



# POST CONFERENCE REPORT





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# LETTER FROM WOMEN DELIVER STAFF

**In October 2007, Women Deliver held its first international convening in London with nearly 2,000 advocates, researchers, policymakers, and global leaders from 115 countries.**

Since then, we have held triennial in-person and virtual convenings across the world, taking us to Washington, D.C., Kuala Lumpur, Copenhagen, and Vancouver. [The Women Deliver 2023 Conference](#) (WD2023), held in Kigali, Rwanda, was our first convening since the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were energized to see 6,300 in-person and over 10,000 virtual like-minded and passionate attendees in a unified space, where we could address and celebrate our diversity and persistence in the face of the tactics the anti-rights movement uses to deny people their rights. At WD2023, we were encouraged to see our collective focus, enthusiasm, creativity, and technical strength. This energy and commitment will continue to sustain our movement for years to come.

Under the theme “Spaces, Solidarity, and Solutions,” WD2023 brought the Conference to the African continent for the first time and was developed in co-creation with numerous partners, who committed their time, expertise, funding, and insights to ensure that WD2023 was a space that reflected our collective needs and experiences. Our time in Kigali provided us with a much-needed opportunity to connect with feminist movements, enabling them to participate in and have access to international networks, resources, and funding opportunities.

As part of our continued commitment to create safe and inclusive spaces that center people’s experiences at the heart of solutions to address inequalities, WD2023 was our most inclusive Conference yet. With accessibility features for in-person and virtual delegates, including interpretation and sign language at plenary and concurrent sessions, we did our best to ensure that people of different abilities were able to enjoy and engage in the Conference. We also included safeguarding measures to ensure that the Conference was a safe space, free from any abuse, harassment, neglect, or exploitation, especially for young people in all their diverse identities. We worked tirelessly with the Government of Rwanda to ensure that Conference was a celebratory, welcoming, and safe space for LGBTQIA+ delegates in attendance. Lastly, we developed the WD2023 Mobile App, designed to help delegates access the in-person conference floor plan, transportation schedules, and sessions program, all to enable them to maximize their experience.

At WD2023, discussions ranged from addressing sexual and reproductive health (SRH), reproductive rights, climate change, financing for women’s health, the anti-rights movement, and much more. Through these discussions we are proud to see the emerging key outcomes and commitments made to improve the lives of women and girls globally.

Though we have made progress, we still have ways to go in strengthening our movement and addressing the structural barriers that limit the potential of women and girls. However, convenings like WD2023 provide spaces in which we can unite and celebrate our differences – as well as hold leaders and others, including Women Deliver, accountable. For instance, the criticism we received due to the presence of Hungarian President Novak was warranted, and we apologize for our failure to prevent this from happening. We will learn from our past experiences and mistakes, in the hope that, moving forward, we continue to grow in a way that helps us to best advocate for those we work with and for.

Women Deliver is happy to share this report with all our Conference delegates, partners, supporters, and funders. Our time in Kigali was a significant moment in which we hope we provided a much-needed sense of connection, collaboration, and solidarity as we recommit to prioritize gender equality and bodily autonomy for all.

Thank you for joining us and for your continued support. As we continue to work together for a more gender-equal world, we earnestly welcome your partnership, advice, honest feedback and criticism, and open dialogue. WD2023 would not have been possible without all of you, and for that we are grateful.

***The Women Deliver Team***

# **WD2023 CO-DESIGN AND CO-CREATION**

**WD2023 was co-designed and co-created to be the most inclusive, diverse, accessible, and consultative Women Deliver yet. Women Deliver set out with the goal of ensuring that the Conference was co-created by organizations and individuals representing the intersectional identities of the girls and women we work with and for.**

**Meet some of our co-creation partners below:**



## **GOVERNMENT OF RWANDA**

[The Government of Rwanda](#) was the host of WD2023 in Kigali. The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion played a key role in the planning and execution of WD2023, sitting on the [WD2023 Advisory Group](#), and hosting the Opening Ceremony and Culture Night for all delegates to attend. The Government of Rwanda generously provided transport services to all the delegates, coordinated security measures, and managed protocol for high-level guests during the Conference. Additionally, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion hosted the Ministerial Forum Pre-Conference, which brought together over 40 ministers from different parts of the world to discuss “*Digital Technology and Innovations, Prevention/Response of Gender-Based Violence and Women’s Economic Empowerment*,” to drive political commitment, and identify and generate concrete actions to obtain accountability and outcomes for gender equality and equity.



## **WD2023 ADVISORY GROUP**

The [WD2023 Advisory Group](#) (AG) consisted of 30+ organizations based in all major geographic regions in the world and representing civil society, philanthropic organizations, governments, media, United Nations agencies, the private sector, the [Generation Equality Forum \(GEF\) Action Coalition](#) leaders, and youth, including [Women Deliver Young Leaders](#). For the first time, one-third of the AG members were selected via an open application process, and 60 percent of AG members belong to organizations based in low-and middle-income countries (LMICs). The AG developed all aspects of the Conference, including shaping the Conference theme, objectives, application processes, and programming.



## **ACCESSIBILITY PARTNERS**

Women Deliver committed to prioritizing [accessibility](#) and inclusivity at WD2023. We worked with advisors and consultants, including Women Enabled International, Experience Dynamics, DisAbility, and This Ability, to co-design and champion accessibility at WD2023, both on-site and on the virtual platform. We also signed onto the [Feminist Accessibility Protocol](#), developed by the Inclusive Generation Equality Collective, committing to best practices around accessibility and funding to support persons with disabilities. WD2023 was also the first Women Deliver Conference to offer simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Spanish, and International Sign Language.



## **REGIONAL CONVENING PARTNERS**

Selected due to their commitment to gender equality and to engage with diverse advocates and stakeholders in their region, the [Regional Convening Partners](#) (RCPs) were instrumental in the planning, execution, and mobilization of convenings ahead of WD2023. As part of the [Global Dialogue](#), the RCPs worked with regional partners to bring country-level perspectives and experiences and share progress and feedback within their own context. Over 1,000 advocates gathered during the Regional Convenings and carried the conversation through to WD2023 in Kigali.

### **Regional Convening Partners include:**

- [City of Bogotá, Colombia](#), The Americas region
- [Arab Institute for Women at the Lebanese American University](#), MENA region
- [The Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women \(ARROW\)](#), Asia region
- [The Victorian Government](#), in partnership with the Commonwealth of Australia, Pacific region



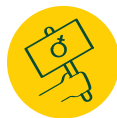


## YOUTH PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Youth Planning Committee (YPC) was a dynamic co-creation body composed of 18 passionate and driven adolescent and youth advocates, both within and beyond Women Deliver's programs. This committee served as a powerful platform for the voices and perspectives of youth, harnessing their collective experience, to provide strategic input in the development and implementation of WD2023 by co-leading the creation of youth-oriented events and programming, and serving as a consultative body on youth engagement at WD2023. Primarily, the YPC lead in the co-creation and design of:

- **Youth Pre-Conference**, a space for youth to learn from their peers, share knowledge and skills, and network before WD2023 officially began.
- **Youth Zone**, a physical space with youth-focused and intergenerational programming dedicated to young people to encourage networking, dialogue, and idea-sharing.
- Capacity-sharing and networking activities in advance of the Conference, such as outreach to youth networks for further consultation on WD2023 planning and mobilization of youth to engage in the **Global Dialogue, Regional Convenings**, virtual program, and in-person in Kigali.

[The Adolescent Girls Investment Plan \(AGIP\)](#) was the technical safeguarding partner for WD2023. The group provided best-practice recommendations on online and on-site safeguarding measures for keeping young people safe during the Conference.

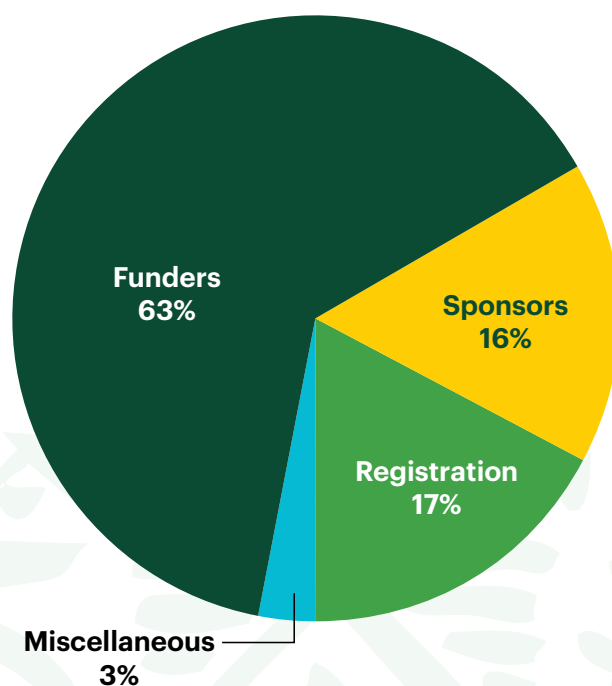


## THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

The wider feminist movement also played a key role in co-creating WD2023, by hosting **30+** Global Dialogue events, both virtually and in-person, in the lead up to the Conference and leading nearly **500** side events at WD2023. But even before all that, **4,480** individuals took part in the [Global Community Consultation](#) to shape the goals of the Conference. These consultations highlighted the most pressing issues that the collective feminist movement felt should be discussed at the Conference. This further sparked a massive wave of enthusiasm to attend WD2023, and following an open call for applications, we received **750** applications to host concurrent sessions, **249** to host sides events and **149** for exhibition booths. Additionally, we received **15,000+** Conference scholarship applications and nearly **2,500** people joined the waitlist to come to the Conference after registration had unfortunately reached maximum capacity.

Even the funding of WD2023 was co-created, with a total of 79% coming from 87+ sponsors and funders.

## BREAKDOWN OF WD2023 CONFERENCE REVENUE



# WD2023 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## WHO was at the Conference



**6,300+**  
**feminists**  
joined in Kigali



**600 scholarships**

AWARDED TO ATTEND  
ON-SITE AND **500** AWARDED  
TO ATTEND VIRTUALLY



**30%**

OF ATTENDEES  
WERE YOUNG  
PEOPLE UNDER  
AGE 30

**86%**

of on-site attendees  
had never attended  
a Women Deliver  
Conference

### Gender Breakdown of on-site attendance:



**78%** female



**20%** male



**2%**

Non-binary/  
Gender Nonconforming/  
Other

### Breakdown of regional attendance on-site:

**61%** from East, West, Central,  
and Southern Africa

**16%** from North America

**10%** from Western Europe

**6%** from Asia

**3%** from Latin America and  
the Caribbean

**2%** from Middle East and North Africa

**1%** from Oceanic Pacific

**<1%** from Eastern Europe



## Type of organization on-site attendees came from:

**30%** iNGOs

**29%** National & CBOs

With over **300+**

Business /Private

Sector leaders, **250+**

Government officials,

and **200+** UN

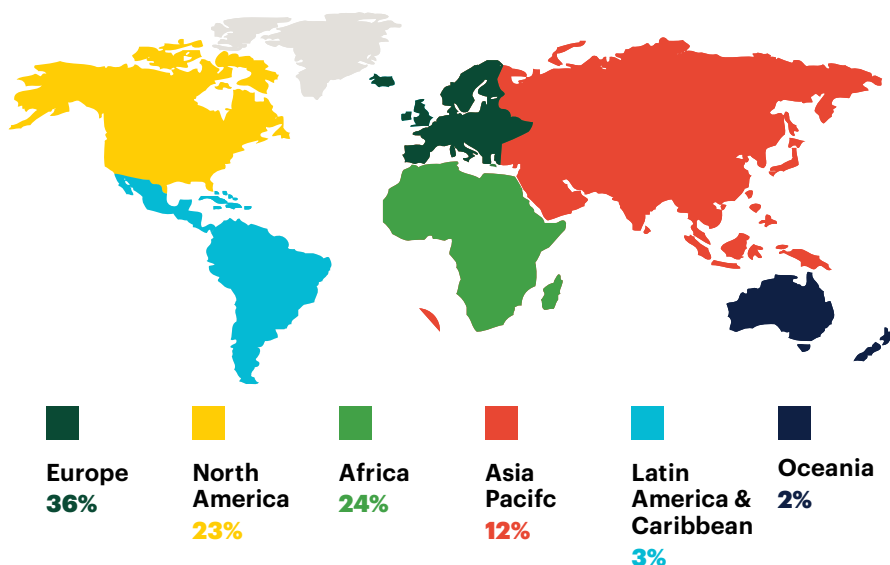
and multilateral

members present



Over **10,000**  
people joined us online

## Attendees by Region





**“ We are supporting follow-up actions to the Transforming Education Summit to advance gender equality in and through education. WD2023 was a useful space to elicit input into this process, to meet potential partners to advance action and advocacy, and to further the momentum for this work.**

*- WD2023 survey respondent*





# ➤ WD2023 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## WHAT happened at the Conference

### 9 pre-conferences

focusing on Bodily Autonomy, Care Policies, Climate, FGM/C, Girls, Maternal Health, Philanthropy, Violence Against Women, and one pre-conference solely for Youth



speaking on **100%** of plenaries and concurrent sessions

Youth had dedicated spaces like the Youth Zone, but were also present throughout the Conference



Social media about the Conference generated more than **33 million impressions** and resulted in a **13.5% increase** in Women Deliver's Instagram followers, the platform most used for live coverage of the Conference

**80 ON-SITE CONCURRENT SESSIONS** AND  
**41 VIRTUAL CONCURRENT SESSIONS** SELECTED  
VIA AN OPEN CALL PROCESS

**200 SIDE EVENTS** AND **OVER 200 EXHIBITORS**

The Conference generated over **1,300** earned media mentions, representing a \$15M+ advertising value equivalent



**30+ Global Dialogue and Regional Convening events**, which brought together thousands of advocates to prepare and set agendas ahead of WD2023



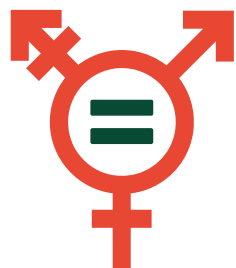
**180 films and artistic pieces exhibited** at the Conference Art and Film Festival



**13 plenary events on-site** and **2 exclusive virtual plenary sessions**, exhibiting 100+ speakers and artists from over 55 countries of all regions of the world

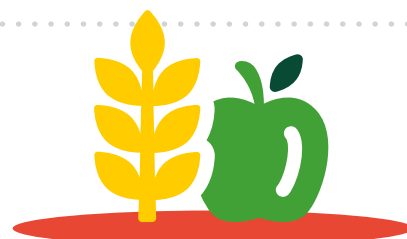
# ➤ WD2023 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## WHY the Conference is Important



**91% of respondents** to a post-conference survey agree that spaces like WD2023 are important to advancing gender equality because of the power of these spaces for sharing and learning, making connections, fostering solidarity, re-energizing the movement, and catalyzing action

**82% OF RESPONDENTS** TO A POST-CONFERENCE SURVEY SAID THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO **ADVANCE THEIR ORGANIZATION OR GROUP'S MISSION AT WD2023** THROUGH SHARING EVIDENCE, CONVENING WITH PARTNERS, LEADING ACCOUNTABILITY CAMPAIGNS, AND LAUNCHING COMMITMENTS



A campaign was launched at WD2023 by over **40 organizations** to close the gender nutrition gap, calling for transformative actions from governments to improve women's and girls' nutrition



Canada announced more than **\$200 million in funding** as part of Canada's SheSOARS initiative, funded as part of the 10-Year Commitment to Global Health and Rights

**93%** of respondents to the a post-conference survey reported that they made connections at the Conference that they believe will advance their work



**11** pieces of research on topics related to gender equality were launched and spotlighted at WD2023



Youth penned a **collective declaration** to COP28 in the Youth Zone





The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, GSK, and ViiV Healthcare announced a new 3-year partnership and **£6million** in funding to help improve gender equality in the Africa region.

**86%** of respondents to a post-conference survey agreed that they felt energized and inspired at the Conference



## The Kigali Call to Action:

United for Women and Girls' Bodily Autonomy announced by UNFPA to accelerate investments and actions, with women-led organizations and the feminist movement at the center

Women Deliver announced its **Emerging Leaders Program** that will put more trust-based funding into the hands of young people



**Advocates (AWRA)** and **Orchid Project** introduce the first-of-its-kind African-led network working to end female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) in Africa





**“ It’s the first time in my life I traveled to attend a conference and I was chosen among 15,000 applications and that gives me a lot of confidence and self-satisfaction. I used to be shy and not talking to people but this conference was a life-changing experience for me. I made more than 50 connections during the conference, and the things I learned here will change my life forever. I will be a real leader someday, I promise.**

*- WD2023 survey respondent*





# WOMEN DELIVER GOING FORWARD

**91%** of WD2023 Post-Conference Survey respondents agreed that spaces like WD2023 are important for advancing gender equality. That is why Women Deliver is committed to curating convenings and moments of connection that advance our collective work. But we are also giving ourselves some time to figure out what that means, for you and for us.

Since the Conference, Women Deliver has spent the past few months internally analyzing feedback and data to fully understand the challenges that we faced and impact that was made at WD2023. Looking back, we have learned valuable lessons in understanding that the co-creation process, though vital, requires more time and resources. More resources are also needed to provide interpretation, prioritize language justice, and improve our transparency processes. What is most notable in our reflections is that in-person convenings, like WD2023, are crucial, with continued support for a virtual conference component to increase access.

Our next step is to conduct an external, independent After-Action Review of WD2023. Our evaluators will be asking staff, co-creation partners, and attendees questions like: “What did WD2023 achieve?” “What went well in the design, preparation, and execution of WD2023? What could be improved, and how?” “What role do large global convenings play to further the objectives of the feminist movement?” and “What role should Women Deliver play in that space?” **Following the After-Action Review, we plan to share the full results publicly in early 2024.**

Women Deliver has spent the last three years working tirelessly to bring WD2023 to life. Our focus, as it always has been, remains on working on solutions to address prevailing gender inequalities worldwide. For now, as we pause, reflect, strategize, and ask ourselves “Where is Women Deliver going next?” we take with us your inputs from our robust conversations at WD2023 as we charter our ever-evolving path as organization and as a movement.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND FUNDERS

Without the generous support, resources, time, and input from our sponsors and funders, WD2023 would not have been possible. Women Deliver is grateful for the contributions from our various partners.

## LEADER SPONSORS



## FUNDER SPONSORS



## VISIONARY SPONSORS



## CHAMPION SPONSORS



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## ADVOCATE SPONSORS



## MEDIA PARTNERS





**“ Seeing the wave of women and feminist allies come together and experience that in Rwanda was such a lift forward. The entire energy, content, and space was inspiring and compelled us to ‘think’ forward and be forward in some of those spaces.**

*- WD2023 survey respondent*







Contact us at: [info@womendeliver.org](mailto:info@womendeliver.org)

Website: [www.wd2023.org](http://www.wd2023.org)

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