

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

WOMEN ENABLED INTERNATIONAL



Photo courtesy of Canva

Image: A close up of a person wearing a brightly decorated surgical face mask gazing up and into the distance.

A Message From WEI Leadership

In a year marked by crisis and assault on human rights, particularly for women and other marginalized genders with disabilities, Women Enabled International and our partners around the world drew on our collective strength and expanded the limits of our resiliency.

We equipped feminists with disabilities to use their power to claim their rights, compelled governments to acknowledge and address discrimination, expanded the evidence-base for intersectional gender- and disability-inclusive responses to urgent humanitarian needs, and provided training and resources necessary to make laws, systems, and services more inclusive, accessible and just.

Your steadfast support makes our work possible. We thank you and hope you will continue to advocate alongside us to champion equality and justice for all.



Stephanie Ortoleva
Founder & Executive Director



Catherine Hyde Townsend
President, Board of Directors

Mission

WEI advances human rights at the intersection of gender and disability to: respond the lived experiences of women and girls with disabilities; promote inclusion and participation; and achieve transformational equality.

Vision

WEI envisions a world where women and girls with disabilities claim human rights, act in solidarity, and lead self-determined lives.

Responding to Global Crisis

When COVID-19 struck, WEI responded immediately by issuing a global survey to understand how the pandemic was impacting rights at the intersection of gender and disability. Launched in May 2020, WEI's survey results have helped inform global response.

Partnering with women with disability-led organizations from around the world, as well as the UN Population Fund and UN Women, WEI coordinated 20 virtual consultations and written surveys that reached more than 300 respondents to document their lived experiences during COVID-19 and create tools to help ensure their rights.

Based on this extensive research, WEI and its partners produced a set of resources to inform crisis response by governments, U.N. agencies, public health experts. The suite of resources addresses critical issues - from preventing gender-based violence, to accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare, to meeting basic needs for employment, education, and essential services.



Photo courtesy of Canva

Image: A close up of person wearing a white surgical mask stares deeply into the camera. Only half of their face is visible.

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS

With international human rights mechanisms substantially halted due to the global pandemic, WEI focused on deepening relationships with key experts and working groups.

Joining the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security,

WEI informed the development of a roadmap on the 20th anniversary of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security to make it more disability inclusive, for example involving women with disabilities in planning for disaster relief and developing early warning systems for conflict situations.

“I constantly learn from the work of WEI and promise to carry it forward as we explore hidden intersectionalities in the work of the mandate like indigenous people with disabilities and prisoners.”

- Gerard Quinn Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, appointed October 2020



Image: A woman wearing a red sweater and jeans is sitting in her wheelchair energetically speaking into a microphone.

BUILDING CAPACITY

At WEI's South and South East Asia Regional Convening in January 2020, 22 feminists with disabilities from 10 countries gathered in Bangkok, Thailand to deepen working relationships across the region, share knowledge, and hone international human rights advocacy skills.

The group identified priorities for collective action including to:

- 1) engage in international women's rights forums to ensure inclusion of disabled feminists;
- 2) strengthen the regional network of feminists with disabilities and allies; and
- 3) inform debates concerning abortion, pre-natal testing and disability.

**“All movements are our movements.
We just haven't engaged with them enough.”**

- Nidhi Goyal, a disability activist, comedian, member of the U.N. Women Executive Director's Advisory Group, and Founder and Director of Rising Flame, India



Photo courtesy of Canva

Documenting Barriers

In partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Pacific Sub-Regional Office, WEI launched a multi-year project aimed at transforming access to and inclusiveness of gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health services across six Pacific Island countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

WEI's research identified the primary barriers to essential services — including family planning, comprehensive sexuality education, skilled attendance at birth, integration of health services for victims of violence, among others—for women and young people with disabilities.

"[A]fter I attended the ... training on sexual and reproductive health and family planning. I was motivated to get checked. ... I felt good because I got to know my internal organs. ... I also find the clinic accessible for me because the nurses are very helpful when providing the test together with useful information are very useful for me."

— 35-year-old woman with visual impairment from Fiji

Image: Two women, one using a white cane and both wearing white shirts and jeans, walk arm in arm down a carpeted hallway.

Leveraging Collective Action



Image: Two people with brown hair embrace.

Selected as a civil society leader on the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) Feminist Movements & Leadership Action Coalition, WEI began leveraging its role to influence the Beijing+25 process to ensure that its outcomes reflect priorities for feminists with disabilities worldwide.

In 2020, we conducted outreach and planned events to organize an inclusive collective of feminists with disabilities and organizations advocating at the intersection of gender and disability to develop an advocacy platform aimed at States, intergovernmental bodies, U.N. agencies, and other civil society organizations engaged in the GEF process in 2021 and beyond.

“Women with disabilities are 1 in 5 women around the world. As such, our voices and perspectives are invaluable to all conversations related to gender equality and women’s rights.”

— *Inclusive Generation Equality Collective Advocacy Platform*

PROVIDING PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

In early 2020, WEI completed a series of six trainings that reached a total of 370 stakeholders from 76 countries, in partnership with UN Population Fund (UNFPA) global regions: Eastern and Southern Africa; Western and Central Africa; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; the Pacific Sub-Region; North Africa and the Arab States; and Asia.

Workshops centered on WEI/UNFPA co-authored Guidelines that provide practical and concrete guidance service providers, as well as for governments and civil society actors involved in developing, implementing, advocating for and monitoring gender-based violence prevention or sexual and reproductive health services for women and young persons with disabilities.

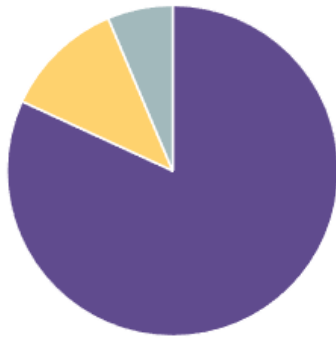
Country delegations developed action plans to bring back to their communities. WEI and UNFPA will collaborate with regional offices to support their implementation and evaluation in 2021.



Image: Our founder, Stephanie Ortoleva, listens intently to an advocate speaking next to her.

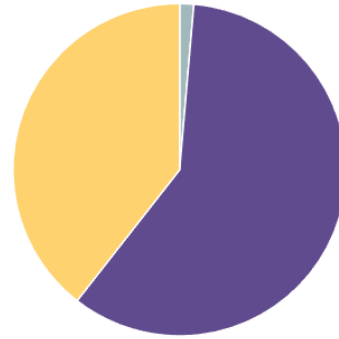
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2020



EXPENSES: \$821,121

- Programs - 82%
- Core Mission Support - 12%
- Development - 6%



INCOME: \$1,328,942

- Grants - 59%
- Multilateral Funding - 40%
- Contributions & Other - 1%

Thank You!

Women Enabled International is deeply grateful to the following funding partners, as well as to the growing community of individuals whose generous support made our work possible in 2020:

- Channel Foundation
- Disability Inclusion Fund
- Disability Rights Fund
- Ford Foundation
- Open Society Foundations
- Thomson Reuters Foundation
- UNFPA
- UN Women
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

“The Ford Foundation is proud to support WEI’s pioneering human rights work at the intersection of gender and disability justice. They were among the very first grantees of our program, which speaks to their exceptional leadership across movements, their solid reputation in the funding community for effective programs and management, and the potential we see for continued growth and far-reaching impact.”

- Radha Wickremasinghe, Global Program Officer, Gender Racial and Ethnic Justice - International

**Every gift is meaningful.
Please consider donating online today.**