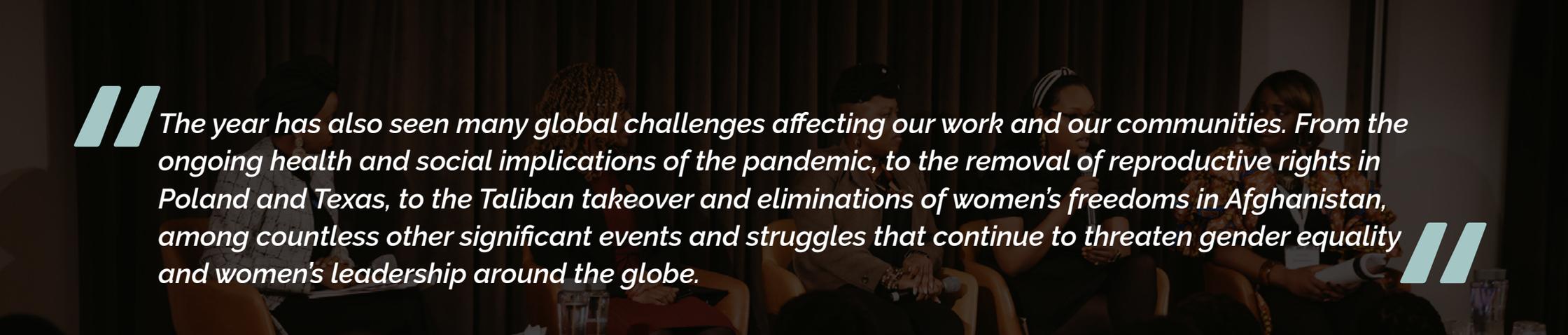




# 2021

OUR YEAR OF IMPACT



*The year has also seen many global challenges affecting our work and our communities. From the ongoing health and social implications of the pandemic, to the removal of reproductive rights in Poland and Texas, to the Taliban takeover and eliminations of women's freedoms in Afghanistan, among countless other significant events and struggles that continue to threaten gender equality and women's leadership around the globe.*

**Dear Women in Dev network,**

*As we approach the end of 2021, it is with great pleasure that we present to you the following report on our activities and progress throughout the year.*

*2021 has seen the Women in Dev network grow and flourish, as we have introduced a range of new activities and experimented with different ways of engaging our members in advocacy - from op-eds to online Masterclasses and more.*

*The year has also seen many global challenges affecting our work and our communities. From the ongoing health and social implications of the pandemic, to the removal of reproductive rights in Poland and Texas, to the Taliban takeover and eliminations of women's freedoms in Afghanistan, among countless other significant events and struggles that continue to threaten gender equality and women's leadership around the globe.*

*Within our sector, we have seen continued failings to deal with deep-rooted problems, such as racist legacies and toxic work environments, and the latest reporting on [Gutmacher's mass resignations](#) show that if these issues are not dealt with properly, good people will leave. There is still so much work to do the change the way the sector functions to better*

*serve communities and the people working to advance gender equality.*

*With the goal of mobilising around a range of different issues related to gender and international development - while centering on our three calls to action of women's leadership, feminist leadership principles, and funding practices - our advocacy has spotlighted these various topics and moments that have caught the world's attention this past year.*

*As we move forward, we are proud of what Women in Dev has accomplished so far and will continue to leverage the experiences and expertise of our ever-expanding network to drive dialogues, inform our collective learning and together, identify opportunities and solutions to changing the way the sector functions.*

*In community and solidarity,*

**The Women in Dev Steering Committee**



# Steering Committee

Women in Dev is governed by experts in the field who accepted our invitation to join the Steering Committee. The current 11-women team, spanning geographies and areas of expertise, provides expert guidance on key issues we focus on and has been supporting the network in different activities.

The Steering Committee members who have led Women in Dev throughout 2021 are:



**Helene Wolf**

Chair and Co-Founder of FAIR SHARE of Women Leaders



**Ida Horner**

Chairperson of Let Them Help Themselves



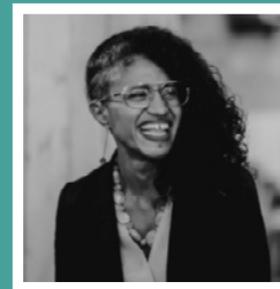
**Janet Mbugua**

Media Personality & Founder of Inua Dada Foundation



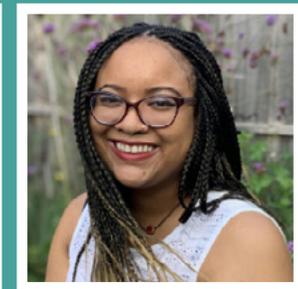
**Melissa Kilby**

Executive Director of Girl Up



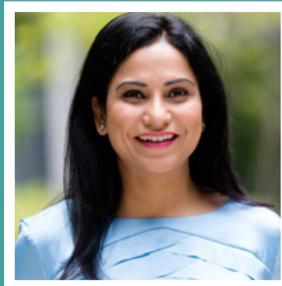
**Natalia-Nana Lester-Bush**

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Specialist



**Olivia Andrews**

Fundraiser, and Campaigner



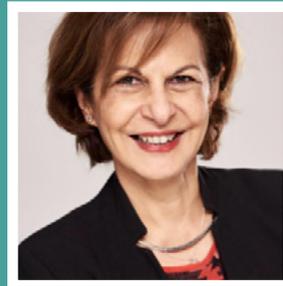
**Dr. Roopa Dhatt**

Executive Director & Co-Founder of Women in Global Health



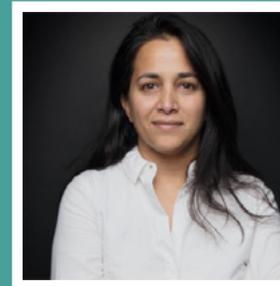
**Dr. Sethunya Mosime**

Head of Sociology Department, University of Botswana



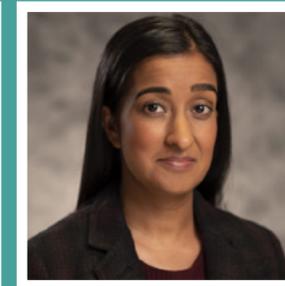
**Shada Islam**

Advisor and Commentator on Europe, Africa, Asia, Geopolitics, Trade, and Inclusion



**Uma Mishra-Newbery**

Social Justice and Women's Rights Leader and Initiator and Facilitator of the Racial Equity Index



**Dr. Zara Ahmad**

U.S. Government Affairs Lead for CDC's COVID-19 Response



# Network-Building

Being the first-ever conference of its kind, the 2020 Women in Dev inaugural conference set the foundation for the creation of an inclusive and vibrant community. Starting from 400 conference attendees, the WID network is now made up of 4,230 organisations and individuals.

In 2021, we saw the network grow rapidly as the world continued to grapple with the pandemic and its devastatingly heavy, gendered impact on women and families. Throughout the year, we came together to engage with some of these issues, providing a platform for the women in our network to share their unique knowledge and experience and, in doing so, continued to ensure the members in the network felt represented and understood.

We worked with Sara Hussein on a WID blog post entitled "[The Tide is Turning. Why silence on Palestine is no longer an option](#)" on the reality of Palestinians – and the surge in local women's movements and grassroots activism around this "anti-colonial, anti-racist struggle".

We also worked with two former Afghan refugees – firstly with a former panellist at our inaugural conference, Rabia Nasimi, on the op-ed - "[I was an Afghan refugee – believe me, acts of kindness make a big difference in a crisis](#)" - which was published in the UK's national newspaper, the Independent. And then more recently with Silsila Mahboub, who we helped to craft her unique story as an Afghan asylum seeker and former TV and radio presenter looking to start a new life in Bulgaria - while channeling her experience into refugee rights activism - into the blog post, "[From Afghanistan to Bulgaria: Finding Purpose in Displacement.](#)"

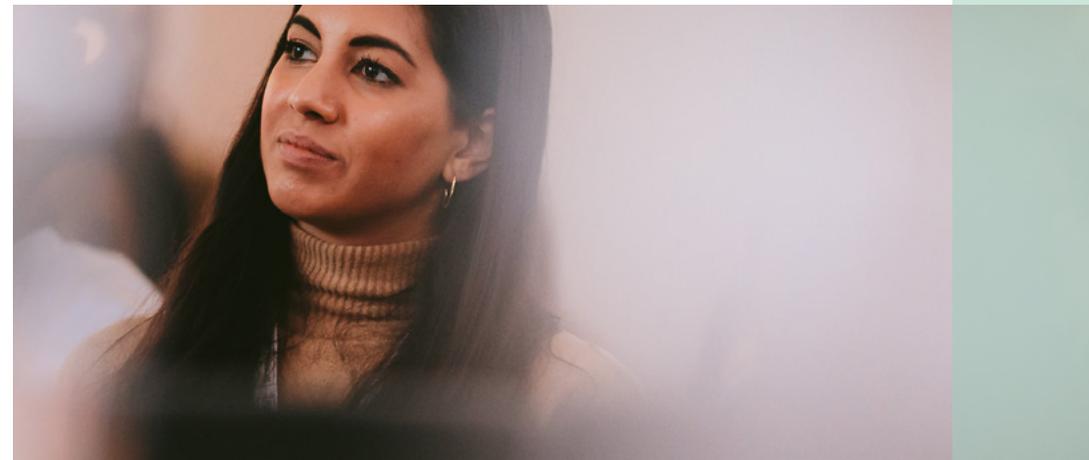
Furthermore, we featured an article written by our network member, White Ribbon Alliance former CEO, Betsy McCallon - "[Reflections](#)

[from an Activist-Turned-CEO.](#)" Here, Betsy reflects on leadership, movement building, sector-wide "stuckness" and other lessons learned on her journey from activist to CEO of a major women's rights organisation.

Our last blog post of 2021 was by Women in Dev Founder, Rachel Firth. "[Why We Surveyed 30,000+ Women During the Pandemic](#)" explores the importance of gender data when tackling ongoing gender inequalities – especially gender-based violence – tying in reflections on the "Global Count" campaign launched at the beginning of the year with Women's March Global.

Finally, in response to the overwhelming need for better access to job opportunities from members of our network, we launched the WID Jobs Board in January 2021. The job listings are updated on a weekly basis with the latest gender, health, and global justice opportunities. To date, the WID Jobs Board has listed over 100 jobs from 40 global organisations.

As we look forward to 2022, the WID network will continue to seek new collaborative partnerships as well as provide a platform and opportunities for our members at all times, looking to profile the expertise and knowledge that exists within the network, so we can continue to learn from and with one another.



# Capacity-Building

This year, we hosted several different spaces to advance shared learning within the community including webinars, Masterclasses, Q&As on key topics with experts from within the WID community, and our very own Women in Dev Podcast. We are excited to continue this work, bringing more learning and sharing opportunities to our community, figuring out what works, what's useful, and from there continuing to build and refine our services.

- **Webinars**

Following the conference, we held a series of dialogues focused on some of the critical issues we were facing as a sector and as a global community. These included:

- [Gender and Leadership](#)
- [Donors and Movements](#)
- [Power and Privilege](#)

This year, we have continued to host thought-provoking dialogues on relevant topics and/or current events that were taking place. This included an [UNGA side event on Equitable relationships between donors and grantees](#) - where Steering Committee members Dr. Roopa Dhatt and Uma Mishra-Newbery joined several others from the wider network for a lively panel discussion. The webinar was centred on the fact that in order to ensure true equity across the sector, donors and grantees must unite in their shared values and ambitions, to combine the donor's resources with the grantee's on-the-ground knowledge of how these can be translated into tangible changes. This session was one of many steps needed to build shared understanding and agendas for change between donors and implementing partners.

In March, to commemorate International Women's Day, we also co-hosted a WOW Festival session on "[Now or Never: The Urgent](#)

[Need for Data on ALL Women](#)" exploring the Global Count data that was gathered so far, and how such data on women and gender-diverse people worldwide is critical for sustainable solutions to the challenges impacting women across different demographics and geographies.

- **Masterclass**

In October, we held our first [Masterclass on feminist leadership in practice](#). As a network of movements, women's rights organisations, NGOs, INGOs, donors, and institutions, we wanted to convene a conversation on feminist leadership to share best practices from the sector and examples on how to apply the model. Lisa Hey and Helene Wolf from one of our Steering Committee members' organisations, FAIR SHARE of Women Leaders, co-hosted and moderated this session. They were joined by a guest speaker from the network, global women's leadership and anti-FGM activist, Nice Nailantei Leng'ete, representing Amref Health Africa and Nice Place Foundation.

The speakers shared their life experiences and how they had individually applied feminist leadership principles in their professional or personal lives. We had a positive response from the network and moving forward, we will be bringing together experts in the field to share their skills on various additional topic areas in the realm of gender, social justice, and international development.

- **Q&A**

During August's International Youth Week, we launched our flagship "Q&A: in conversation with" series via Instagram Live. The aim of this series is to host more informal, candid, and open discussions on various topics. Our first conversation - led by Steering Committee

member Olivia Andrews and network member Tikhala Itaye, Global She Decides Movement Champion and Executive Director of HeR Liberty Malawi - brought together young people in the network to discuss what they felt needed to change for meaningful youth engagement.

Our second and most recent Q&A took place in November on the topic "[Accountability for Afghanistan: How should the Global Community react and intervene?](#)" Our Steering Committee member, Shada Islam, joined global refugee rights activist, Anila Noor, and young Afghan refugee and activist Silsila Mahboub - to bring their various experiences and areas of expertise to this interactive conversation. Participants explored the responsibilities of Western countries, Islamic countries, and the International Development sector in relation to the crisis, as well as the truth about the Afghan refugee experience.

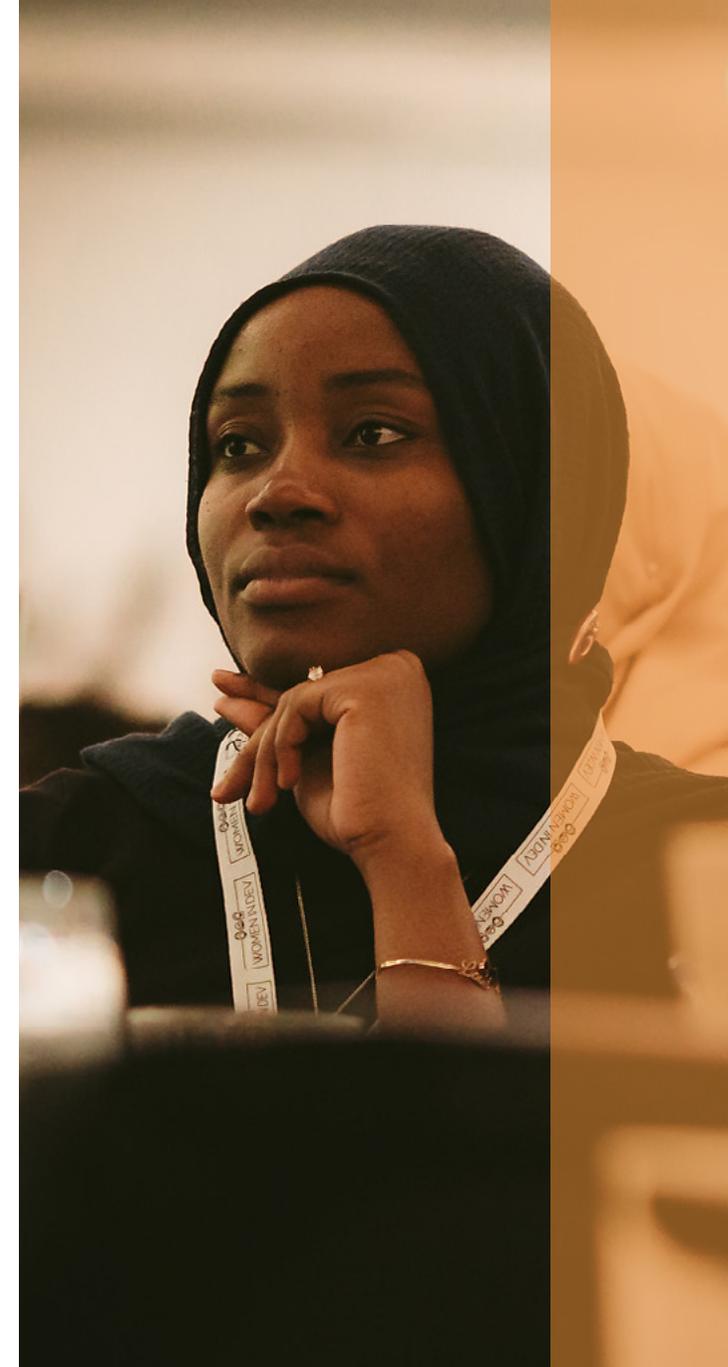
We will continue to explore different topics and presentation possibilities through the Q&A series, and call upon our network to share their topics of interest and guests to engage with.

- **Podcast**

In September, we kicked off our podcast series, Women in Dev: the Podcast (on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [Amazon](#), and [Podbean](#)), as a way to engage our network and wider audience through a new medium. We wanted to tackle some of the big issues facing our sector and invite experts in the field to hold in-depth conversations, beyond what we can do in an event or webinar.

To date, we have recorded three episodes. The first one with Kavita Ramdas - president and CEO of the Nathan Cummings Foundation who is a globally recognised advocate for gender equity and justice; One with GG Phaladi - philanthropist and development practitioner from Botswana and the founder of the Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project (GPPHP); And one with Evelyn Acham - passionate young climate justice activist from Uganda. Topics covered included accountability around GEF commitments, where organisations fall down when it comes to meaningfully engaging young people, and what feminist action on climate change looks like.

We've had hundreds of downloads so far, and listeners tuning in from over 30 countries. Our top countries so far are the UK, the U.S., France, Canada, and Zimbabwe. Looking forward, we will continue to expand our guests for another four episodes this season and try to drive listeners from a wider variety of countries.





## A Global Mapping Project



## Campaigns

In January 2021, we worked alongside Women's March Global and a vast network of over 80 partners and WMG Chapters worldwide to launch the [Global Count](#). This anonymous online poll for women and gender-diverse people to have their say about the issues that impact them in a way that ensures intersectional voices and priorities are counted by ranking the issues in order of priority for their personal situation and in the context of their local community.

The [Interim Findings](#) of this data, released 6 months later in time for the Generation Equality Forum, revealed that violence, harassment, and abuse is the number one priority issue for women in every single one of the 173 countries represented by our 31,600 respondents.

As we come close to one year post-launch, we are now in the process of working with Women's March Global to further clean and analyse this data as we plan for 2022's January mobilisation - with more specific results from this powerful pool of data from women and gender-diverse people all around the world.



# Looking ahead

The Women in Dev network and community came out of our inaugural conference in 2020. Since that time, we have continued to evolve; adapting to the new normal and responding to the needs of our community.

At times, we have been quiet as the team behind Women in Dev also adapt, find their feet, build processes that work and, most importantly, ensure that everything that we do is in service of the community so that our work and advocacy is intentional and advances our collective goals to:

1. Transform funding practices
2. Instill feminist leadership models
3. Increase women's leadership

Looking ahead to 2022, we look forward to kicking off the year by supporting our partner Women's March Global around their annual action to set the tone for a year of solidarity and progress both within and beyond the sector - and more broadly, continuing to trial new ways of connecting and advocating to strengthen and amplify Women in Dev's reach and impact.

We have had incredible guest speakers for our events this year and we hope to continue bringing experts from within the community on each topic we discuss. We want to continue to have these radical conversations that will call for and drive change within the sector, providing our community with a platform to hold these conversations, openly, candidly, and intentionally. We are so excited for the year ahead, to continue our work and learning with you all.



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WOMEN IN DEV