

The Women & Girls Index:

MEASURING GIVING TO WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' CAUSES

OCTOBER 2022

Introduction

The Women & Girls Index (WGI) provides the only systematically generated, comprehensive data on charitable organizations dedicated to women and girls. The WGI tracks the landscape of women's and girls' organizations in the U.S., including the amount of philanthropic support they receive from individuals, foundations, and corporations. You can download the full list of WGI organizations, as well as search for organizations by keyword, category, and geographic location at WomenAndGirlsIndex.org. This website also contains more details about the Index, and the methodology used to create and update the WGI.

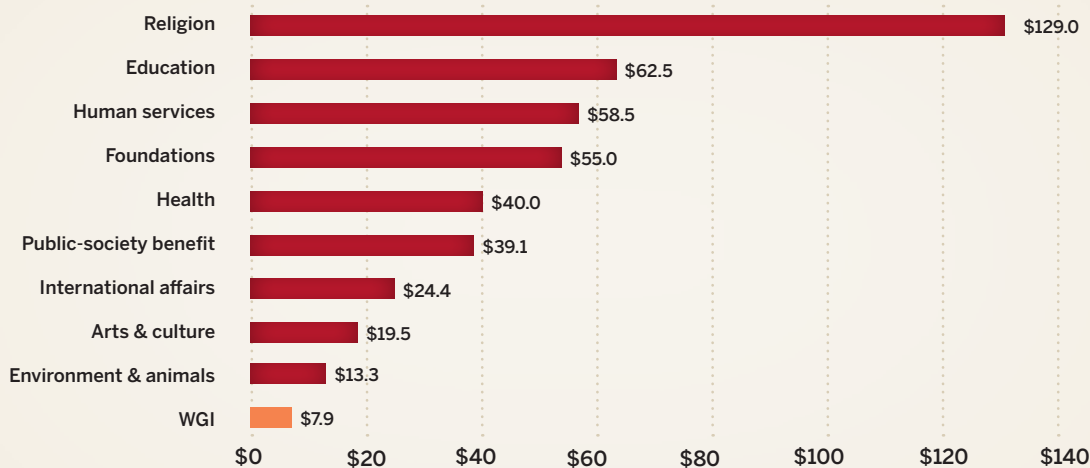
The updated WGI adds information from 2019—the most recent year for which finalized IRS data on charitable organizations is available. This update expands the picture of charitable giving to women and girls from 2012 to 2019. The year 2019 saw philanthropic support for equal pay inspired by the U.S. women's national soccer team winning the World Cup¹ and ongoing charitable giving in response to the #MeToo movement.² The 2019 WGI data provide a baseline for charitable giving to women's and girls' organizations prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately impacted women in numerous ways.³

FINDING 1

Women's and girls' organizations received nearly \$8 billion in philanthropic support, or less than 2% of overall charitable giving, in 2019.

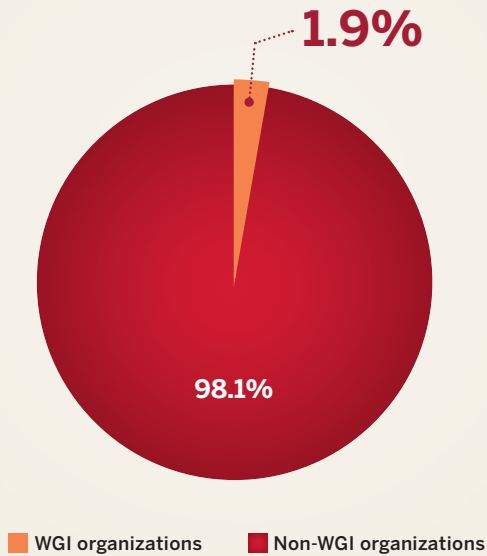
The updated WGI contains 48,395 charitable organizations, or 3.5% of total registered charitable organizations. These organizations received \$7.9 billion in philanthropic support in 2019—a fraction of that received by traditional nonprofit subsectors like education and health. This amount made up 1.9% of overall charitable giving, remaining relatively unchanged from 2018.

Philanthropic support for women's and girls' organizations compared with traditional nonprofit subsectors (2019, in billions)



Note: Subsector figures are 2019 values from *Giving USA 2022*. WGI organizations appear in all traditional nonprofit subsectors, but are depicted as their own subsector for the sake of comparison.

Philanthropic support for women's and girls' organizations as a share of overall charitable giving (2019)

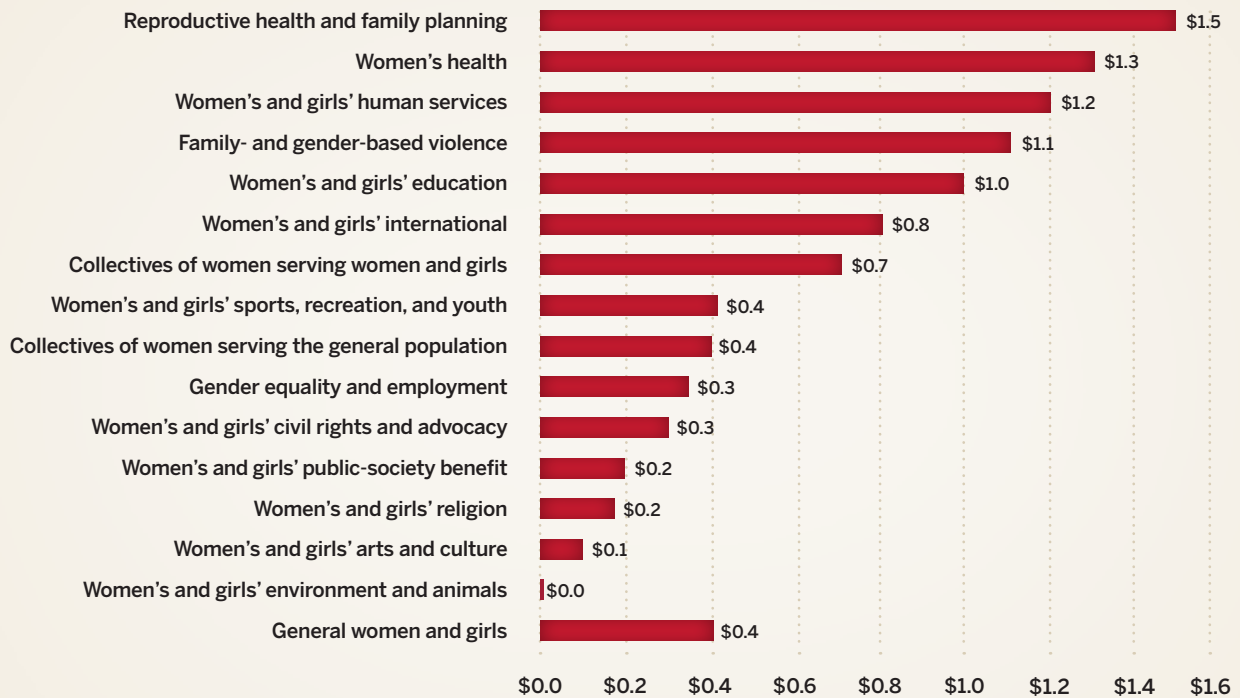


FINDING 2

Reproductive health and family planning organizations received the greatest amount of philanthropic support for women's and girls' organizations in 2019. Gender equality and employment organizations experienced the largest increase in charitable giving to WGI organizations from 2012 to 2019.

Women's and girls' organizations can be found in all traditional nonprofit subsectors and further categorized based on mission focus. Similar to previous years, reproductive health and family planning organizations (e.g., Planned Parenthood, Center for Reproductive Rights) received the greatest amount of philanthropic support for WGI organizations in 2019, at \$1.5 billion.

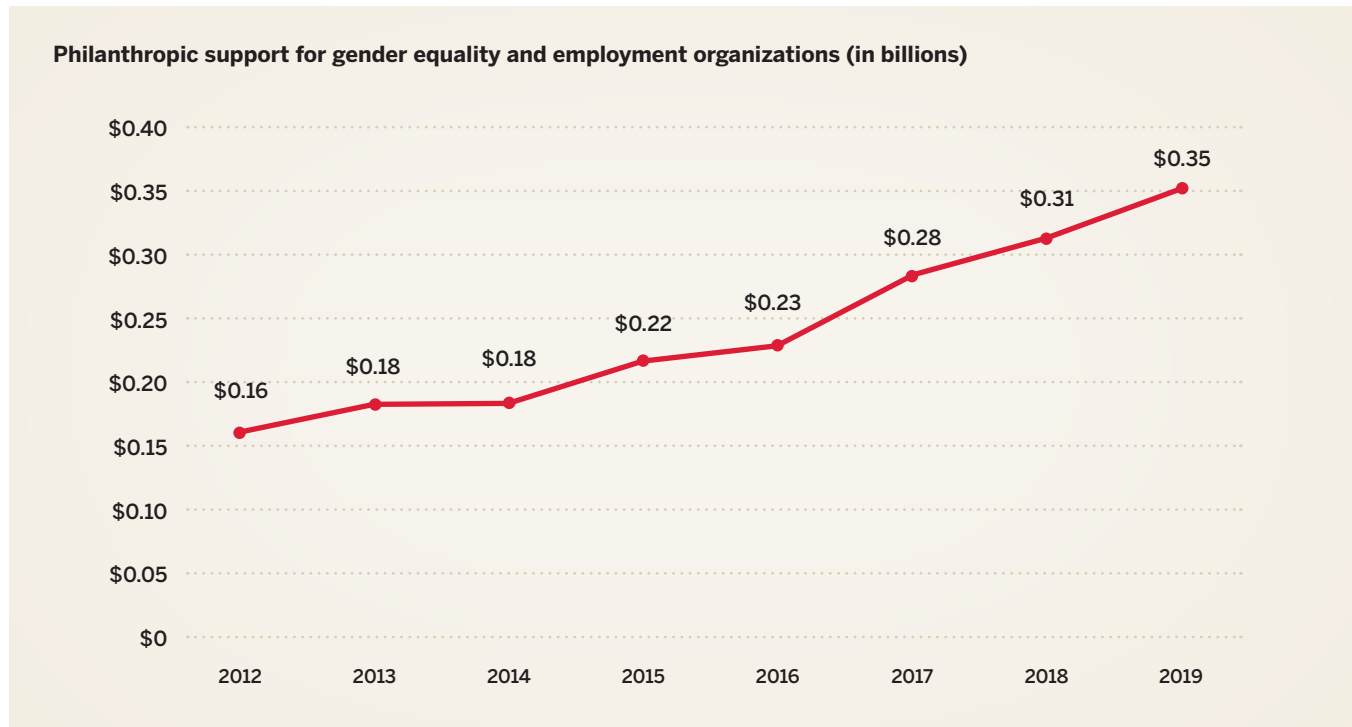
Philanthropic support for women's and girls' organizations by mission focus (2019, in billions)



Note: Mission focus categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive, therefore, adding up the dollars in this figure exceeds the \$7.9 billion total of philanthropic support for women's and girls' organizations in 2019. Dollar amounts are rounded to one decimal place for ease of reading, but the ordering and length of the bars are based on exact values. Women's and girls' organizations focused on the environment and animals received \$8.3 million in 2019; this appears as \$0.0 in the figure due to rounding.

Charitable giving to reproductive health and family planning organizations increased by 82.3% from 2012 to 2019. This growth shows that, even before the 2022 *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision (in which the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*), philanthropic support for these organizations was on the rise. This pattern demonstrates the consistent focus on reproductive health and family planning in recent years, as evidenced by events like large numbers of individuals joining the Women’s March and contributing to organizations addressing reproductive rights following the 2016 presidential election.⁴

Although they receive a smaller amount of charitable giving, gender equality and employment organizations (e.g., National Women’s Law Center, Catalyst) experienced the largest increase in philanthropic support for WGI organizations from 2012 to 2019, at 119.4%.



From 2018 to 2019, philanthropic support for gender equality and employment increased by 11.8%. These organizations may have benefitted from charitable giving in response to the U.S. women’s national soccer team’s 2019 World Cup victory, which spotlighted the gender pay gap in sports and other professions. Since the largest gender equality and employment organization—the National Women’s Law Center—houses the Time’s Up Legal Defense Fund, ongoing philanthropic support for the #MeToo movement could also have boosted charitable giving to this category in 2019.



FINDING 3

Among collectives of women, organizations serving women and girls receive greater philanthropic support—and grew at a much faster rate from 2012 to 2019—than those serving the general population.

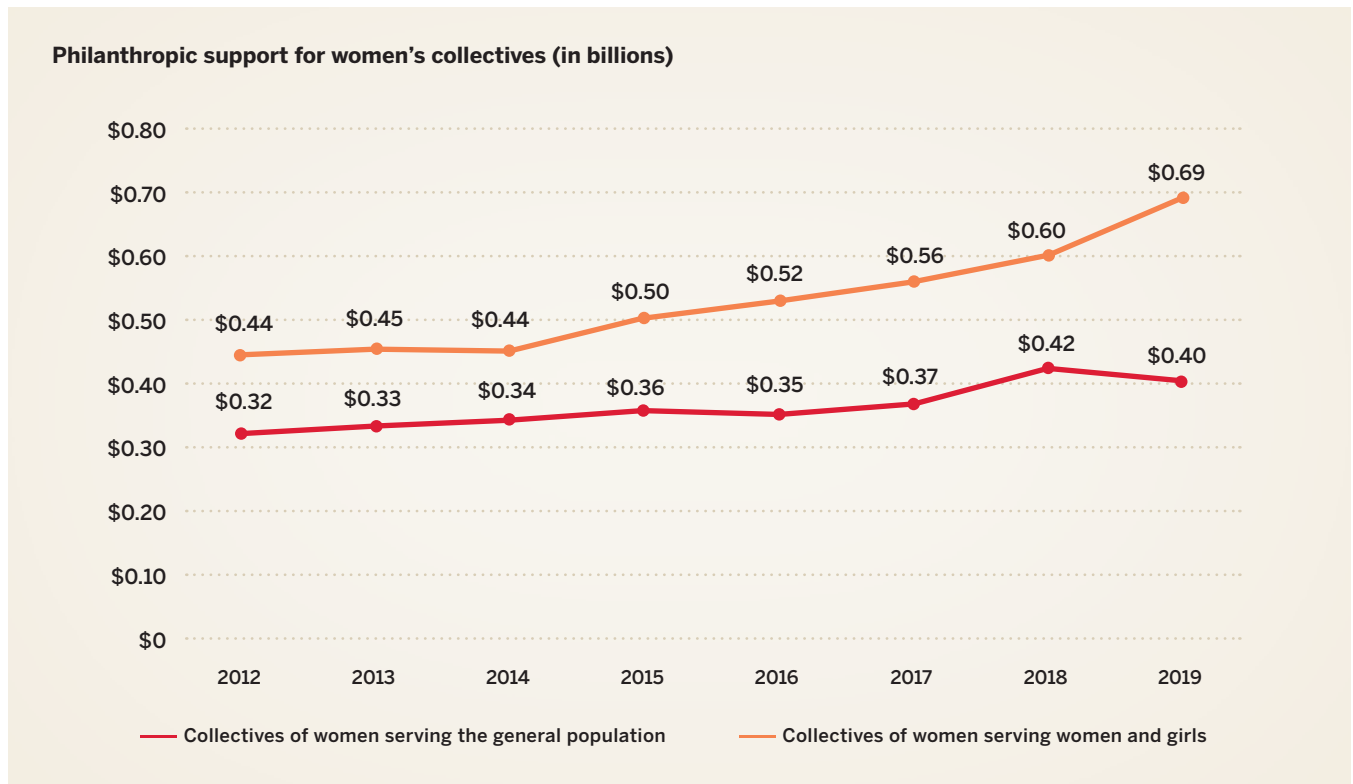
In addition to organizations that are primarily managed by professional staff, the WGI also includes organizations in which groups of women volunteers and/or donors play a significant role. These organizations are categorized as collectives of women that either:

- Serve women and girls (e.g., women’s funds and foundations); or
- Serve the general population (e.g., Junior Leagues, Impact 100 groups).

Collectives consist of like-minded individuals coming together to support a shared cause, often by pooling their financial resources,⁵ but also through volunteering and/or advocacy (e.g., giving circles, mutual aid networks). Historically denied access to the male-dominated domains of economics and politics, forming collectives is one way women created their own spheres of influence in the nonprofit sector.⁶ Collectives have also played an important role for women of color, who were often excluded from existing organizations or formed their own groups to address issues specific to their communities (e.g., Black sororities, National Coalition of 100 Black Women).⁷

Collectives of women serving women and girls receive greater philanthropic support (\$0.7 billion in 2019) than those serving the general population (\$0.4 billion in 2019). Charitable giving to women’s collectives serving women and girls grew more than twice as quickly (58.6%) as those serving the general population (26.5%) from 2012 to 2019.

As shown in the figure below, philanthropic support for collectives of women serving women and girls and those serving the general population grew at a similar rate from 2012 to 2014. Since 2014, charitable giving to women’s collectives serving women and girls increased at a faster rate, with especially strong growth from 2018 to 2019. This suggests that donors may be increasingly approaching their philanthropy in a gendered way, giving more to organizations that focus on women and girls rather than the broader population.⁸



Implications

Issues affecting women and girls (e.g., the gender pay gap, sexual harassment and assault) have received increased attention in recent years, but charitable giving to organizations addressing these issues lags behind. Fundraisers and nonprofit leaders should use this information as a central case for supporting their organizations. Prospective donors are likely aware of these issues, but may not have translated this awareness into actual giving to women's and girls' organizations. Donors should consider how their values align with their current giving. If issues affecting women and girls are important to you, is this reflected in the organizations to which you contribute your financial and other resources?

The numbers presented here provide a pre-pandemic baseline for charitable giving to women's and girls' organizations. Research has shown the pandemic reversed progress on gender equity, which could inspire greater giving to these organizations. Fundraisers and nonprofit leaders should communicate that donors' support is even more urgent now, since women and girls will need additional resources to make gains coming out of the

pandemic. Those who want to support women and girls should consider upping their giving to WGI organizations. If you already give to these organizations, find out how they have fared during COVID and what additional support they may need—financial or otherwise.

The resources on [GiveToWomenAndGirls.Day](#) and [WomenandGirlsIndex.org](#) can assist in raising funds for women's and girls' organizations and researching these organizations. Fundraisers and nonprofit leaders should visit [GiveToWomenAndGirls.Day](#) to find user-friendly tools and messaging to encourage giving to their organizations on International Day of the Girl (October 11, 2022)—and every day. Current and prospective donors should visit [WomenAndGirlsIndex.org](#) to find a women's and/or girl's organization that aligns with their interests—you can search by keyword, category, and geographic location. Researchers should visit [WomenAndGirlsIndex.org](#) to download the WGI dataset and incorporate it into their own research on nonprofits and philanthropy.

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