

Funding Crisis: Impact & Response by Women's and Feminist Funds



Prospera International Network of Women's and Feminist Funds engaged with its members to assess the initial consequences of recent defunding trends. Together, we identified the impact of reduced, suspended, or discontinued funding over the past two years. The responses from 45 member funds offered crucial insights into the challenges they are currently navigating and the adaptive strategies they are employing to continue supporting their grantees.

Key Survey Findings from Member Funds



78% of funds are affected, with **\$65.3M** in confirmed losses so far.



A cross-network average **30%** budget cut is expected in 2026.



66% of funds expect **program cuts** & 73% foresee **staffing & compensation constraints**.



Roughly 2 out of 5 funds have **not replaced any of the lost funding**.

Impact on Civil Society & Movements



\$676M in estimated losses threaten **feminist organizing** and advocacy.

Security, legal, and digital risks are rising, especially for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

95% of grantees are losing vital funding, leading to program reductions or shutdowns.

Increased reliance on restrictive public donor funding limits flexibility for feminist movements.

Nearly half of the funds report that some of their **grantees face the risk of closure**.

Most at-risk areas:



90%

LGBTQI+ Rights & Inclusion



67%

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights



67%

Grassroots Organizing

Women's & Feminist Funds Responding with Strength & Strategy

Despite these challenges, Prospera's member funds are mobilizing, adapting, and leading the response:

85%

Are actively advocating with donors and funders, and exploring new partnerships and collaborations.

88%

Are expanding resource mobilization efforts and diversifying funding.

63%

Are providing or planning to provide bridge funding or emergency grants.

29%

Are generating alternative revenue through fee-for-service models and social enterprises.

31%

Are shifting programmatic focus to align with available funding.

13%

Are implementing staff reductions or salary adjustments.

Strategically Built Reserves, Now Drawn for Survival

91% of Prospera's member funds have built financial reserves over the years, a reflection of strategic planning, institutional resilience, and a long-term vision for sustainability. These reserves are a critical tool in decision-making, offering our members the flexibility to respond to crises, uphold commitments, and protect their core values and their grantees under pressure.

Our members reported that 29% of them have already begun drawing on those reserves to withstand the current wave of funding cuts.

This moment reveals more than financial pressure, it underscores the precariousness of feminist organizing. **Reserves, meant to safeguard the future, are now being used to simply survive.** Without renewed support, the essential infrastructure of feminist movements is at risk.

