

GENDER & DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



ANNUAL REVIEW 2021-2022



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Photos on front page:

First row (L-R): GADN Members' Meeting May 2022, GADN Board Meeting July 2021, GADN Members' Meeting May 2022

Second row (L-R): GADN Members' Meeting May 2022, GADN Board Meeting October 2021, GADN Members' Meeting May 2022

Message from the GADN co-chair

In a year marked by severe cuts to the UK aid budget, a global cost of living crisis, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine we are proud that the Gender and Development Network (GADN) has continued to champion feminist solutions and ways of working.

As a feminist organisation, we are all too aware of the persistent impact of gender inequalities, ongoing women's rights violations and rollbacks as well as wider global social injustices which continue to plague our efforts of creating more equitable, just and sustainable societies. Of critical importance is the need for us to work effectively and collaboratively in order to challenge these injustices. With that conviction in mind, GADN has worked hard over the past year to bring members together on topics of shared concern and play an active role in global feminist movements, proposing alternative solutions to global problems.

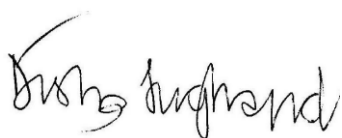
Navigating the new Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) presents ongoing challenges for everyone in the UK aid sector. This year, GADN has worked closely with members to oppose the aid cuts with a strong, united message. We were pleased to learn that the Foreign Secretary has prioritised women and girls in the new International Development Strategy, but much remains to be done to advocate for and implement a more nuanced understanding of gender equality in the forthcoming strategy on women and girls. We are concerned too that British private investment is being seen as a replacement for public funds, despite evidence of its limits in achieving equality goals.

The UK's presidency of the G7 last year made it a major focus for our work, which continued as GADN played an active role in this year's W7 in Germany, hosted by the Deutscher Frauenrat (National Council of German Women's Organisations). Our response to the G7 Leaders' Communiqué, called for public investment in the care economy, progressive taxation and vaccine equity, amongst other concerns. In this, and other forums, decisions on Covid-19 economic recovery are underway, and thus our Reframing of Macro-level Feminist Economics (REFRAME) project on feminist macroeconomic alternatives is proving timelier than ever. Our efforts to promote positive strategies and alternative models, in cooperation with feminist allies around the world, have never been more important.

Finally, situated as we are in the international development sector, GADN is taking steps to acknowledge our own positioning and put anti-racist and decolonial principles into action. Our journey is only beginning, but we hope that our commitment to learning, intersectionality and respectful partnerships is already becoming evident. We know that meaningful action on these issues is critical for the success of our work and the realisation of our core vision.

As ever, GADN is a product of its membership and the time, energy, passion and resources that they devote to our network. The Board of Trustees wants to particularly highlight those members who chair our working groups, sit on our Advisory Group and our Heads of Policy Group, and co-lead our Women of Colour Forum. Our small but mighty Secretariat – Jessica Woodroffe, Sophie Efange, Yamina Ouldali and Katherine Dean – also continues to deliver impressive results in the midst of seemingly constant change and challenge.

Looking ahead, we remain committed, determined and, yes, even hopeful about what we can achieve by working together for women in all their diversity.



Disha Sughand,
Co-chair, GADN
July 2022

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

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Who we are

GADN is dedicated to achieving gender equality for women and girls in all their diversity. As a network of UK-based NGOs and experts, we start from the understanding that women and girls confront intersecting discriminations in their everyday lives. These barriers are shaped by gender as well as race, class, religion, caste, age, gender identity, disability and sexual orientation (amongst others) – and this is further compounded for women in the Global South who continue to live under the weight of oppressive neo-imperial and neo-colonial forces. Our approach is feminist, and we are committed to anti-racism and decolonisation.

The expertise of our members, our strategic approach and global alliances – including our practical global solidarity efforts – along with our independence from government funding make us uniquely positioned to influence decision-makers. We use our role to advocate for structural change and centre the voices of women and girls in international policy spaces and institutions, working in partnership with feminists and women’s rights organisations in the Global South.

We believe that our power comes from working in partnership amongst our members and by playing an active role, as a Northern-based organisation, within global feminist movements. Together, we draw on feminist alternatives and challenge unequal power structures effectively to demonstrate that another world is possible.

Vision and strategic aims

Our vision is a world defined by social justice and gender equality, one where women and girls everywhere are able to claim their rights, free from discrimination and prejudice. Our strategic aims, detailed in our [2020–23 strategy](#), are:

- To support, enable and constructively challenge members to deliver effectively on gender equality and the rights of women and girls in international development.
- To influence and challenge decision-makers to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls.
- To contribute to and support global feminist movements.
- To build a progressive and effective network that is part of global feminist movements.

As our current strategy comes to a close, we are starting to prepare our 2023–26 strategy, in consultation with members, allies and stakeholders.

What we do

- **We offer a space for peer support, collaboration and growth.** GADN facilitates shared learning and collaboration amongst members with the aim of strengthening advocacy and programming on gender. As a network of UK-based NGOs, many of which benefit from considerable reach and influence in the international development sector, GADN also plays a crucial “critical friend” role, challenging members to reflect on their assumptions, analyse power relations and continue learning about gender equality and women’s rights.
- **We come together to shape policy debates and influence decisions with our allies.** As a UK-based organisation, it is our responsibility to challenge the UK government on its policies and programmes. We also work with allies globally to target powerful international institutions. Through our REFRAME project, we promote feminist alternatives to current economic policies, providing concrete proposals to shape Covid-19 economic recovery plans in pursuit of sustainable, equitable and just societies.
- **We are partners in global feminist movements.** Working cooperatively as part of global feminist movements is central to our approach. Our growing alliances with women’s rights organisations and other like-minded organisations boost our collective strength and influence. The change we seek can only be truly transformative and sustainable if it is rooted in the lived experience and shared priorities of women themselves.
- **We are constructing an inclusive, supportive and impactful network.** Our goal is to embody our principles in our everyday ways of working, centring learning and listening in our approach. We engage with members on best practices, provide spaces for challenging conversations and seek out opportunities for collaborations. We seek to ensure that these are strategic, supportive and transformative, reflecting our commitments to feminism, intersectionality, anti-racism and decolonisation in the aid sector.



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In a year marked by uncertainty, GADN has nonetheless delivered a number of key successes in its mission 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 improve their own work across a variety of themes and issue areas and trying to share our access to power with feminists from the Global South.

UK Government accountability

The UK government's cuts in the aid budget caused widespread uncertainty and hardship amongst some of the world's most vulnerable populations. GADN has worked alongside members to oppose the cuts and expose their disproportionate impact on gender equality and women's rights. We began by collaborating on a [briefing](#) with Care International UK and others from the GADN Heads of Policy group. Building on that momentum, we also made a submission to the International Development Committee's [inquiry on the impact of the aid cuts](#).

Promoting gender equality across the new FCDO structure remains a priority for GADN as well as our members and was the topic of a Members' Meeting in September 2021. In our [submission](#) to consultations for the UK's new **International Development Strategy**, and at a roundtable on the International Development Strategy with then FCDO Minister Wendy Morton MP, we raised the need for transformative proposals on gender equality. Once the strategy was released, our [blog](#) outlined our continuing concerns about the effectiveness of private British investment in achieving equity goals. During consultations with the FCDO on the forthcoming women and girls strategy, we worked with members as well as allies from the Global South calling for a transformative approach addressing structural barriers to gender equality.

As part of our work influencing the UK government, we also engage regularly with opposition parties. Thus, in July 2021, GADN made a [submission](#) to a Labour Party consultation on achieving gender equality in development, where we focused on the role of macroeconomic policymaking in areas like the care economy, decent work, resourcing women's rights, creating enabling policy environments and reparations. GADN joined then Shadow FCDO Minister Yasmin Qureshi MP, alongside a select number of NGOs, to discuss and share our recommendations.

Gender equality at the G7

During the UK's Presidency of the G7, GADN worked extensively to promote gender equality at the **2021 G7 Summit** working in collaboration with civil society organisations globally. GADN co-chaired the Women 7 (W7) group of civil society organisations, working with representatives from around the world to develop the [W7 communique](#). Hosting the **2021 W7 Summit** in late April 2021 enabled us to share space with a number of excellent speakers from the Global South who offered their expertise and helped to shape the W7's priorities.

As part of the G7 process, GADN was able to raise gender equality issues during numerous meetings with officials and ministers including former Chancellor Rishi Sunak MP, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss MP, Home Secretary Priti Patel MP, and Jonathan Black, the UK Sherpa to the G7. Throughout, we consistently called for public investment in care services and social protection; more financial commitments on violence against women and girls, implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, financial support for Southern women's rights organisations; and strong language on race and decolonisation. Our Director also represented the W7 on the UK Government's G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC), ensuring that many of our key messages – on macroeconomic policy, social infrastructure and the aid cuts – were put forward and delivered from the chair of GEAC to the UK Prime Minister. In the final G7 Leaders' Communique, we were pleased to see language around a number of our priorities including the care economy and anti-racism, and we also produced a [response](#) to that communique.

This work has continued in preparation for the **2022 G7 Summit**, hosted by Germany, where we chaired the W7 Covid-19 recovery working group with a focus on the [care economy](#). The final G7 Leaders' Communique included some of our language on care, as outlined in our [response](#).

Racial justice and decolonisation

We are committed to modelling and supporting a critical lens on anti-racism and decolonisation in the international development sector. In so doing, we seek to **challenge ourselves, our members and the wider sector**. While much more work remains to be done, our efforts this year have included creating spaces for reflection on racial justice and decolonisation, such as our Members' Meeting in November 2021 featuring Rafia Zakaria and titled [Against White Feminism](#). In June 2021, Lata Narayanaswamy wrote a short [briefing](#) for us on decolonising aid, and we have now begun work on a paper on reparations. Our April 2021 [submission](#) to the International Development Committee's inquiry on racism in the aid sector proposed some recommendations for addressing this critical issue, and these messages also featured in our advocacy with the FCDO and the G7 in 2021.

Feminist economic alternatives

Advocating for **feminist alternative approaches for macroeconomic policymaking** continues to be a priority for GADN, which we pursue through our REFRAME project.

Our recent work in this area has centred on Covid-19 economic recovery. This year, we convened an international research team to examine experiences and lessons from Covid-19 recovery plans across India, Argentina, the Philippines and Uganda. The result was a [report](#) detailing our findings and recommendations for transformative ways forward, as well as a [briefing](#) on centring care in economic recovery efforts. The report was disseminated widely to policymakers, including via a [parallel event at CSW66](#). A [briefing](#) by three academics at the Institute for Economic Justice in South Africa, also argued that Covid-19 presents a rare opportunity to reshape macroeconomic policies from a feminist perspective.

In December 2021, GADN participated in the Global Alliance for Tax Justice's Tax Justice and Gender Equality conference to share and discuss the G7's tax deal and its likely impact on gender equality, especially in Africa, based on a briefing we produced. We co-organised our panel with allies Nawi-Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective, Akina Mama wa Afrika and Tax Justice Network Africa. Our work also took us to a CEDAW Committee Briefing in November 2021, where GADN worked with allies International Women's Rights Action Watch – Asia Pacific and the Centre for Economic and Social Rights. Our contributions highlighted the role and importance of macroeconomics in efforts to achieve gender equality and women's rights.

Finally, GADN hosted a Members' Meeting in March 2022 titled, [Imagining Feminist Futures for a Transformative Covid-19 Recovery](#). At that event, our members benefitted from the expertise of three Global South-based feminists: Rowena Laguilles-Timog of the University of the Philippines, Ruth Nyambura of African Ecofeminists Collective and Kumudini Samuel of DAWN. Each speaker examined possibilities for transformative Covid-19 economic recovery from a variety of angles including macroeconomics, climate and multilateralism.

Members

Supporting and working collectively with our members lies at the heart of everything that GADN does. In addition to our working groups, we have continued to hold four Members' Meetings per year throughout the pandemic, creating space for members to connect and network as well as to hear new ideas and analysis. We also keep our members up to date through our weekly e-notices and informative briefings like the ones listed throughout this annual report.

Working Groups

GADN's **member-led working groups** are a valuable forum for sharing learning and strategy on our various priority issues. (See the complete list of working groups below under 'Membership and Network Structures'.) Over the last year, the working groups have supported members in navigating relations with new teams in the FCDO, held a range of meetings on topics of concern to their members, and produced joint outputs and publications.

In April 2021, for example, the Girls' Education group hosted a two-day roundtable on school-based violence against girls with presentations from Concern Worldwide, FHI 360, Save the Children, Girl Effect and Relief International. In May 2021, the Violence Against Women and Girls group and the Programmes group held a joint learning event on technology-facilitated violence and abuse, while July 2021 saw a joint event by the Humanitarian and Women's Economic Justice groups on economic recovery and Covid-19 amongst women affected by crisis, conflict and displacement. The Programmes group also supported its members' learning on intersectionality with a meeting in October 2021 including speakers from the University of Cambridge, Freedom and Roam Uganda, the Coalition African Lesbians and the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship. The Humanitarian group launched a [briefing](#) on humanitarian response as part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in December 2021, in partnership with the Humanitarian Policy Group, GAPS UK, Fe-Male, the Gender Equality Network and the Gender Violence Recovery Centre. More recently, in January 2022, the Violence Against Women and Girls group hosted a listening exercise for the What Works: Impact at Scale consortium with Care International and Social Development Direct.

Global feminist movements

GADN is committed to ensuring our actions contribute collaboratively to global feminist movements. We share our platform with **feminist and women's rights organisations located in the Global South**, ensuring their voices are heard both in the UK international development sector and globally. We have done this particularly through our REFRAME project, with webinars and joint publications on [taxation](#) and [Covid-19 economic recovery](#), and by sharing the work of feminist organisations on our website.

Working collaboratively and respectfully with **organisations across the Global South** is vital to our work. Organisations we worked with last year included: [African Women's Development and Communication Network \(FEMNET\)](#), [Nawi-Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective](#), [Latindadd](#), [Gender and Trade Coalition](#), [International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific \(IWRAP-AP\)](#), [Women in Development Europe \(WIDE+\)](#), [Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era \(DAWN\)](#), [Association for Women's Rights in Development \(AWID\)](#), [Global Alliance for Tax Justice \(GATJ\)](#), [Akina Mama wa Afrika](#), [Self Employed Women's Association \(SEWA\)](#), [Tax Justice Network Africa \(TJNA\)](#).

Communications and publications

GADN continued to use its website to [share resources](#), including collating [feminist responses to Covid-19](#) and hosting 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 6,940 to 7,450 in 2021–22. Our audience on [Facebook](#) grew from 21,744 to 22,222, and our [LinkedIn](#) page attracted 2,283 new followers over the last ten months. Additionally, our [website](#) attracted over 40,000 unique

visitors in 2021–22 while our weekly newsletter achieves above-average opening rates of around 25 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. Amongst the most-read publications on our website are the [W7 Summit communique](#), which attracted nearly 1,500 unique visitors in 2021–22, as well as the [GADN Humanitarian working group’s briefing on the WPS agenda](#) and our synthesis report [Lessons for a Feminist Covid-19 Economic Recovery](#).

GADN’s 2021-2022 publications include:

- [W7 communique](#): Making gender equality a reality: recommendations to the G7 (April 2021)
- [Response](#): Submission to the International Development Committee on the philosophy and culture of aid: racism in the aid sector (April 2021)
- [Response](#): Submission to the International Development Committee on the impact of the UK aid cuts (May 2021)
- [Briefing](#): UK government decisions to cut UK aid are disproportionately falling on women and girls (June 2021)
- [Response](#): Response to the recommendations from the G7’s Gender Equality Advisory Council (June 2021)
- [Response](#): Response to the G7 communique (June 2021)
- [Briefing](#): Feminist proposals on macroeconomic policies needed for a Covid-19 economic recovery: a perspective from the African continent (June 2021)
- [Briefing](#): Decolonising aid (June 2021)
- [Update](#): Generation Equality Forum: an update (July 2021)
- [Briefing](#): The G7’s global minimum corporate tax rate: a good deal for the African continent? (September 2021)
- [Briefing](#): Humanitarians and the Women, Peace and Security agenda during Covid-19 (December 2021)
- [Report](#): Lessons for a feminist Covid-19 economic recovery: multi-country perspectives (March 2022)
- [Briefing](#): Centring care in Covid-19 economic recovery: a five-point care package (March 2022)

What our members say

GADN conducted a member survey at the end of 2021. Broadly, the findings reveal that members value the network for its strong working relationship with FCDO and the access members are able to achieve through working groups, Members’ Meetings and other forums:

“Receiving an analysis of the direction of the FCDO and other institutions is helpful for me and my organisation to advance in our work.”

It is clear that GADN acts as a safe space for gender equality advocates within many of the UK's international development NGOs, and that they appreciate a forum to share experiences and agitate for change inside their own organisations. Members also welcome GADN's recent efforts to incorporate an anti-racist and decolonial lens, including opportunities for members themselves to learn about it, and want to see this work continue and expand:

"It's really helpful to me to have access to a space like GADN that is feminist and increasingly committed to anti-racism too, from which I can draw strength, tools and ways of working to make my own work (and workplace) more feminist."

"I'd love to see GADN playing the critical friend with regard to the UK's place in the world, histories of colonialism, reframing aid as solidarity and/or reparations."

Likewise, members support our commitment to sharing space with Global South-based feminists and women's rights organisations, pushing us to grow our network and partnerships. They also called for more engagement with key elements of the network, like our Board of Trustees, and suggested that GADN's visibility on social media could be furthered, including engagement of members across social media platforms.

We are proud to provide a conduit through which our members can learn, collaborate, amplify voices and draw strength for the work supporting gender equality and women's rights.

"Being a member of GADN gives me a feeling of passion and purpose."



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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), Caterina Mansueto (treasurer), Lee Webster, Chiara Capraro, Naana Otoo-Oyortey, Alexandra Gough, Piyumi Samaraweera, Lata Narayanaswamy and Leila Billing. Bryony Timms is on maternity leave from October 2021. Trustees who stepped down during 2021-22 are Beverley Duckworth (July 2021), Saranel Benjamin (July 2021), Maria Varela-Garrido (October 2021) and Daphne Jayasinghe (October 2021).

Secretariat

GADN's current Secretariat staff members are Jessica Woodroffe, Director; Sophie Efange, Head of Policy; Katherine Dean, Coordinator (until July 2022); and Yamina Ouldali, Communications and Policy Officer. Since April 2021, GADN has benefitted from a number of volunteers: Hollie Clements, Dhanya Nair, Lakshmi Kammukkil, Claudia Calvert and Tabitha-Levis Jarsdel. As ever, our volunteers' work has been vital to the continuation of the network.

Membership and network structures

Our **membership** currently stands at 195 individual members and 75 organisational members. Of these, four organisations and 38 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 new status of "GADN overseas supporter". For a complete list of organisational members, see our [website](#). Joining instructions can also be found on our [website](#).

The **Advisory Group** works with the Secretariat to implement GADN's annual work plan and leads on issues not covered by our working groups. Members of the Advisory Group devote substantial time to the network and play a vital role in GADN's work.

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 overlaps and intersections between our various areas of work, our groups are increasingly collaborating on joint initiatives and contributing to the work of the Secretariat with detailed policy positions. Our working groups and their current chairs are:

- **Gender and Disability:** Sherin Alsheikh Ahmed (Islamic Relief Worldwide) and Diana Hiscock (HelpAge International)
- **Girls' Education:** Feyi Rodway (FHI 360)
- **Humanitarian:** Megan Daigle (ODI) and Niki Ignatiou (ActionAid)
- **Programmes:** Ellie Shillito (ActionAid) and Tina Wallace (individual member)
- **Violence Against Women and Girls:** Najah Almugahed (Islamic Relief Worldwide), Amy Harrison (individual member) and Penelope d'Souza (individual member)
- **Women's Economic Justice:** Alex Farley-Kiwanuka (Publish What You Fund), Amy McShane (Bretton Woods Project) and Kate Horstead (Age International) on maternity leave
- **Women's Participation and Leadership:** Sophia Fernandes (individual member)

Thanks are also due to group co-chairs who have stepped down over the past year: Shireen Motara (individual member), Anya Cowley (Save the Children), Laura Martineau-Searle (Social Development Direct), Ella Hopkins (Bretton Woods Project) and Piyumi Samaraweera (Womankind).

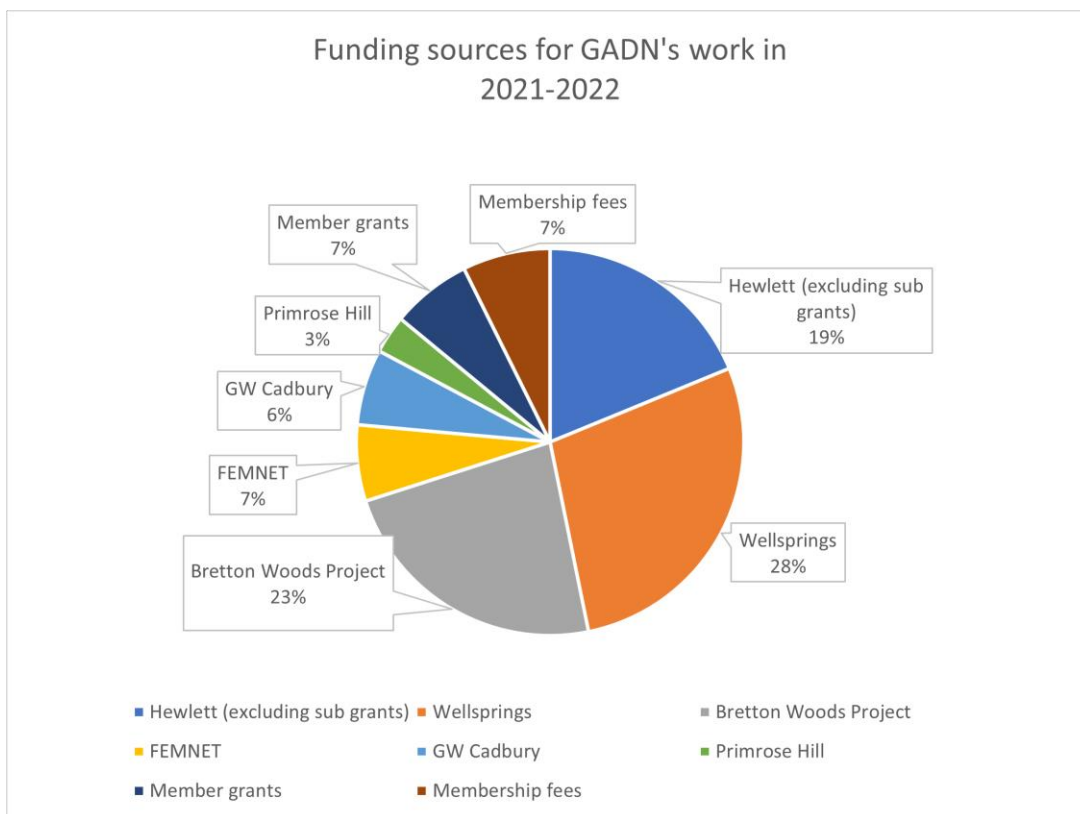
GADN supports the **Women of Colour Forum**, recognising that women of colour need their own spaces to gather, free from the marginalisation and discrimination so often found in places of work and across British society more broadly. The co-leads are Saranel Benjamin and Rayana Rassool. Membership of 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.

GADN also continues to work with **UK networks** including [Bond](#), [Bretton Woods Project](#), [Gender Action for Peace and Security \(GAPS\)](#), and the UK Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health.



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Our membership fees and core grants from member organisations are crucial to allowing us to work flexibly and respond to changing external circumstances. In 2021–22, we received core funding from ActionAid UK, Christian Aid, Oxfam GB, 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 2021–22 GADN received core funding from the following sources:

- Membership subscriptions and donations: £22,812
- Members' core grants: £21,000
- GW Cadbury Trust: £20,000
- Primrose Hill Trust: £10,000

GADN received additional funding for our work on feminist macroeconomics in 2021–22:

- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation: £207,687 (of which £149,000 was distributed in sub-grants)
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund: £87,701
- Bretton Woods Project: £72,568
- FEMNET: £19,991

For more information on GADN's funding and finances, please see our 2021-22 financial report, available on our [website](#).

Photo descriptions:

'Introduction' (p.3): Part of GADN Board of Trustees and Secretariat at our October 2021 Board Meeting: (back row, L-R) Katherine Dean, Piyumi Samaraweera, Sophie Efange, Disha Sughand; front row (L-R) Yamina Ouldali, Caterina Mansueto, Leila Billing, Daphne Jayasinghe, Lee Webster.

'Activities & Achievements' (p.5): Part of GADN Board of Trustees and Secretariat at our July 2021 Board Meeting: (L-R) Sophie Efange, Chiara Capraro, Daphne Jayasinghe, Beverley Duckworth, Disha Sughand, Naana Otoo-Oyortey, Lee Webster.

'Structure' (p.13): GADN members at our May 2022 Members' Meeting.

'Funding' (p.15): GADN Secretariat in November 2021: (L-R) Sophie Efange, Yamina Ouldali, Katherine Dean, Jessica Woodroffe.