

What happened to the money?

Fundraising toolkit for trans organising
in times of COVID-19



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What happened to the money?

Fundraising toolkit for trans organising in times of COVID-19.

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Abbreviations

BPoC	Black and People of Colour
CEECA	Central-Eastern Europe and Central Asia
COVID	Coronavirus disease
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ENAR	The European Network Against Racism
GRA	Gender Recognition Act
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer
LGR	Legal Gender Recognition
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
PSOE	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party
SWC	Sex Work Call
TRIM	Trans Rights Index and Map
TGEU	Transgender Europe

Introduction

Trans communities have been – and will continue to be for the foreseeable future – severely affected by the massive-scale COVID-19 crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has considerably worsened the socio-economic situation of many trans persons as well as their access to education, housing, health, and employment. However, barriers and challenges faced by trans communities are underestimated, overlooked, and the needs of the community are categorised as ‘non-vital’.¹ Trans people continue to face a crisis within a crisis, posing one of the biggest challenges for our communities around the world at this moment.

While there is a dire need for community initiatives focusing on robust support to those most affected by the pandemic, trans-specific data on the impact of the pandemic is lacking. To make up for these gaps, since April 2020 TGEU has been monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on trans communities in Central Asia and Europe. Our preliminary monitoring work² reveals worrying impacts of the crisis on trans advocacy and organising, as well as the deep inequalities minority and marginalised groups face in obtaining healthcare (including mental healthcare), accessing basic necessities, and receiving government relief.

The increasing vaccination numbers of the most privileged (people and countries) could mislead us into thinking the crisis is soon to be overcome. However, there is no doubt that long-term consequences will continue to harm our communities, in addition to the challenges of those further marginalised in accessing the vaccines in the first place (trans people who are undocumented, sex workers, homeless...)

What is the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on trans organising and trans organisations? How can we make sure trans organisations, and therefore trans communities, are not left behind as national

¹ For more info, check TGEU’s dedicated website section: <https://tgeu.org/covid-19/>

² Boglarka Fedorko, Anwar Ogrm, and Sanjar Kurmanov (2021) Impact assessment: COVID-19 and trans people in Europe and Central Asia. TGEU. Available from: <https://tgeu.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/impact-assessment-covid19-and-trans-people-in-europe-and-central-asia.pdf>

protective measures are lifted and economies start recovering? The extent to which trans organisations have been affected is still largely unknown, due to the lack of large-scale and in-depth research. However, the following assessment aims at highlighting some key findings that address the financial impact of the crisis on trans organising together with some tips and recommendations to support organisations in managing escalating scenarios, surviving the crisis and its consequences.

CHAPTER 1

FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

Part 1

Impact assessment state of trans funding before COVID-19

Even before the crisis, the state of trans funding was worrisome and regularly at risk. In 2016, the Global Philanthropy Project published a funder briefing report on the state of trans organising.³ Through a comprehensive survey the report gathered the input of 455 organisations working in 99 countries, representing every region of the world. These organisations cover a wide range of areas of work from legal and policy advocacy to health and social service provision and community organising. The report identifies key barriers to funding and fundraising for trans organisations. These include:

1. The rapidly expanding international trans movement is significantly under-resourced and continues to receive only a small amount of total global funding on LGBTI+ issues.
2. Too few funders are reaching trans organisations, and the limited funding that is given to trans organisations is not evenly distributed across the globe.
3. Trans organisations receive smaller grants compared to other types of organisations that are funded on LGBTI+ issues.
4. Government and multilateral funders have not yet scaled up funding to trans organisations.
5. While foundations are the leading funders for trans organisations, funding is concentrated among a small number of foundations.

³ Scamell, D. (2019), The State of Trans Funding: Funder Briefing. New York: Global Philanthropy Project, American Jewish World Service, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice and GATE. Available from: <https://transfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Funder-Briefing-The-State-of-Trans-Funding.pdf>

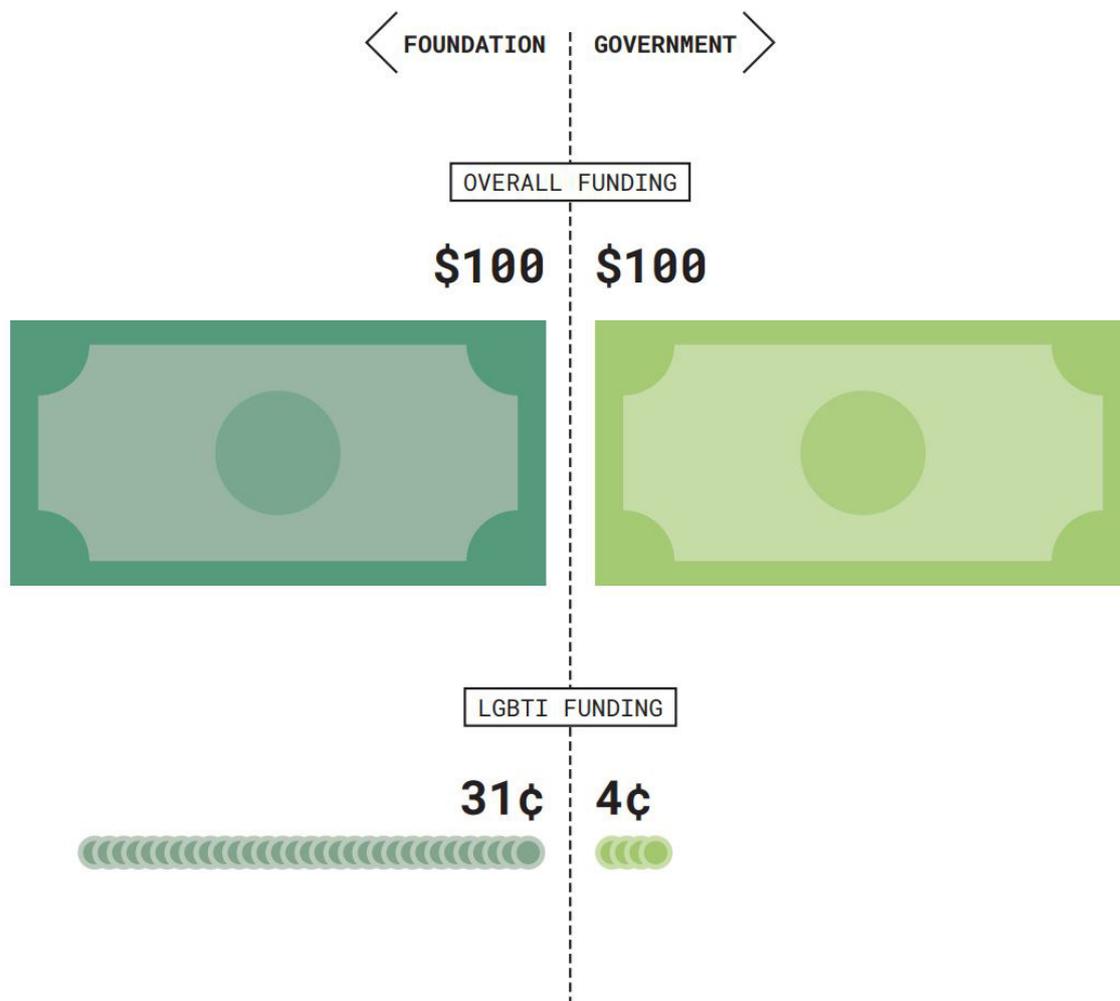
6. Only a quarter of total funding for work with trans communities outside of the U.S. was awarded to trans-specific organisations.
7. Outside of the U.S., there is a significant gap between the number of trans organisations working at the local level and those being funded to do so.
8. Trans organisations working at the international level are doing so with little funding.
9. Trans organisations are at the front lines of the HIV response within their communities but receive a very small amount of global HIV funding.⁴

In 2019, a few months before the pandemic outbreak, the Global Philanthropy Project released its 2017-2018 Global Resources Report.⁵ This report showcases the global LGBTI+ funding distribution and highlights how the lack of funding impacts trans organising. While this comprehensive report is worth being thoroughly read, a selection of figures is particularly relevant to understanding the state of trans funding:

- LGBTI+ funding in global funding:
According to the report, in 2017 and 2018 (excluding funding focused on the United States), global LGBTI+ foundation funding made up less than 0.31% of overall global funding, and funding from donor governments made up less than 0.4% of international development assistance. This means that for every \$100 of overall global foundation funding, only 31 cents of foundation funding go to LGBTI+ funding, and only 4 cents of governmental funding does.

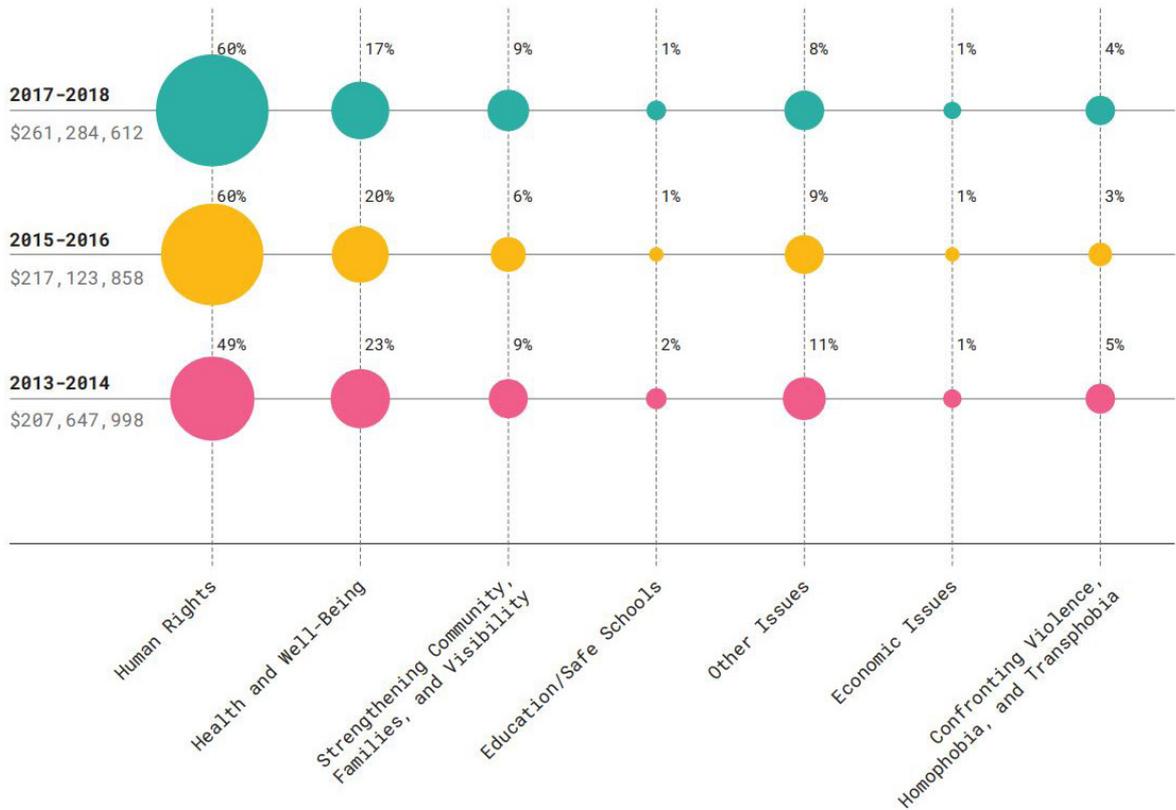
⁴ Ibid. p3.

⁵ Global Philanthropy Project (2019), Global Resources Report: Government and Philanthropic Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Communities. Available from: https://globalresourcesreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GRR_2017-2018_Color.pdf



- Main funded LGBTI+ issues:
According to the report, excluding funding focused on the United States, US\$261 million was awarded to LGBTI+ issues in 2017-2018. Within this funding, 60% goes to Human Rights (US\$157 million), and 17% goes to Health and wellbeing (78% of which was directed to HIV/AIDS). No other issue area received more than 10% of funding.

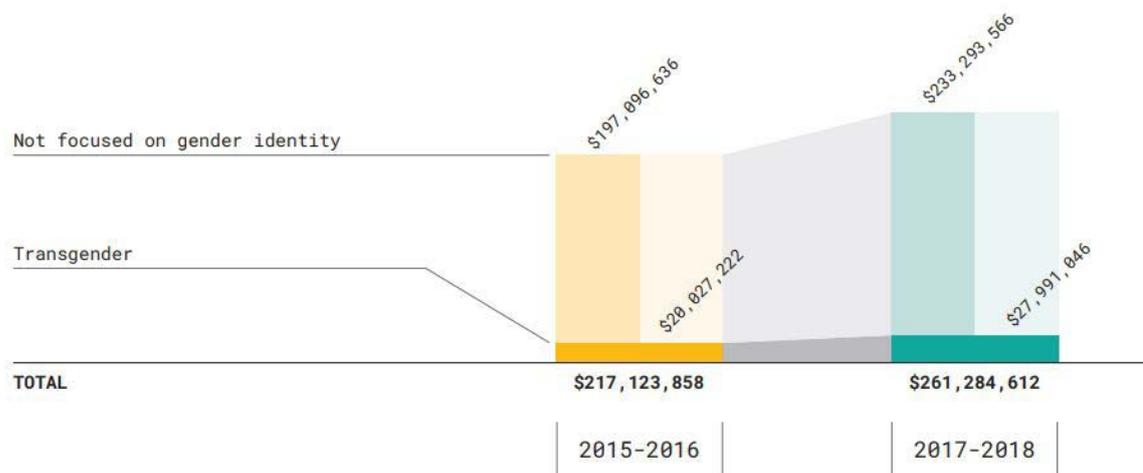
DISTRIBUTION OF GLOBAL LGBTI FUNDING, BY ISSUE ADDRESSED (2015–2018), Graphic source: Global Resources Report (2017/2018), p.38



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- Trans-specific focus within LGBTI+ funding:
In 2017 and 2018, excluding funding focused on the United States, funding awarded to transgender, genderqueer, and non-binary communities made up only 11% of all funding for LGBTI+ issues (US\$28 million).

FUNDING BY GENDER IDENTITY, BY TOTAL AMOUNT (2015–2018), Graphic source: Global Resources Report (2017/2018), p.45



In a context that is not even that of a global pandemic and financial crisis, these figures show that:

1. While LGBTI+ funding already represents an extremely low part of global foundation funding, trans funding makes up an even smaller part (which, ultimately, limits trans organisations' capacity and agency within the global human rights movement);
2. Not only is the LGBTI+ movement poorly funded, but within this funding, very few resources are available outside of human rights, health, and wellbeing-oriented work. This leads to very limited resources available to specifically address humanitarian emergencies such as the current pandemic.

It is too soon to have an accurate picture of how the crisis has financially impacted the trans movement in Europe and Central Asia. However, in the context of the health, socio-economic and political crisis that has hit trans communities particularly harshly,⁶ we can note that:

- The funding needs for trans organising are even greater than before.
- The organising capacity of trans-led organisations has been greatly impacted.
- General LGBTI+ funding is threatened by the strategic reallocation of funds and the global financial impact of the crisis worldwide.

⁶ Boglarka Fedorko, Anwar Ogrm, and Sanjar Kurmanov (2021) Impact assessment: COVID-19 and trans people in Europe and Central Asia. TGEU. p.11. Available from: <https://tgeu.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/impact-assessment-covid19-and-trans-people-in-europe-and-central-asia.pdf>

Part 2

Impact of COVID-19 on trans funding

Impact on our communities

The financial impact of COVID-19 on trans organisations cannot be understood without exploring how the crisis has impacted our trans communities, and therefore our priorities and organising capacities

In times of crisis, those living in the margins suffer the most. This is true now more than ever where the impact of the pandemic is being felt most severely by trans people who are homeless, sex workers, disabled, migrants, asylum seekers, poor, and/or elderly. They are negatively affected:

- By the virus itself. Trans people are more likely to have existing health conditions and experience economic instability than the general population due to structural and societal discrimination. This situation puts them at higher risk of becoming exposed to the virus and of developing severe symptoms.
- By the health care system and health care providers. Trans people worldwide already face barriers when accessing healthcare (denial of care, human rights violations within this setting, lack of insurance, among other issues). These barriers, combined with the challenges most trans people face in their daily life (including discrimination, harassment, and bullying), make them more reluctant to seek medical help when ill. Furthermore, the provision of general and trans-related care has been severely cut in the current crisis while the range of national restrictions (such as physical distancing, lockdowns, and curfews) have taken a huge toll on our community's mental health. Trans kids and youth forced to shelter with unaccepting or abusive family members or relatives face, among other things, high risk of self-harm and mental health crisis.
- By the socioeconomic impact of this crisis. The socioeconomic impact of the pandemic has hit the most marginalised communities the hardest: those who are homeless, migrants, asylum seekers, sex

workers⁷ and/or disabled. Trans people often work in the informal economy, rely on sex work, have precarious job positions and low incomes. As a consequence of the pandemic, many trans people struggle to cover bare necessities as many have lost their jobs and/or homes. Many suffer decreased or loss income, especially undocumented migrants and/or sex workers, and face high risk of homelessness.

- By a parallel conservative backlash. While trans communities are among those most impacted by the crisis, governments have used the pandemic as an excuse to violate trans people's human rights.⁸ Since the beginning of the outbreak, we have witnessed a series of major setbacks in the recognition and protection of trans people in the European and Central Asian region. In 2020, TGEU reported a list of worrying developments.⁹ In 2021, the list gets longer:

Kyrgyzstan introduced a new law in July 2021, targeting the finances of NGOs. This makes the work of trans human rights defenders more vulnerable to state scrutiny.

Also in July 2021, in Tbilisi, Georgia, LGBTI+ protestors and accompanying journalists were attacked by a mob. A journalist died as a result. The government accused the LGBTI+ protestors of being responsible for the violence.

Legislation attacking rights first introduced in 2020 in Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Poland continues to impact trans people on a daily basis. For example, legal gender recognition was

⁷ ICRSE (International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe) and SWAN (Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network) (2020) *COVID-19 crisis impact on access to health services for sex workers in Europe and Central Asia*. Available from: https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/eswa/pages/42/attachments/original/1631372900/Covid19_SWAN_ICRSE_Final_Umbrella_Interactive.pdf?1631372900

⁸ ICRSE (2020) *Sex workers on the frontline: the role of sex workers rights groups in providing support during the COVID-19 crisis in Europe*. p13. Available from: https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/eswa/pages/107/attachments/original/1631371160/Sex_workers_on_the_frontline-2-2.pdf?1631371160

⁹ Boglarka Fedorko, Anwar Ogrm, and Sanjar Kurmanov (2021) *Impact assessment: COVID-19 and trans people in Europe and Central Asia*. TGEU. p.11. Available from: <https://tgeu.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/impact-assessment-covid19-and-trans-people-in-europe-and-central-asia.pdf>



removed from the Civil Code in Kyrgyzstan while the public was distracted by the peak of the pandemic in 2020. It has not been reinstated since.



The Hungarian government announced a referendum for early 2022, presenting homosexuality and trans identities as a potential threat to children.¹⁰



In 2021, a UK Court questioned the ability of minors to make decisions about their healthcare needs when it comes to gender-affirming care. While the ruling has since been overturned, its repercussions have already been felt, with healthcare providers in the UK and Sweden stopping serving young trans people.¹¹



Furthermore, the lack of advancements for trans rights in progressive countries is concerning. The debate over self-determination for trans people has poisoned the public debate in Spain for a self-determination law for trans people. Long-overdue gender recognition reforms have failed (Germany)¹² or have been stalled (Denmark, Sweden). The impact is often hardest for trans minors as age barriers continue to prevent them from changing their documents to match name and gender identity.

Trans activists from Central Asia report the need to go underground with their work or leave their countries for safety reasons.



The momentum of progressive rights reforms that we have been witnessing for the past years has come to a halt and for the first time in recent years, anti-trans laws have been implemented. Trans communities are facing unprecedented attacks from political and

¹⁰ Reuters (21 July 2021), *Orban referendum plan raises stakes in Hungary's LGBT row with EU* <https://www.reuters.com/world/hungarys-pm-call-referendum-child-protection-issues-2021-07-21/>

¹¹ TGEU (2021), *UK Court of Appeal unblocks trans youth's access to medical care*, <https://tgeu.org/uk-court-of-appeal-unblocks-trans-youths-access-to-medical-care/>

¹² Deutschlandfunk Nova (21 May 2021), *Transsexuellengesetz: Bundestag lehnt Reform ab*, <https://www.deutschlandfunknova.de/beitrag/transsexuellengesetz-reformantraege-von-gruenen-und-fdp-abgelehnt>

social actors, including conservative non-governmental organisations (Agenda Europe, ADF International, Ordo Juris, CitizenGo, HazteOir, World Congress of Families), extreme right-wing political parties (AfD in Germany, Vox in Spain, Fidesz in Hungary, PiS in Poland), and small, but vocal, anti-trans women’s groups and influencers (Fairplay for Women, UK). These actors, especially those in the conservative spectrum, are proactive, attempting to limit the rights of trans people, LGBTI+ people, and women – often with the intent to weaken civil rights movements.

This “anti-trans” or “anti-gender” movement targets marginalised and aims at pushing societies away from democracy towards autocracies. Marginalised communities and individuals are particularly affected as the rhetoric used is often nationalistic, and accompanied by racism and xenophobia. It therefore includes direct attacks on Black people and People of Colour, sex workers, and migrants. These hostile environments leave our communities unprotected and our organisations threatened by increasing anti-trans legislative proposals and rhetoric further limiting space for civil society.

Although these anti-trans and anti-gender initiatives often appear to be ‘grassroots’ in nature, they are in fact professionally orchestrated and extremely well-funded. They started well before the COVID-19 crisis but have been accelerated by it. In 2020, the Global Philanthropic Project reported that between 2013 and 2017, pro-LGBTI+ movements worldwide received US\$1.2 billion, while the anti-gender movement received US\$3.7 billion – more than triple the LGBTI+ funding.¹³ A report by the European Parliamentary Forum revealed that US\$707.2 million in anti-gender funding (that often also targets trans people) originated from the United States, the Russian Federation and Europe over the 2009–2018 period.¹⁴

¹³ Global Philanthropy Project (2020) *Meet the moment: a call for progressive philanthropic response to the anti-gender movement*, p13. Available from: <https://globalphilanthropyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Meet-the-Moment-2020-English.pdf>

¹⁴ European Parliamentary Forum (2021), *New report exposes the money behind network intent on overturning laws related to sexuality and reproduction in Europe*, <https://www.epfweb.org/node/845>

Impact on trans organisations' financial capacities

While movement restriction measures and social inequalities increase the risk of transphobic violence and abuse in the everyday life of trans people, possibilities to receive support and other services have been diminished due to the pandemic. Most of TGEU's trans-led member organisations are going through major organisational and financial difficulties and lack resources to survive this unprecedented crisis. Some have stopped their activities altogether until further notice, while others have pivoted towards direct community support, focusing particularly on those most vulnerable and harshly impacted by the health and socioeconomic consequences of the crisis.

In a context where already low levels of trans funding is threatened, this unprecedented crisis has taken a toll on the trans movement's financial stability and sustainability. Among other financial consequences, trans organisations and human rights defenders are facing:

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- Unexpected re-allocation of funds to humanitarian assistance and emergency needs outside of the original funding scope, causing funding restrictions.
- Loss of funding or hardship due to donors' lack of capacity to deliver on funding agreements and standards in a context where trans organisations themselves are harshly impacted.
- Missed opportunities due to lack of capacity to apply for new grants and/or due to changes in global and regional funding priorities.

Zoom-in – The International Trans Fund Internal Survey¹⁵

To better understand the impact of COVID-19 on their grantee partners, the International Trans Fund (ITF) developed a short survey in April 2020 that was sent to all current grantee partners. The response rate was high (79%/N=30). According to their survey:

- 97% of grantee partners said it was very or somewhat accurate that they were extremely worried about COVID-19.
- 93% of grantee partners said it was very or somewhat accurate that it was difficult for them to conduct work on their ITF grant.
- 73% would need ITF to support them by providing emergency funding.
- 63% would need ITF to support them by extending the final reporting deadline by a month or two.

The results suggested that most of ITF's grantee partners were engaged in direct support and mutual aid and urgently required additional resources to meet the critical needs of their communities.

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In a context where trans funding was already shrinking (see Chapter 1, Part 1) and has been greatly affected by the pandemic, the unexpected need for re-programming has led to tension between the immediate need for humanitarian crisis assistance on the one hand, and the longer-term need for advocacy and community building on the other hand. Not only are trans organisations facing difficulties meeting both their communities' needs and funding agreements, but the lack of capacity and resources for general operating, advocacy, and community building efforts is paving the way for a growing anti-trans movement (see Chapter 1, Part 2).

¹⁵ International Trans Fund (ITF) (2020) *Annual report*. p67. Available from: <https://www.transfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ITF-Annual-Report-2020.pdf>

Impact on global LGBTI+ and trans funding

These preliminary assessments are confirmed in a report published by the Global Philanthropic Project in 2021, which brings figures to what many trans activists have been discussing and witnessing for the past year:

1. Governments, donors, and service providers have largely failed to acknowledge or address the specific needs of LGBTI+ people in response to COVID-19;
2. LGBTI+ organisations have mobilised to fill this void out of necessity, providing for basic needs, support, and protection for their communities; without sufficient support from traditional development agencies.

Philanthropic support for LGBTI+ communities has remained stable, with funders offering flexibility to meet the moment; however, this results in significant human rights-focused funding being redirected to humanitarian service provision.¹⁶

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According to the report, out of the 4,467 recorded COVID-19 resource mechanisms only one explicitly described funding to support LGBTI+ communities, and none to specifically support trans-specific communities. Besides this, out of the 3,000 recorded resources mechanisms tracked to the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP), none explicitly describes funding to LGBTI+ communities.

Underfunding has always been a key topic when we discuss challenges to trans organising. Trans-specific projects face structural barriers and lack of visibility, and their funding is small even when compared to other LGBTI+ issues.

Not only do trans organisations face persistent underfunding, they are also threatened by anti-trans initiatives, which have gathered increasing support and financing in recent time. Such initiatives receive three

¹⁶ Global Philanthropy Project (2021) *Where are the global COVID-19 resources for LGBTI communities?* p3. Available from: <https://globalphilanthropyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Mapping-COVID-Report-2021-Final-1.21.21.pdf>

times more money than the whole LGBTI+ movement and contribute to intensifying structural discrimination against trans people and the invisibility of trans-related issues, obstacles that are at the root of trans underfunding in the first place.

This vicious cycle of structural barriers creating underfunding, and intensified anti-trans initiatives generating further structural barriers, has been exacerbated by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this scenario with reallocation of capabilities in order to provide emergency humanitarian relief, lack of capacity to meet agreements, lack of capacity to apply for new grants, and changes to priorities for funding, there is a drainage of already scarce resources for trans-led organisations and trans-focused initiatives.

As long as trans-led organisations are forced to rely on a small pool of donors which does not include governments, major development agencies, and multilateral funders, the movement will continue to be susceptible to seasonal crises and to attacks from anti-trans campaigns.

CHAPTER 2

TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Part 1

Tips for financial stability

Adaptation from TGEU's COVID-19 webinar 'Financial stability in times of crisis' (16 July 2020.)

20 What can be done, here and now, to protect your organisation from the financial consequences of the pandemic? The COVID-19 pandemic might represent one of the biggest tests of the financial system since the 2008 global financial crisis to date. The pandemic caused extraordinary global macroeconomic shocks that pushed the global economy into a recession in 2020. Although recovery has begun in 2021, the ongoing pandemic means it is uneven and uncertain. Many trans communities rely on NGOs to help them through this trying time. However, the realities of the current environment mean that NGOs themselves are dealing with additional demands and limited capacity at the same time.

There are – and will continue to be for the foreseeable future – unavoidable consequences of this pandemic worldwide. In these extraordinary times when COVID-19 continues to spread and to impact almost every individual and organisation across the world directly or indirectly, trans organisations are among those deeply affected. As it is not yet clear what the pandemic will bring in the future, it is important to be prepared to minimise or manage future financial impact. To monitor financial risks due to the pandemic, organisations must identify and use the flexibility built into existing financial tools to support the response.

Here are some tips and recommendations for your organisation to consider in times of COVID-19:

How can you mitigate the impact of the pandemic on your finances?

- Comply with agreed reporting and actively seek support:
Make sure you are closely following your funder reporting requirements and financial responsibilities. This will ensure you receive your upcoming donation tranches in time. Inform your funders about the challenges your organisation is facing due to the pandemic or if any programme is impacted. Keep your donors updated about the steps you are taking to handle the situation, how you are managing your organisation, and how you are supporting staff and your communities.
- Prioritise control over your finances and budget:
Create a plan for managing the necessary fixed costs, managing cash flow, and delaying the expenditures that can be delayed. In short: get into lean management mode! To ensure your programs stay on track, you might need to increase your fundraising efforts and dig into your reserves. It may not be ideal but might be needed in these uncertain times. The trans community needs increased support now and for the years to come. This will also mean more resource requirements in the future. Once you are on top of the current situation, prepare for the next year, including a budget for increased contingency costs for the coming months. Make sure you are involving your board and staff members, too.

How can you reduce costs to increase cash on hand?

It is a stressful time to run an organisation, given the dual responsibilities of delivering your mission and protecting the health and safety of your employees, volunteers and the trans community. Your organisation is being tested under extraordinary conditions and in ways never imagined. To survive, organisations should consider what costs can be reduced immediately to increase cash on hand.

A few options are the following:

- Take a close look at your expenses, identify those that may be

easiest to cut, and do so. But be careful of penalties or other fees related to early termination of services or other changes in conditions.

- Renegotiate necessary expenses by requesting discounts during the ordering process. Do not be afraid to ask suppliers if they are willing to lower or completely eliminate costs for an organisation.
- Contact service providers such as your phone company or internet provider for a better rate plan or other options. Some utility, phone, and internet service providers are suspending disconnections for non-payment.
- Plan your organisation's cash flow and prioritise spending. This includes cash on hand, expected revenue, estimated expenses, and any restricted grant funds that may be released.
- Contact your funders to convert restricted funds to unrestricted funds that can be used for general operations.

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How can you creatively optimise your operations and redirect resources?

There are several tactics that, while not directly financial in nature, that may drive efficient operations and generate long-term financial results. Take into consideration the following creative manoeuvres to optimise operations and redirect resources:

- Use staff spare time to work on tasks that have been put off, such as training or preparing workshop materials. Filter down to the core activities of your program delivery that must be and can be carried out. Assign responsibilities and make them clear to everyone in the organisation.
- Share resources and encourage partnerships. Offer staff who may not be fully employed in your organisation as a resource for another organisations.
- Develop new fundraising ideas for your organisation and train staff to prepare to execute them.

- Contact volunteers for your organisation who may have time on their hands to increase their engagement.

Part 2

Tips for fundraising

Adaptation from TGEU's COVID-19 online training 'Organisational sustainability' (25 March 2021.)

Financing resources are key to sustaining our movement and ensuring we can continue protecting our communities. If you are working at the frontline with the trans community on COVID-19, look for funding opportunities locally and globally. Across the world since the pandemic outbreak, funds and grants are being established to deal with the impact of COVID-19. As highlighted earlier in this report (see Chapter 1, Part 1), most of these funds are not directly addressing LGBTI+ needs. However, with a bit of adaptability, you can find creative ways to apply to access them. Look for such opportunities in your country and region and check if your organisation is eligible. Keep track of government portals and those of local authorities giving any information about support being offered to organisations.

Below are a few tips to build a strong fundraising campaign and a robust application for funding:

Step 1: Build robust organisation foundations



Step 2: Identify potential donors



Step 3: Apply for funding

Step 1 - Build robust organisational foundations:

The stronger your organisational foundations are, the higher the chances are you will develop sustainable programmes. Any given group or organisation should rely on the following three pillars:



STRUCTURE

1. Set your organisation's mission, vision, and purposes.
This is who you are as an organisation: what (what would the future look like if your organisation is successful?), why (why does your organisation exist?), and the how (how are you going to make your vision a reality?). This should be clear to whomever is working with you, whether they are permanent staff, volunteers, or periodical helpers.
2. Clarify your team and leadership structures and ensure you're boosting all voices.
If you have already been working as a team, then these roles already exist, whether you have consciously identified them or not. Make them explicit, reflect on the power dynamics they rely on, consider ways to mitigate imbalances, and agree on your internal organisational chart. How do you divide up work? Who prepares and who approves? How do you ensure to include the voices, perspectives, or experiences of marginalised or underrepresented communities impacted by your work?
3. Develop accountability systems.
Be intentional about the work you're doing, and who you are doing it for, by developing accountability systems. Who are you accountable to? How do you make sure they are the guiding voice? How do you assess the work done and adjust if needed?

PROGRAMMES

1. Define your organisation's areas of work.

We are only human beings and have, unfortunately, limited time, resources, and capacity. To avoid overextension and overwork, you must narrow your programmatic strategy to a limited number of key areas and projects. You need to define those. What is your organisation's expertise? What type of deliverables do you usually work on (programmes/projects, research, service provision, advocacy etc.)? Why, why not? How do you make sure that your organisation is best positioned to achieve your goals?

2. Develop your partnership and networking strategy.

Map out the stakeholders that might have an influence on your programmatic focus. They might be on a local, national or regional level. Analyse your opposition, identify potential allies, assess your persuadable audiences, nurture your relationships with your beneficiaries, and target decision-makers. Be intentional when building your relationships. Who are you (not) working with, how and why?

OPERATIONS

1. Build clear and transparent operating processes.

Reflect on your administrative needs, reporting requirements, legal compliances, budget plan, finances, and accounting system. Are all your organisational needs covered? Are the people doing the work supported enough (e.g., trainings, resources etc)? Although they are key to the organisation, these positions tend to be both overlooked and under-valued. Reflect on segregation of roles and, if you have enough resources, consider potential areas of hiring and investment.

Step 2 - Identify potential donors

1. Develop a fundraising strategy.

Before engaging with calls for applications, you might want to step back and collectively agree on what to consider when choosing a donor. Would you prefer the funding be private or governmental? Would you ideally apply for core, project or urgent funding?¹⁷ Most of the time, we don't have the luxury to pick and choose, and simply apply for whatever opportunities are accessible. However, remember that applying for funding can be extremely time-consuming and resource-draining, and sometimes has little chance of being successful. Being intentional about what ideal funding opportunities your organisation is looking for will help you decide what opportunities are worth your time and resources.

2. Map out funding opportunities.

To optimise your fundraising strategy, make sure you are aware of all the funding opportunities you are eligible for. Map out these opportunities by thematic focus, geographical focus, and scope (e.g., local, municipal, global). For instance, depending on the thematic focus of donors, you might need to shift your project's focus. Be creative! Great trans projects can be funded through grants focusing on topics that might not seem at first to be directly related to LGBTI+ issues: public health, access to education and culture, media, journalism, to name a few. Depending on the donor's focus or funding interest, you might need to find a balance between advocacy work and service provision, as well as between project and operating work. Make sure you assess correctly what the funder's strongest

¹⁷ **Core funding**, also called indirect or unrestricted funding, is financial support that covers basic 'core' organisational costs (administrative costs, salaries of non-project staff, rent and utilities, equipment etc.). This type of funding can be particularly challenging to receive, and to report on.

Project funding is financial support provided (by a private or governmental donor) for a particular purpose. It only covers activities that fall under the frame and scope of the one project the organisation receives the grant for.

Urgent funding is financial support designed to provide security in times of financial distress and unanticipated costs. It is meant for sudden but necessary expenses and is usually hard to be renewed or extended.

focus and interests are and adapt your proposal to it. Similarly, depending on how secure it is in your city or country, you might want to explore local public opportunities (such as city councils' scholarships, local diversity awards). If your local environment is too hostile for that, then you might want to consider private donors, or international opportunities.

Keep in mind that, unfortunately, sometimes hundreds of organisations apply for one grant. Some funders accept applications only upon invitation. It is critical to build relationships with donors and prospective funders. Regional LGBTI+ gatherings can be a great opportunity to better map the funding landscape and meet donors.

Step 3 - Apply for funding

Now that you have all agreed on a funding strategy and narrowed it down to a limited number of application opportunities, it's time to actually apply. What should you keep in mind when doing so?

1. Clarify your priorities and develop your logical framework for a clear proposal.

A logical framework will help you systematically develop, plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate a project. A well-structured logical framework will make it easier for you to present clear and organised connections between your projects, their outcomes, outputs, and activities. Furthermore, many donors already require a 'LogFrame' (see below for an example) or a similar process.

Below is a template of a Logical Framework Matrix (commonly referred to as a 'LogFrame') you can use as you plan your project. We highly encourage you to follow the steps in the order presented and develop this framework as a team. Ideally, the people in charge of implementing a project should be involved in its conceptualisation.

Logical Framework Matrix - Template 1

Steps	Comments and key brainstorming questions
STEP 1: Problem assessment	<p>Assess the problems you are building your proposal on. What issues need to be tackled? This should be the starting point for your project (proposal). Brainstorm in teams. Doing background research can help you build a stronger case.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Look for data and resources on targeted issues you're covering. Parallel to this, you can also look for resources on the funding landscape and the lack of funding for the population you are serving. This will help readers understand how urgent the need for funds is.2. If you wish to develop a community-led project, this should be directly informed by community needs and can be done through a community needs assessment. A community needs assessment is a tactical way of analysing gaps and opportunities in community services. It also determines the strengths and assets available in your community. The outcomes of a community needs assessment helps you better understand what your program has to accomplish to meet the needs of a diverse community.¹⁸

¹⁸ A template to plan and run your own community needs assessment can be found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FcNnprTf1T_heBGUyMhIm10XOx-cw0JutRdGTKNXG4A/edit#heading=h.my6dloslsqil

STEP 2: Project's goal	<p>What are you aiming at achieving? This is the big picture, the long-term goal. You will not solve it alone; your project only needs to contribute to the goal.</p>
STEP 3: Interconnected objectives	<p>What specific and actionable targets will help you move closer to the goal? These are a series of short-term goals helping you to get closer to your overall goal.</p>
STEP 4: Your organisation	<p>Who are you and why would you be best positioned to tackle these issues?</p>
STEP 5: Activities	<p>How are you going to achieve your goals? Resist the temptation to start with the activities when planning your project! This step should only come once you have a clear picture of the problem you want to tackle, and your project's goals and objectives.</p>
STEP 6: Outcomes and impact	<p>What results do you hope to achieve? How will it impact (positively) the problem you assessed?</p>
STEP 7: Risks analysis and mitigation plan	<p>Often, application proposals overlook risk analysis: it is either superficially treated or considered as an afterthought. Thoroughly assessing the risks you expect to take if the project gets implemented, and proposing mitigation plans, is critical to a good writing process.</p> <p>Depending on the scope of your work, different kind of risks can be considered: technical, implementational, political etc. Risks should always be rated according to their likelihood (Low-Med-High) and risk mitigation should always be quantifiable actions (e.g. budget to allow for</p>

	<p>unknowns or timescales to allow for delays). Without it, not only could you find yourself exposed to unpredicted risks and damages with no mitigation plans, but it can lead the donor to consider your project as not well considered or too risky.</p>
STEP 8: Monitoring and evaluation	<p>If outcomes and impacts describe what success would look like, monitoring and evaluation are more about how you will know your project is successful.</p> <p>How are you going to measure your results? This aims at making sure you're right on track and gives some perspective to readjust if needed. It helps you to learn and improve, understand how change works (or doesn't), to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge and makes you accountable to your communities.</p> <p>On a more pragmatic note, this section is often a donor's requirement in the application process in order to hold your organisation accountable for the progress of the project. These indicators are also a powerful tool that can help you to obtain more funding in the future.</p>
STEP 9: Budget	<p>What resources do you need to make your project happen? Make sure you are realistic about the resources you need (especially human resources!). You can, for instance, reflect on the workload increase or management needs that would arise from your project. Remember, if securing money for your organisation is difficult, spending it in a meaningful and sustainable way can sometimes be even harder.</p>

1. Develop a clear application workflow and timeline.

Grant applications can be very time-consuming and the timeframe between open calls for application and application deadlines often very tight. It is even more challenging as most trans activists are volunteers and rely on their free time to conduct such processes.

Do not despair! To run a smooth and successful application process, it is essential to use your time strategically and build a well-structured application plan. To avoid any delays or last-minute applications, make sure to regularly check the latest call for applications of the key donors you identified in Step 2. Furthermore, to avoid your team members disengaging and becoming disempowered, we highly encourage you to run this planning process collectively. Build a clear timeline together, agree on the workflow, assign lead persons for each task and schedule regular check-ins.

Tip: when building your application timeline, work backwards from the grant submission deadline (and always plan some buffer time!).

2. Below is a template of a timeline you can use. These are only examples, make sure your timeline is adapted to the grant you are applying for and to your team capacity.

Status	What?	Who leads?	By when?	Comments
100%	Grant submission			Ideally plan 2 days before the deadline!
	Final review			Don't forget to proofread and check the layout. This will determine whether your application looks professional or not.
	...			
	Team check-in			
75%	Final draft of all material			Application packages sometimes require more documents than just the narrative and budget - make sure you are building in time for that too!
	...			
	...			
50%	Team review			
	First draft of all material			
	...			
25%	Brainstorm on the project proposal following the above logical framework matrix model			General rule: under-promise and over-deliver!
	...			
	Team meeting to set up the process			
0%	Familiarize yourselves with grant material			

Conclusion

Let's get started!

Now it is time to put into practice what you have learned from this impact assessment and toolkit. Raise awareness on the state of trans funding and advocate before key stakeholders. Empower your community members by strengthening their fundraising skills.

Advocate!

The pandemic has shed light on how under resourced trans organizations are, and how difficult it is to address the three major needs of trans-led organisations: the need to respond immediately to public emergencies and crises; the need to provide services to meet everyday demands of our communities; and the need to ensure long-term operational capacity.

When governments and other human rights organisations failed to do so, trans organisations and grassroots groups have given humanitarian relief to marginalised communities, even at the expense of their own sustainability. The role trans organising plays in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and the struggles faced is also an opportunity to break down the invisibility of trans topics within international funding systems and to broaden our funding scope beyond traditional sources and issues.

Empower!

Convene your team and start discussing how you can improve your existing processes or brainstorm on next steps in your fundraising strategies. In time of crisis, the future is uncertain. So how can we expect to plan when we cannot plan? Experiment with the above tools, be creative, learn from others and simply give it a try. The trans movement needs you, whether your group is an emerging grassroots organisation, or a well-established trans organisation.

