

KALEIDOSCOPE:

FONDO SEMILLAS
MUJERES SEMBRANDO IGUALDAD



Findings and reflections on LGBTQI+
movements in Mexico

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I. INTRODUCTION

LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico play an important role in advancing human rights and democracy in the country. In a challenging context, over the last several years, they have achieved important successes and grown in national presence and recognition.

Fondo Semillas, in collaboration with Arcus Foundation,¹ is pleased to present the report, Kaleidoscope: Findings and Reflections on LGBTQI+ Movements in Mexico.² This report is the result of participative exploratory research with organizations, activists and experts that form part of LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico.

This report aspires to be a useful tool for organizations, donors, activists and others interested in identifying the needs, challenges and opportunities for LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico. The information gathered here comes from the voices of current members of these movements, in alignment with Fondo Semillas' philosophy of never replacing the voices of activists, but rather amplifying them.

For Fondo Semillas, participating in this initiative was a great opportunity to better understand the diversity of LGBTQI+ movements in their own voice. It provided us with a broader perspective on their successes, challenges and opportunities. Thanks to this exploratory research, we are able to identify commonalities and differences between the diverse LGBTQI+ agendas, as well as their connections with other social movements. We also now have a stronger mandate to define strategic areas of support for different LGBTQI+ groups, and the results of this study will be fundamental in shaping future decisions.

¹ A brief description of both Fondo Semillas and Arcus Foundation can be found at the end of this report.

² We would like to thank Lydia Alpizar, consultant hired by Fondo Semillas and Arcus Foundation to carry out this research. We would also like to thank Cíclica, consultancy firm dedicated to organizational strengthening, for their support in writing the report.

We appreciate the efforts of those that contributed their time to making this information public, without whose support this report would not have been possible. Likewise, we thank Global Fund for Women,³ who shared their Movement Capacity Assessment Tool (MCAT).⁴

We would also like to thank Arcus Foundation who, in collaboration with Fondo Semillas, contributed resources to the development of this report in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing LGBTQI+ people in Mexico, as part of the construction of their grantmaking program in the country.

We hope that these results can be translated into useful inputs for conversation and reflection among those who comprise these movements, donor agencies and other allied actors.

Use of the acronym LGBTQI+

Throughout the Kaleidoscope report, Fondo Semillas employs the acronym ‘LGBTQI+’ to represent the diversity of movements that participated in this research. LGBTQI+ stands for ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex’. In the original Spanish version of the report, we used the acronym LGBTTTIQ+, which is relevant to the Mexican context as it brings visibility to multiple trans identities. ‘Transgender’ is the accepted umbrella term for these identities in English. Similarly, people who identify as queer or intersex are not as visible in Mexico. However, we include them in our representation of the movements as their contributions and critiques are necessary to advance towards rights for all. At the end of the acronym we have added a plus sign because we know that there are other ways of living and experiencing gender and sexuality and we invite other movements to participate in future actions derived from this research.

³ A brief description of the organization can be found at the end of this report.

⁴ Explained further in the methodology section at the end of this report.

2. CONTEXT: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

This exploratory study allows us to understand the context for LGBTQI+ movements – in their own words – at the time of field research (August to September 2018). The participants identified opportunities and challenges that are presented here, with the hope that they are useful to LGBTQI+ movements.

2.1 Opportunities for advancing the rights of the LGBTQI+ population

The participants mentioned favorable events and circumstances in the current context that could support the activism of LGBTQI+ movements.

Change in the federal government and Congress

In July 2018, in an unprecedented landslide victory, the left-wing political party (Morena) won the presidential elections, a majority in Congress and governorships in various states. Prior to the elections, the LGBTQI+ Coalition had been formed to influence political parties' agendas and support LGBTQI+ candidates. In many interviews we heard that the current historical moment could represent an important opportunity to advance in legal protections and public policy at the federal and state levels, given the commitment to LGBTQI+ agendas expressed by Morena. The law that extended social security benefits to same sex couples – approved a short time before interviews were conducted – was interpreted as a sign that advances could be achieved for LGBTQI+ agendas.

However, some interviewees expressed skepticism and concern about the likelihood that real advances could be achieved, given the level of contradictions that Morena has shown to date in relation to progressive issues, as well as their alliance with the PES (Partido Encuentro Social – Social Encounter Party), a neo-charismatic evangelical party.

Another opportunity mentioned in the context of the change in administration was the possibility of influencing key sectors, such as education. It has been difficult to break into the education sector given the involvement of conservative groups and parent and teacher associations. Participants mentioned that with the new administration there might be an opportunity to do so in a more significant way.

The growing importance of legal action and strategic litigation

Given the progress achieved in legal protections and with State institutions in the last decade, there are now more opportunities than ever to present complaints, claims and strategic litigation to advance LGBTQI+ rights in the country. In this context, a need for legal assistance was identified, in particular for LGBTQI+ people that are highly vulnerable, including those that have been detained or incarcerated. Some participants suggested that activists engaged in advocacy could play an important role in this context.

The new generation of leaders and ways of organizing in LGBTQI+ movements

Some older leaders identified the new generation of leaders that is emerging throughout the country as one of the greatest opportunities to advancing LGBTQI+ rights. These young leaders are seen as contributing fresh ideas, enthusiasm and new visions for ways of organizing that are unencumbered by historic divisions within the movement.

This new generation of leaders could benefit from strengthening, which is seen as an opportunity to build unity and greater capacity for action within LGBTQI+ movements. Interviewees also identified these new leaders as being part of more fluid forms of self-identification, where gay, lesbian, trans, bisexual and intersex people are part of the same group and are creating new ways of engaging in activism, for example, social media, cyberactivism, countercultural expression, etc.

Support from allied institutions

Support from institutional allies of LGBTQI+ movements was identified as an opportunity in the current context. The National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED for its abbreviation in Spanish), together with the Mexico City Council to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination (COPRED for its initials in Spanish), have been key allies in efforts to eradicate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Private sector support for inclusion and non-discrimination of LGBTQI+ people

Research participants mentioned that interesting work is being carried out by the business community to recognize sexual orientation and gender identity and to prevent discrimination. Some have committed to inclusion programs and/or to making donations to organizations that work on these issues. There are also initiatives to certify businesses as LGBTQI+ friendly. However, concern was expressed that this could just be a pinkwashing strategy.⁵

2.2 Challenges

In the same way that participants identified favorable opportunities for advancing LGBTQI+ people's rights in the current context, they also identified aspects or circumstances that represent a challenge.

⁵ Pinkwashing is a term used to criticize certain strategies implemented by brands and private or governmental initiatives in order to be perceived as socially responsible and inclusive of LGBTQI+ populations without contributing to structural change. For more information about pinkwashing, see Pérez-Sánchez, Gema (2017). "Pinkwashing". In Lucas Platero, María Rosón, Esther Ortega, eds. *Barbarismos queer y otras esdrújulas*. Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 348-55.

Growing conservatism and so-called “gender ideology”

The growing conservatism of both religious and non-religious groups that carry out high-level campaigns to try to attack and block the progress of LGBTQI+ rights in the country, was identified as one of the primary challenges. These campaigns include attacks on activists as well as their agendas, under the pretext of “protecting the family” and morality. Additionally, research participants indicated that there is still a great deal of cultural prejudice and social stigma against LGBTQI+ people. This all forms part of a growing international tendency to elevate so-called “gender ideology” as a common platform to link and strengthen the agendas of detractors of the LGBTQI+ community, feminist organizations and other initiatives that celebrate diversity.

The growth of neo-charismatic evangelicals

Though these religious groups have not grown in Mexico to the degree that they have in other countries (Brazil, for example), they have a considerable presence at the local level and have positioned themselves on the national political scene. An example of this was their alliance with Morena, the winning political party of the presidential and congressional elections in 2018. This alliance carried religiously conservative candidates into elected positions at state and municipal levels.

Inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in faith-based groups

According to participants, there are few LGBTQI+ faith-based groups in the country. In many cases, they are new and informal groups with little institutional capacity that are mainly focused on creating safe spaces for LGBTQI+ people to practice their religion or to freely exercise their spirituality. There are concrete activities among religious groups to include the LGBTQI+ population, such as choirs, support groups and political activism.

Historically religion has been used by right-wing groups to attack LGBTQI+ people. This is why many defenders of LGBTQI+ rights do not feel identified or represented by religious groups.

Increase in fascist discourse and actors

In addition to the challenges already mentioned, research participants mentioned a clear increase in hate and the incitation of violence against the LGBTQI+ population and activists, an effect increasingly felt since the victory of Jair Bolsonaro and his party in Brazil.

Increase in extreme violence against LGBTQI+ populations

During interviews, participants mentioned that there is still no official registry of crimes against LGBTQI+ people in México. Meanwhile, civil society organizations have reported a significant increase in murders and other types of crimes and violence against the LGBTQI+ community. Additionally, in some states in the country organized crime represents a serious challenge, especially to LGBTQI+ people involved in sex work.

Data on hate crimes in Mexico:

- From 2017 to 2018, 165 murders were registered throughout the country, of which 101 were committed against trans women, 62 against gay men and two against lesbian women.⁶
- The states with the highest rates of hate crimes are Guerrero, Veracruz, State of Mexico, Tamaulipas, Mexico City and Guanajuato.

In Mexico, hate crimes are not considered aggravating circumstances at the federal level. However, some jurisdictions have included aggravating circumstances in their penal codes, such as: Coahuila (Art. 103(A)(5), 2005), Colima [only in case of homicides] (Art. 123bis, 2015); Mexico City (Art. 138(8), 2009); Michoacan [only in case of homicides] (Art. 121, 2014); Puebla (Art. 330bis, 2012); and Queretaro (Art. 131(4), 2015).

⁶Data obtained by the Mexican LGTTTTI Coalition; Letra S, Cultura y Vida Cotidiana, A.C.; Soy Humano, A.C.

Impunity and lack of access to justice and legal assistance

Mexico has the fourth highest level of impunity in the world (only after the Philippines, India and Cameroon). This means that access to justice is a serious challenge for the majority of people. For LGBTQI+ people, this contributes to greater violence and crimes against them.

Additionally, research participants indicated that there is limited capacity within the LGBTQI+ community to provide legal assistance. Though there are more opportunities to litigate and present complaints before human rights commissions, there is a dearth of lawyers trained in laws related to sexual orientation and gender identity who are interested in representing these cases and sensitive to the issues and discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ people.

Participants mentioned that there is an enormous need for legal support for LGBTQI+ people and their organizations who are victims of hate crimes and violence owing to their identities and activities. In spite of recent efforts to provide legal services pro bono, research participants considered that they were insufficient.

The government is not prepared to commit to LGBTQI+ movements

From the point of view of research participants, the government's primary interest is in avoiding conflicts with conservative organizations and therefore their actions in favor of LGBTQI+ rights have been limited to providing limited funding or training to public officials. Additionally, participants identified a lack of progress on rights related to gender identity at a federal level.

Difficulty in advancing public policy in key ministries

The Ministry of Public Education (SEP for its abbreviation in Spanish) plays a fundamental role in inculcating values and culture in the country, but it is notoriously impenetrable. Any attempts to influence the curriculum, textbook contents, or to promote comprehensive sexuality education have been strongly blocked by conservative family and teacher associations and religious institutions. Some participants indicated that the work carried out by LGBTQI+ movements has not been strong enough to influence this sector.

The SEP is also crucial in preventing and addressing bullying – which has been on the rise – and other forms of violence against LGBTQI+ students at all levels of the educational system.

The Ministry of Labor is another important institution where influence has been limited. Though there are relevant judicial protections against workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation, this type of discrimination does not receive much attention and there are few organizations that work in this area. Additionally, the Ministry does not have specific programs for LGBTQI+ people.

The right to health for LGBTQI+ people continues to be focused primarily on the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Though participants mentioned that there have been some recent advances with the Ministry of Health, most of the work and funding continues to be concentrated on this issue.⁷

Lastly, the consolidation of existing work within different ministries was identified as a challenge to implementing changes in public policy, beyond the individual commitment of public officials that support such changes.

The lack of necessary experience to influence public policy

In the opinion of participants, the limited professionalization within LGBTQI+ movements affects their ability to influence the implementation of public policies (such as protocols or guidelines). Also, training of public officials is considered to be limited and its real impact is questionable.

⁷ Following the in-depth interviews and analysis meeting there were complaints of antiretroviral medicine shortages (more information available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2019/04/vih-sida-desabasto-medicamentos-compras-gobierno>)



3. A LOOK INSIDE LGBTQI+ MOVEMENTS IN MEXICO

This section presents information on the experiences and perceptions of research participants. Information was gathered using:⁸

- An online survey to evaluate movement capacity using the MCAT tool from Global Fund for Women with 46 participants
- In-depth interviews with 11 activists
- An analysis meeting with 20 members of LGBTQI+ organizations to discuss the results of the surveys and deepen analysis of the context

The results obtained are qualitative in character, based on lived experiences and local contexts related to the following topics:

- Achievements of LGBTQI+ movements
- Perception of the state of LGBTQI+ movements
- Representation as a challenge in LGBTQI+ movements
- Need for greater intergenerational communication
- Collaboration within movements and with other allied movements
- Building a collective political agenda
- Strategies used by LGBTQI+ movements
- Movement support infrastructure
- Security, protection and human rights defense

⁸ For a more detailed description of the methodology, see page 63.



3.1 Achievements of LGBTQI+ movements

The following highlights the achievements of LGBTQI+ movement activism identified by research participants during in-depth interviews with 11 activists and the analysis meeting with members of LGBTQI+ organizations.

Greater visibility

LGBTQI+ people are gaining visibility in cities and state institutions throughout the country. They have also received greater coverage by traditional media.

Advances in legal protections

Since the beginning of the 21st century, greater legal protections have been won, especially in regards to:

- Discrimination based on sexual orientation, recognized in the Federal Constitution and in various state constitutions
- Recognition of civil unions and marriage equality in Mexico City and in some states. In addition, the decision by the National Supreme Court is being used as a legal precedent in strategic litigation, via *habeas corpus*, in various states in the country where marriage between same-sex couples continues to be illegal
- Same-sex adoption and adoption of biological or adopted children by a same-sex partner in some states
- Expansion of social security benefits for same-sex partners at the federal level





The landmark meeting between then President of Mexico and LGBTQI+ activists in May 2016

On International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia on May 17, 2016, a meeting was organized between then President, Enrique Peña Nieto, and activists from the LGBTQI+ movement. The meeting had a positive impact on LGBTQI+ rights in public policies and in institutions within the federal government (in particular in the Executive and Judicial branches).

The effects of this meeting were:

- Advancement in the development of public policies that guarantee the rights of LGBTQI+ populations within different governmental institutions.
- Presentation of a reform to the law to legalize marriage for same-sex couples at the federal level (this reform was not ultimately successful, in large part due to opposition by the Catholic Church hierarchy and other conservative actors).
- Greater willingness by the federal Ministry of Health to debate specific policies for LGBTQI+ people; for example, for trans women. In June 2017, the Protocol for Access, Without Discrimination, to the Provision of Services and Medical Care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transvestite, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTTTI) People was published, together with the Guidelines for Specific Care, which emanated from the protocol. The protocol emphasized children, adolescents, intersexuality and sexual difference, lesbian and bisexual women, homosexual and bisexual men and transgender people.
- Mexico joined the UN LGBTI Core Group and proactively promoted the creation of a similar group within the Organization of American States (OAS).
- The Institute of the National Fund for Workers Housing (INFONAVIT for its abbreviation in Spanish) extended housing credits to same-sex couples.



Positioning of the issue of violence against LGBTQI+ people

Recently, violence against LGBTQI+ people has been more visible in the media and public opinion, and present in legislative discussions. Notably, participants mentioned the following points:

- Several states changed their penal codes to make crimes motivated by the sexual orientation of the victim an aggravating circumstance.
- Some state attorneys general have developed specific protocols and created specialized units or have specialized prosecutors for crimes against LGBTQI+ people.
- The Mexican Attorney General (PGR for its abbreviation in Spanish), the National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED) and civil society organizations, developed the National Protocol for the Behavior of Personnel in Attorneys General Offices, in Cases that Involve Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, published in August 2018. This protocol establishes regulations that should be followed by public officials charged with administering justice when someone from the LGBTQI+ community comes forward, whether at the local or federal level.
- Some state prosecutors have also developed protocols to address cases of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Inclusion of sexual orientation as one of the motives for discrimination evaluated in the National Survey on Discrimination (ENADIS)

This survey has existed since 2005, but the most recent iteration, corresponding to 2017, includes relevant data on discrimination against LGBTQI+ people in the country, with special emphasis on gay, lesbian and trans people. In 2018, CONAPRED created an online survey directed at Mexican residents over 16 years of age. The National Survey on Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (ENDOSIG for its abbreviation in Spanish) seeks to map, understand and make visible the different forms of discrimination that LGBTQI+ people face throughout Mexico.



Greater presence of LGBTQI+ activists in the cultural sphere

There are openly LGBTQI+ artists with national and international recognition that are also activists and publicly defend LGBTQI+ rights. Historically, LGBTQI+ movements have used art as a tool for visibility and politicization, for example, theater, literature, cabaret, vogue, illustration, video and other styles, that allow them to generate activism and sociocultural changes.

3.2 Perception of the state of LGBTQI+ movements

None of the people interviewed or participants in the meeting considered that LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico are strong or well organized. On the contrary, they perceived the movements as being weak and fragmented.

In the opinion of those who participated, the significant visibility that LGBTQI+ people have gained in the country does not correspond to levels of movement organization and mobilization. This result, which arose during in-depth interviews and the analysis meeting with activists, coincides with what was reported in the MCAT, where the majority of participants identified LGBTQI+ movements as Emerging.

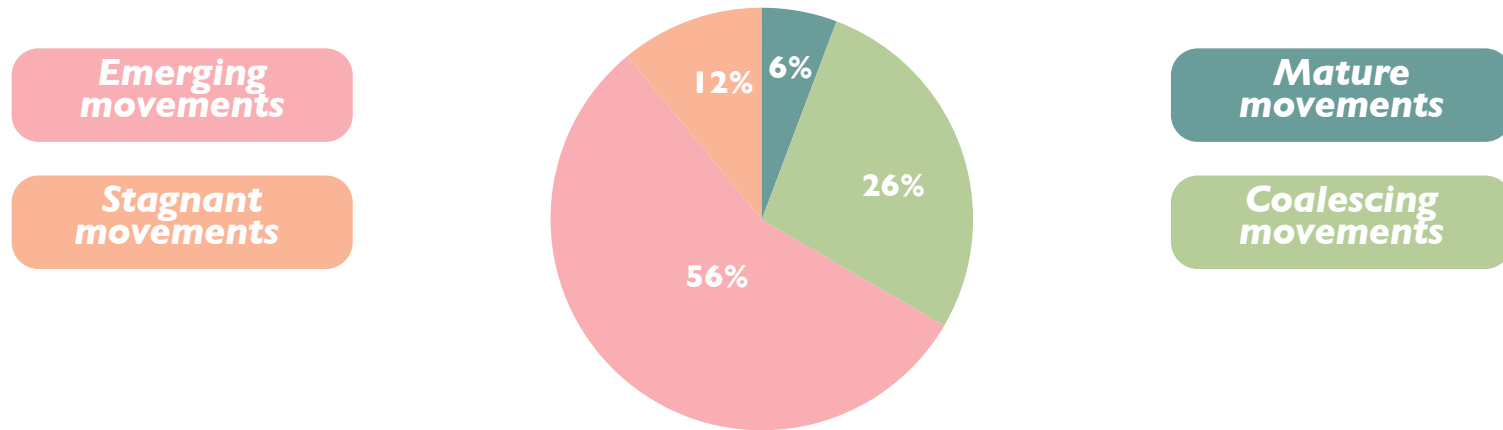
To understand the state of LGBTQI+ movements, MCAT survey participants were asked to indicate the stage that best describes their movement in accordance with the following categorization:



Stage	Description/Characteristics (adapted from Batliwala, 2003)
Mature movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and sustained membership base consciously identifying with the movement • Strong autonomous organizational and governance structure • Extensive and deep leadership • Sophisticated analysis, strategies, political acumen • High measurable impact on state and non-state actors, and society at large • Strategic alliances and adversaries
Coalescing movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steady and sustained membership base • Higher political consciousness and evolving organizational structure • Longer-term political agenda and change strategies • Greater autonomy vis-à-vis support organizations • Increasing visible impacts on society
Emerging movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilization, awareness and identity building • Rising political consciousness and issue/s identification • Preliminary political agenda • Tentative actions for change • Nascent constituency-based leadership • Higher dependence on support organizations
Stagnant movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagnant or declining membership base • Rigid political analysis/agenda that has lost relevance and appeal • Static strategies and actions with limited or declining impact • Aging out of leadership • Rise of other movements



The results of the survey, as we can see in the following pie chart, show that 56% of participants identify their movement in an emerging stage, while 26% in a coalescing stage, 12% in a stagnant stage and 6% identify their movement in a mature stage.



In accordance with this information we can deduce that the majority of survey participants identify their movement at a crucial juncture for strengthening, as they begin to explore new strategies and advocacy with an emerging grassroots leadership. There is minimal perception that the movement is at a mature stage.

These results also coincide with how the majority of participant organizations identify their role in the movement,⁹ since 100% indicated it as being awareness raising, a characteristic that coincides with emerging movements.

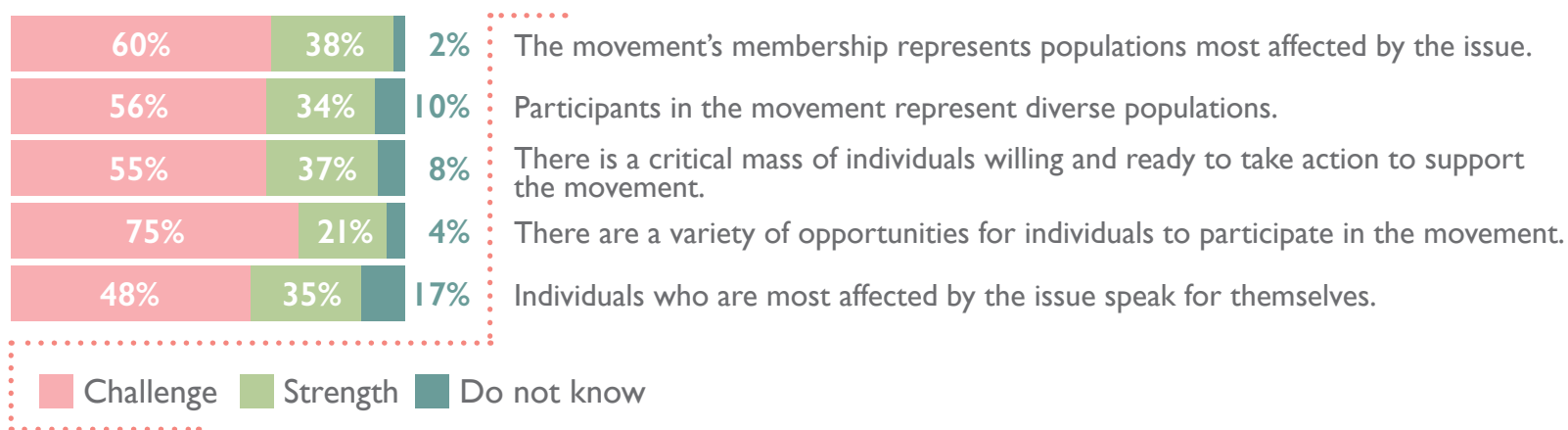
⁹ See Characteristics of research participants in the Methodology section.



3.3 Representation as a challenge to LGBTQI+ movements

In the MCAT survey, participants were asked to identify the following categories as a strength or challenge for their movement:

- The movement's membership represents populations most affected by the issue.
- Participants in the movement represent diverse populations.
- There is a critical mass of individuals willing and ready to take action to support the movement.
- There are a variety of opportunities for individuals to participate in the movement.
- Individuals who are most affected by the issue speak for themselves.



According to the results, all of the categories are perceived as a challenge. It is noteworthy that the highest percentages are in regards to the inclusion of populations most affected and opportunities to participate in the movement. This exemplifies the perception that the broad LGBTQI+ movement in Mexico is not sufficiently inclusive of all of the populations that comprise it.



Disparity in access to power and resources

Various testimonies gathered during in-depth interviews and in the meeting with organizational representatives indicated that the broad LGBTQI+ movement is being represented primarily by gay men in urban contexts. According to various participants, gay men have more power and presence because their leaders, organizations and movements have more resources and spaces for participation. The explanation that was given in the interviews and analysis meeting is that this group has had the most access to resources given their work to prevent and reduce HIV/AIDS, which is the top cause funded within the broader LGBTQI+ movement and at the global level.¹⁰ The lack of diversity in issues that receive funding has benefited one sector within the broad movement, creating an obstacle for the plurality of representations and participation.

Those who participated in the interviews and the meeting perceive competition among LGBTQI+ groups given that limited available resources in the country fall into the same bucket. Additionally, they mentioned that building trust between movements has been a significant challenge in the past. Some indicated that they do not feel support within the broader LGBTQI+ movement. For example, they perceive that some lesbian groups have not supported the fight against HIV/AIDS, or that some gay groups have not taken the lesbian agenda seriously. Though some of these complaints and divisions remain, there is a perception of growing solidarity and coordination among different LGBTQI+ groups.

Unfortunately, in the LGBTQI+ movement there is a predominance of gay men that have a strong resistance to the feminist lesbian women's movement, which means that there is a double resistance to building alliances with the feminist women's movement. (Quote taken from the MCAT survey)

In general, as lesbian and bisexual women, we have been excluded from the movement, which is something that always happens. We aren't included in proposals and there hasn't been enough recognition of the work we are doing. As lesbians we have been able to coordinate better with the feminist movement. (Quote taken from the MCAT survey)

¹⁰ See: 2015-2016 Global Resources Report: Philanthropic & Government Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Communities, developed by Global Philanthropy Project and Funders for LGBTQ Issues.



Trans groups are underrepresented

Trans groups are seen by many of the research informants as the most discriminated among LGBTQI+ people. The agenda for trans people's rights has more recently gained greater visibility, recognition and priority, however there is still much to be done. Notably, trans women are one of the most targeted groups for hate crimes, particularly transfemicide.

There are few groups of trans men in the country, and little visibility. Around 150 trans men receive health services, hormonal therapies and psychological accompaniment at the Condesa Clinic in Mexico City. This clinic is one of the few medical spaces that offer hormonal therapies during transition for trans women and men in the country.

During the analysis meeting as well as in the surveys, there were organizations comprised of trans and non-binary people who mentioned the invisibility they face because their gender identity is not reflected in official documents and identification. They also emphasized the need to use non-sexist and inclusive language in Spanish.

Migration and LGBTQI+ populations

There is a growing migratory crisis with an increase in Central Americans passing through Mexico (on 'migrant caravans') on their way to the United States, fleeing violence. Many LGBTQI+ people need to leave their countries due to diverse forms of violence, in particular due to aggressions by gangs, social rejection, or the lack of economic opportunities in their country of origin.

There are many risks along the migratory path. Trans women tend to be at greatest risk since they can be coerced into sexual exploitation networks. There is a need to strengthen services for LGBTQI+ migrants without necessarily generating specific spaces for them, but rather including LGBTQI+ migrants in a comprehensive way among existing migrant and refugee populations.



Need for an intersectional focus

In the meeting with organizational members the need to strengthen intersectionality was mentioned. This focus would allow for the consideration of sexual orientation, gender identity and body conditions with other issues such as the racialization of certain body types, social class, social inequalities, gender, territory,¹¹ work and labor conditions.

In spite of the importance of the dimensions of class, ethnicity and age, they are not sufficiently considered, worsening the vulnerability of rights. For example, the vulnerability of poor or indigenous LGBTQI+ people within their communities is high and therefore internal displacement is common among them. However, there is very limited knowledge of their situations, organizations, voices, needs and demands and they are absent from the spaces and agendas of LGBTQI+ movements. This reinforces the perception that representation in these movements is a challenge.

Lack of consolidated national coalitions or platforms

Those who participated in the interviews and the meeting with organizational members mentioned that, different from other countries, in Mexico there is no strong and stable national platform, coalition or organization that advocates for LGBTQI+ people with federal or state governments, Congress, or other public institutions.

¹¹ The concept of 'territory' links a community's access to land and natural resources with cultural reproduction, decision-making power, autonomy and livelihood.



3.4 Need for greater intergenerational communication

During in-depth interviews with activists and in the meeting with LGBTQI+ organizational members the following was mentioned:

- New leaders are emerging in the movements throughout the country.
- New leaders have limited experience and little access to training and capacity building.
- There is a significant generational gap: more experienced leaders have not been able to transfer their knowledge and experience in activism to younger generations.

There is a significant lack of professionalization. Now that there is greater interest and opportunity to advocate for LGBTQI+ rights, we don't have the necessary capacity to take advantage of the opportunities that are presenting themselves. (Testimony of interviewee).

A diverse and inclusive leadership allows a social movement to leverage its strategies, identify new issues and amplify priority issues within the movement. For these reasons, it is fundamental to understand the state of leadership within movements. As well as the perceptions of those that participated in the interviews and in the meeting, we asked those who participated in the MCAT survey to indicate if the following aspects are a strength or challenge for their movement.

Categories to evaluate the current leadership in LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico

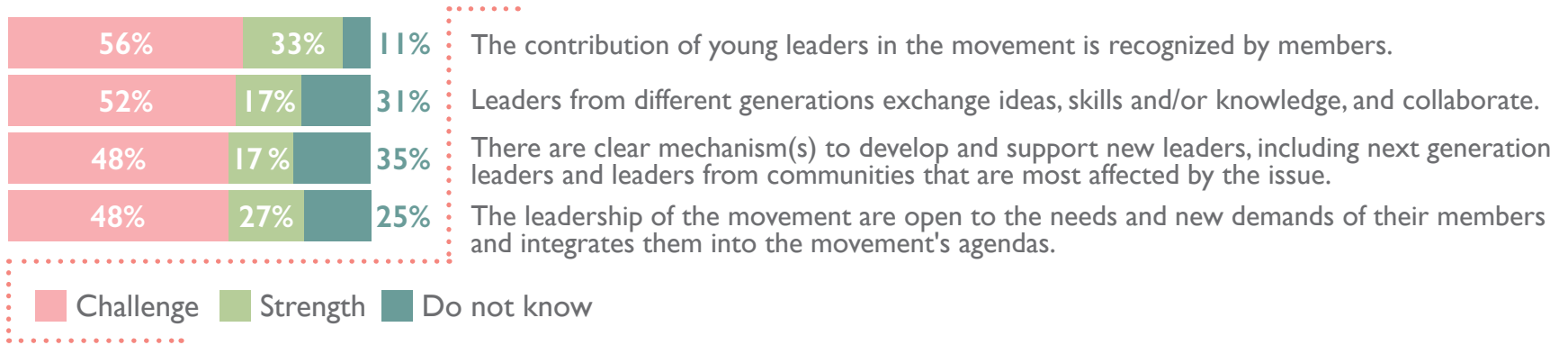
The contribution of young leaders in the movement is recognized by members.

Leaders from different generations exchange ideas, skills and/or knowledge, and collaborate.

There are clear mechanism(s) to develop and support new leaders, including next generation leaders and leaders from communities that are most affected by the issue.

The leadership of the movement are open to the needs and new demands of their members and integrates them into the movement's agendas.

As we can see in the following graph, more than 50% of those who participated in the MCAT survey perceived recognition of the contribution of young leaders as a challenge, as well as the existence of intergenerational exchange. Likewise, 48% consider the existence of clear mechanisms to develop and support new leaders as a challenge, and the same with the openness of leadership to the needs and new demands of their members. It is worth noting that the percentage of those who do not know if it is a strength or challenge is relatively high in three of the four categories.



The people who participated in this study recognized that new leaders are emerging in their movements. This is why it is important to promote spaces for intergenerational exchanges, where those who have more experience can transmit their knowledge, with the objective of strengthening historical memory, access to resources, public advocacy, leadership and capacity building. In turn, new leaders can enrich movements with new perspectives, visions and ways of engaging in activism, which tend to generate intersections with different social movements. In the analysis meeting with activists, they mentioned the risk of movements stagnating if there are not spaces for the participation of new leaders.

3.5 Collaboration within movements and with other allied movements

LGBTQI+ people face different situations on a daily basis that put their rights, lives and bodies at risk.¹² This is why building alliances within and outside of their movements is essential.

In order to understand the intersection of LGBTQI+ movements with others, we used the MCAT survey to ask participants whether they consider the following categories as strengths or challenges.

Categories to evaluate the consolidation of collaborations within the movement and with other allied movements

There is strong collaboration among groups within this movement.

Groups within this movement are actively reaching out and engaging informal groups (i.e., groups that are not legally constituted or groups that have little or no formal structure) such as women's collectives, self-help groups, student groups, etc.

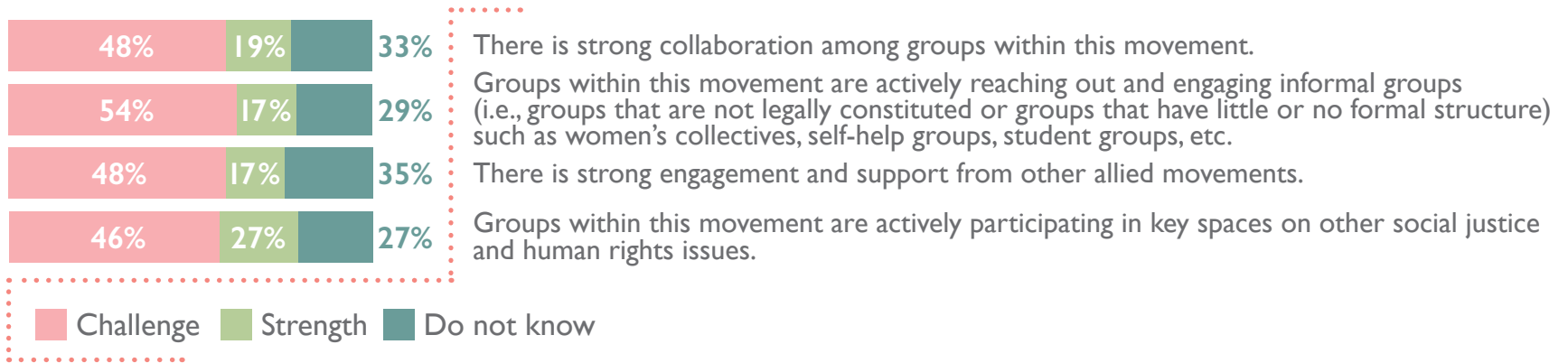
There is strong engagement and support from other allied movements.

Groups within this movement are actively participating in key spaces on other social justice and human rights issues.

¹² Butler, Judith (2017). Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly, Harvard University Press.



It is noteworthy in the results that 48% consider strong collaboration among groups within this movement as a challenge, and that there is a high percentage of people (33%) that do not know. Likewise, 48% consider strong engagement and support from other allied movements as a challenge and 35% that do not know. The lack of knowledge and perception of challenge could be attributed to the lack of communication between movements.



In addition to the MCAT results, in the interviews and meeting with activists, the lack of strong engagement and support from allied movements was mentioned. The majority of participants highlighted the need to support initiatives that promote alliance building with human rights, feminist, and women's rights groups, in addition to others, as well as within LGBTQI+ movements.

Deepening the analysis of these findings, during the meeting with activists, there was a discussion on the internal and external obstacles to alliance-building and networking.

The obstacles to collaboration between LGBTQI+ movements were identified as being:

- Lack of leadership succession and openness to new ideas
- Lack of intergenerational spaces to share about struggles and priorities in an open way
- The centralization of the movement, which impedes construction of a collective agenda and response to the needs of different contexts in the country
- Sexism and violence within the movement
- Lack of recognition of the work and struggles of each collective
- Lack of funding

Obstacles to collaboration with other movements were identified as being:

- Safety as an obstacle for women since participation in broader network spaces increases physical risk
- Lack of sensitivity to LGBTQI+ issues in other movements and vice versa
- Sexism and gender-based violence in other movements

Another important finding is that organizations that have felt excluded from the broader LGBTQI+ movement have generated alliances with other movements, like the feminist movement – as lesbian feminism or transfeminism, the human rights movements, sexual and reproductive rights movements or even liberation theology, though to a small degree. These alliances have been built primarily by the most excluded or periphery movements. Broadening and building networks would permit strategic participation in other spaces and movements.



3.6 Building a collective political agenda

A collective political agenda allows for clarity about key struggles, spaces and priorities for those who participate in movements. Participants of the MCAT were asked to identify the following categories related to the objectives, communication and coordination of their movement, as strengths or challenges.

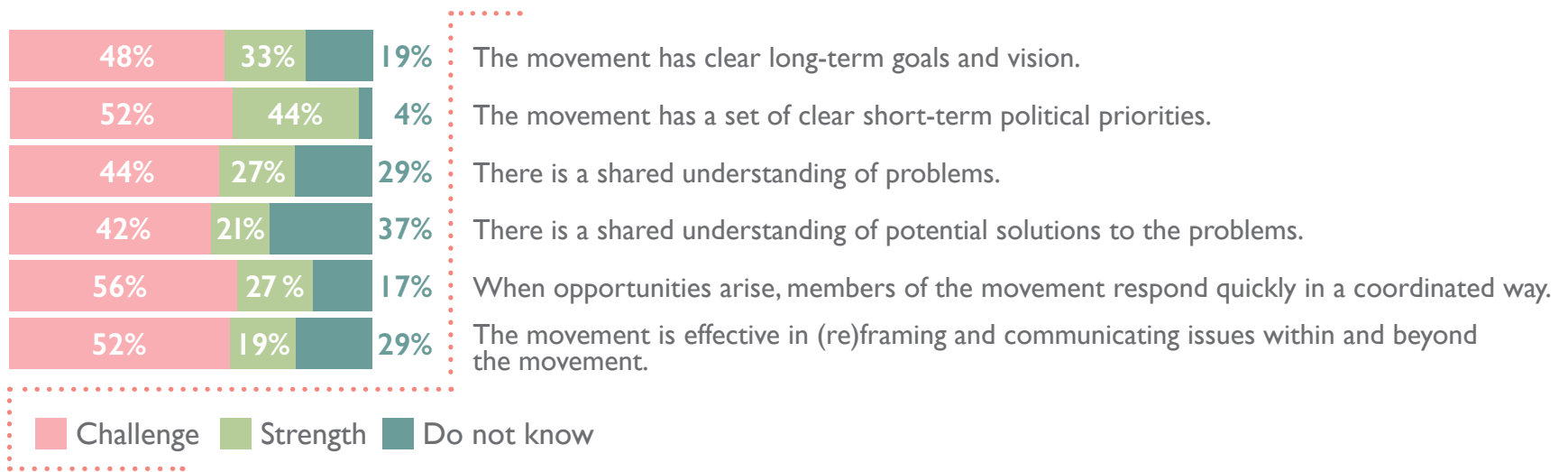
Categories to evaluate the current political agenda of the LGBTQI+ movement in Mexico

The movement has clear long-term goals and vision.	The movement has a set of clear short-term political priorities.
There is a shared understanding of problems.	There is a shared understanding of potential solutions to the problems.
The movement is effective in (re)framing and communicating issues within and beyond the movement.	When opportunities arise, members of the movement respond quickly in a coordinated way.

As evidenced in the following graph, 48% of survey participants consider that the movement is challenged in having clear long-term goals and vision. In terms of whether the movement has a set of clear short-term political priorities, opinions are divided nearly in half, with 52% viewing it as a challenge and 44% considering it a strength.

The rapid and coordinated response of the movement to emerging opportunities was identified by 56% of those surveyed as a challenge. Lastly, it is noteworthy that the percentages of those that did not know if there exists a shared understanding of the problems and potential solutions are high (29% and 37% respectively).





In line with the results of the MCAT survey, participants of in-depth interviews and the analysis meeting mentioned that there has not been a collective agenda that has succeeded in representing the needs of the broad LGBTQI+ movement. In spite of there being several attempts, such as with the law on marriage equality, various participants did not identify it as a priority.

There hasn't been the construction of a common agreement or collective agenda. An example is the common agreement or collective agenda that was articulated in 2016 around marriage equality, but this doesn't reflect the priorities of the broader movement at all. (Quote taken from reflection meeting)

Priority issues should be based on gaining stronger and more rights, hate crimes and violence. Marriage equality is an issue that has advanced in some states but there are issues that go beyond it, issues related to violence. (Quote taken from in-depth interview)



During the analysis meeting with members of LGBTQI+ organizations one of the reflection and discussion topics was about the political agendas of the movements. Although these are developed based on the specificity of experiences of those who share a common identity, they tend to have points in common. For example, participants coincided in five fundamental issues – together with concrete actions to be carried out – that could be promoted as a collective political agenda:

a) Recognition of identities, affected groups and diverse bodies

- Visibility and recognition of trans binary and trans non-binary identities, both at the social and legal levels
- Visibility and recognition of intersexuality
- Visibility and recognition of trans women that do sex work
- Creation and implementation of a federal law on gender identity
- Research on LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

b) Violence against LGBTQI+ people

- Self-organization in the face of violence against LGBTQI+ people
- Classification of hate crimes perpetrated against the trans population

c) Education and cultural sensitivity

- Education and awareness-raising projects with civil society around non-binary identities
- Education and awareness-raising projects with civil society around intersexuality
- Education and awareness-raising projects with the trans women population around hypersexualization and its health consequences



d) Comprehensive health

- Prohibition of corrective surgery for ambiguous genitalia in infancy and in people that have not consented to it
- Comprehensive medical care for trans women and people that live with HIV

e) Actions to strengthen movements from within

- Projects to strengthen youth LGBTQI+ leaders

We can see by the reflections generated in the meeting that, despite differences, there are common issues that cross and negatively affect the broad LGBTQI+ community in Mexico. We observed that the challenge in articulating these issues into a common agenda arises from a lack of opportunities to come together and discuss, reflect, prioritize and generate strategies.

3.7 Strategies used by LGBTQI+ movements

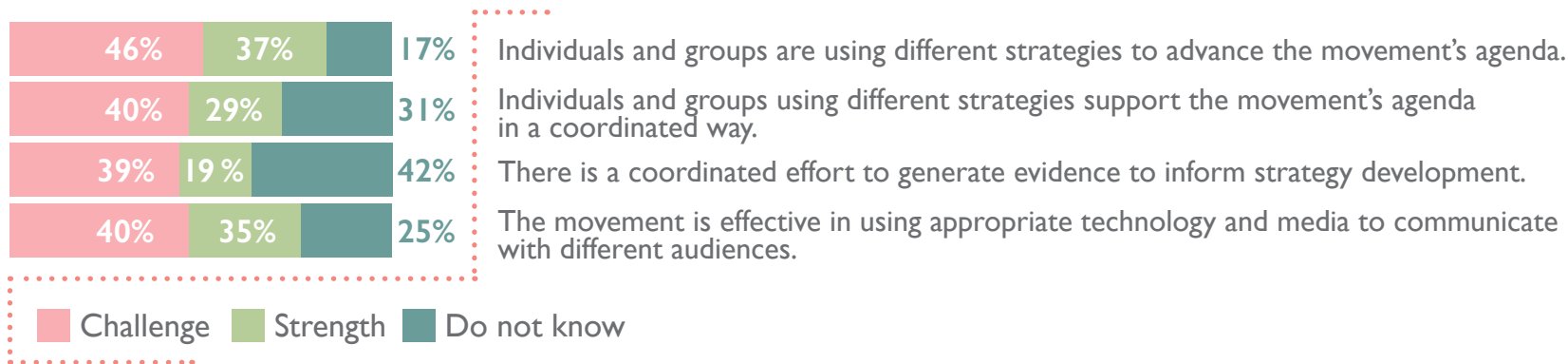
When we understand the strategies that movements employ we can understand their level of capacity to advocate for social change. To identify strategies that are used by LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico, we asked those who participated in the MCAT survey to identify whether the categories in the following table were strengths or challenges.

<i>Categories to evaluate the strategies that movements use</i>	
Individuals and groups are using different strategies to advance the movement's agenda.	Individuals and groups using different strategies support the movement's agenda in a coordinated way.
There is a coordinated effort to generate evidence to inform strategy development.	The movement is effective in using appropriate technology and media to communicate with different audiences.

The results show that 46% of participants believe it is a challenge to use different strategies to advance their movement. Additionally, the use of different strategies to support the movement's agenda in a coordinated way was identified by the majority of participants as a challenge.

Forty-two percent reported not knowing if there is a coordinated effort to generate evidence to inform strategy development. Lastly, the use of appropriate technology and media to communicate with different audiences is perceived as a challenge by 40%. However, this is only five percentage points above those who see it as a strength.





It is noteworthy that in the above graph there is little difference between categories identified as a challenge and a strength. There appears to be opposing results in the same response which can be attributed to the movement's stage and the lack of a common agenda. At the same time, it is evident that participants perceive that there are not clear or shared strategies within their movement.

In addition to the results of the MCAT survey, during in-depth interviews with activists we asked about the strategies that organizations use as well as those that need to be promoted, strengthened and developed.

The results were the following:

Strategies that movements use in Mexico:

- Workshops and seminars focused on raising awareness of sexual and reproductive rights as well as issues related to LGBTQI+ movements.
- Creation of spaces for providing emotional support (this strategy is more frequently used by groups of lesbian, bisexual and transsexual women).
- Self-reflection processes to build and strengthen a collective identity in order to advocate in different spaces and contexts.
- Cultural events, specifically those focused on painting, projection of movies with LGBTQI+ content and theater/cabaret. These have also served as fundraising strategies for participants.



Carrying out these strategies also reflects funding restrictions that limit resources to those that are project-related and which cannot be used for organizational strengthening. This type of funding does not allow for long-term and sustainable structural changes.

Strategies that need to be promoted, strengthened and developed:

- Recovery of the historical memory of LGBTQI+ movements to understand and recognize what has gone before.
- Positioning LGBTQI+ movements in light of the growing strength of a conservative agenda at the state-level in Mexico.
- Building networks within LGBTQI+ groups, collectives and organizations.
- Integrating networks with other movements' groups, collectives and organizations, including feminist, human rights and social justice movements.

It is clear from the strategies mentioned above, that the LGBTQI+ movement has focused on social and cultural activism to combat structural discrimination and violence against LGBTQI+ populations in Mexico. This is characteristic of an emerging movement, and there is a desire to move forward and diversify strategies.



3.8 *Movement support infrastructure*

A strong movement support infrastructure requires effective communication among members, networks to strengthen the capacity of smaller organizations, and a mechanism that allows for effective decision-making. These elements allow a movement to be agile and organized while facing issues that have social, legislative and judicial impact. In order to understand if their movement has effectively developed its infrastructure, we asked participants to identify the following categories as a strength or challenge.

Categories to evaluate strong movement support infrastructure

There are sufficient opportunities for groups to come together for peer learning and joint planning.

There are recognized organizations or coalitions that coordinate and communicate with members of the movement effectively.

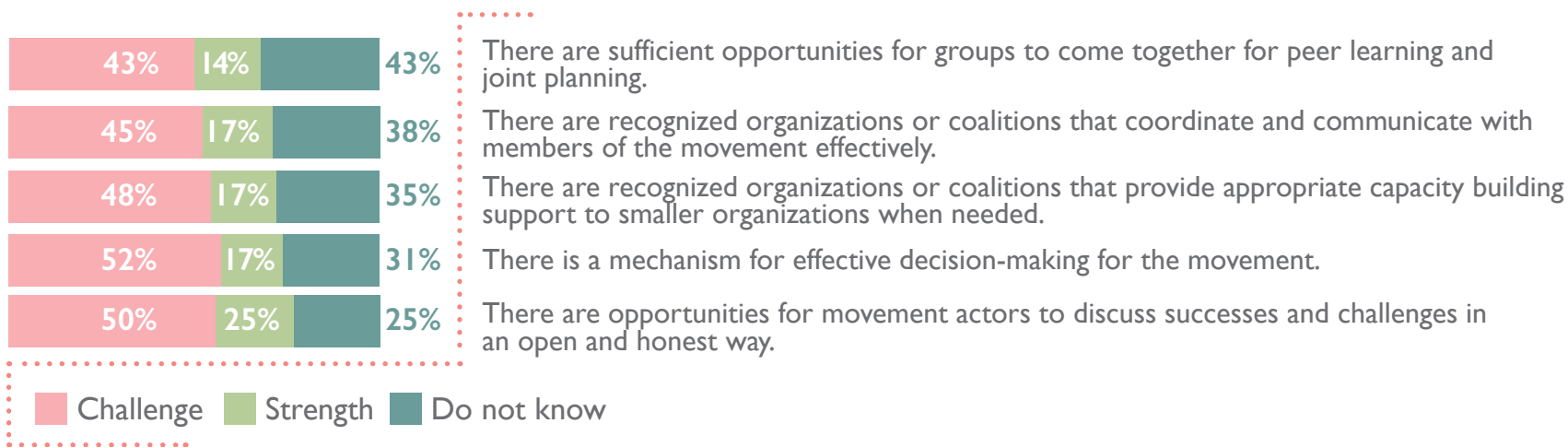
There are recognized organizations or coalitions that provide appropriate capacity building support to smaller organizations when needed.

There is a mechanism for effective decision-making for the movement.

There are opportunities for movement actors to discuss successes and challenges in an open and honest way.



The results show that 43% of participants do not know of the existence of opportunities for groups to come together for peer learning and joint planning and the same percentage identified this category as a challenge. Almost half of participants perceived it as a challenge for organizations or coalitions to provide appropriate capacity building support to smaller organizations when needed. A little more than half also identified the existence of a mechanism for effective decision-making as a challenge.



There is a perception that there are not enough spaces, organizations or coalitions for effective decision-making and that the few that exist have not sufficiently included new leadership or are regionally or thematically centralized.

Half of the MCAT survey participants identified that there are not enough opportunities to meet where they can discuss and reflect on successes and challenges in an open way. There is a need to build solid coalitions that are representative of movements and that take into account contexts outside of Mexico City.



3.9 Safety, protection and human rights defense

It is essential to understand the mechanisms that movements use for their safety, as well as for human rights protection and defense given the current context of discrimination and violence that LGBTQI+ people in Mexico face. According to a study published by Letra S, in Mexico, 473 LGBT people were killed between 2013 and 2018, with an increase in murders in the last year (Cruz Martinez & Brito, 2019). Likewise, one out of every two LGBTQI+ young people stated that they have been victim of some kind of violence: verbal violence (55%), psychological violence (36%), threats (23%), or physical violence (21%).

These forms of violence signify an attempt by society to regulate identities and bodies that do not fit within a binary gender and heterosexual construction (Corral, 2008).



YOU'RE NOT NORMAL. ARE YOU A MAN OR A WOMAN?

DEFINE YOURSELF!

In order to understand the perception of safety within their movement, we asked participants to identify the following categories as a strength or challenge.

Categories to evaluate the safety, protection and defense of human rights within LGBTQI+ organizations

There are mechanisms in place to provide appropriate and immediate response to address violence against human rights defenders.

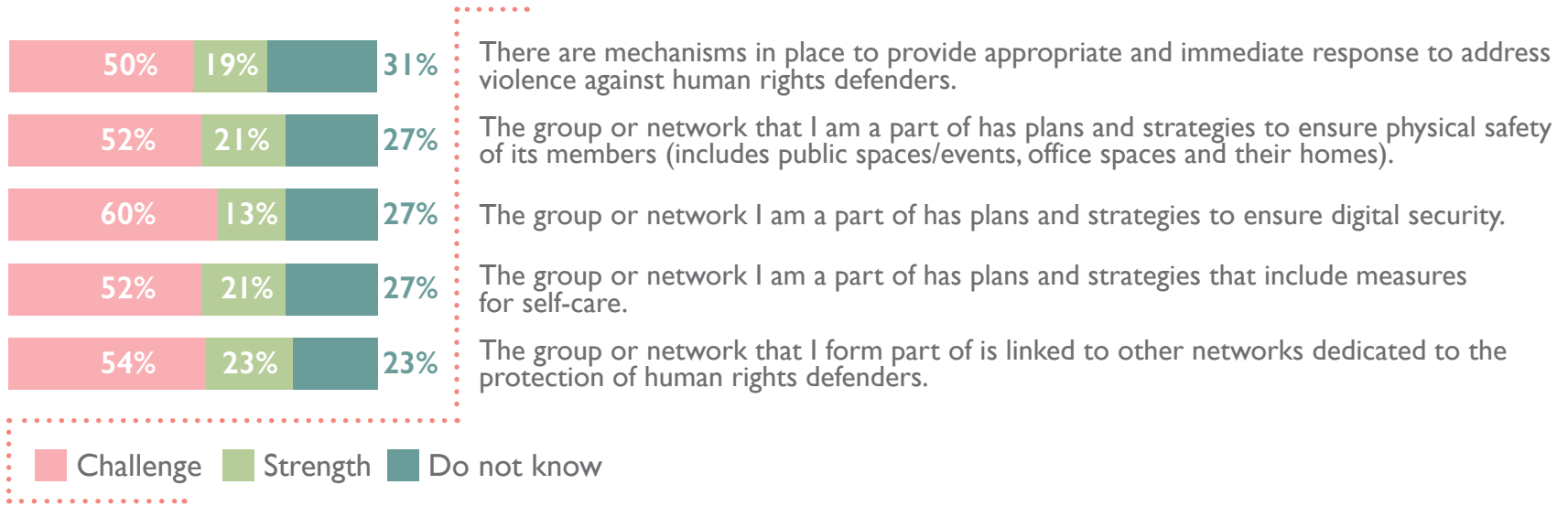
The group or network that I am a part of has plans and strategies to ensure physical safety of its members (includes public spaces/events, office spaces and their homes).

The group or network I am a part of has plans and strategies to ensure digital security.

The group or network I am a part of has plans and strategies that include measures for self-care.

The group or network that I form part of is linked to other networks dedicated to the protection of human rights defenders.

As we can see in the following graph, all the categories in regards to safety, protection and defense of human rights within LGBTQI+ organizations were identified as a challenge by more than 50% of those who participated in the MCAT survey.



In spite of this, in the meeting with members of LGBTQI+ organizations we perceived that people are knowledgeable about necessary steps to guarantee the safety of LGBTQI+ people in Mexico. This is summarized in the following priority actions.

Priority actions to be carried out regarding safety and protection

- Guarantee physical, emotional and digital safety of movement members with strategies such as self-defense classes, implementation of self-care activities and protection of data and information.
- Strengthen the relationships between different organizations that comprise LGBTQI+ movements.
- Classify hate crimes in the country.
- Generate communication and care strategies: safety protocols, protocols between organizations in case of violence and the use of safe platforms for communicating.
- Modify sexist conduct and practices within the movement.
- Stop ignoring lesbian, bisexual and trans groups, as well as people that are marginalized within the movements such as indigenous, incarcerated, homeless and migrant people, among others.

4. HOW ARE LGBTQI+ MOVEMENTS IN MEXICO FUNDED?

Results from this section were obtained from an online survey on funding directed towards LGBTQI+ movements organizations, groups and collectives. Responses were provided by 46 organizations from 14 states in Mexico.

4.1 Annual budget for LGBTQI+ organizations

In order to understand the annual budget of organizations we asked participants to indicate the response that most closely reflects the range of their annual budget, taking into account the following options:

Categories to understand the annual budget of LGBTQI+ organizations (amounts in USD)

\$2,500
or less

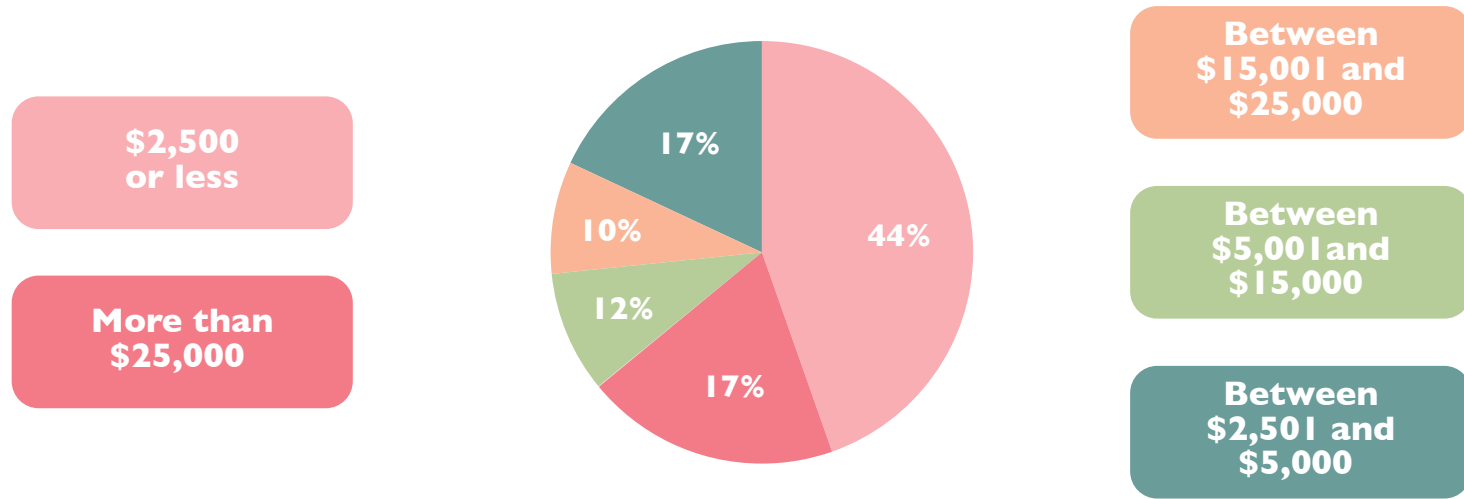
Between
\$2,501
and
\$5,000

Between
\$5,001
and
\$15,000

Between
\$15,001
and
\$25,000

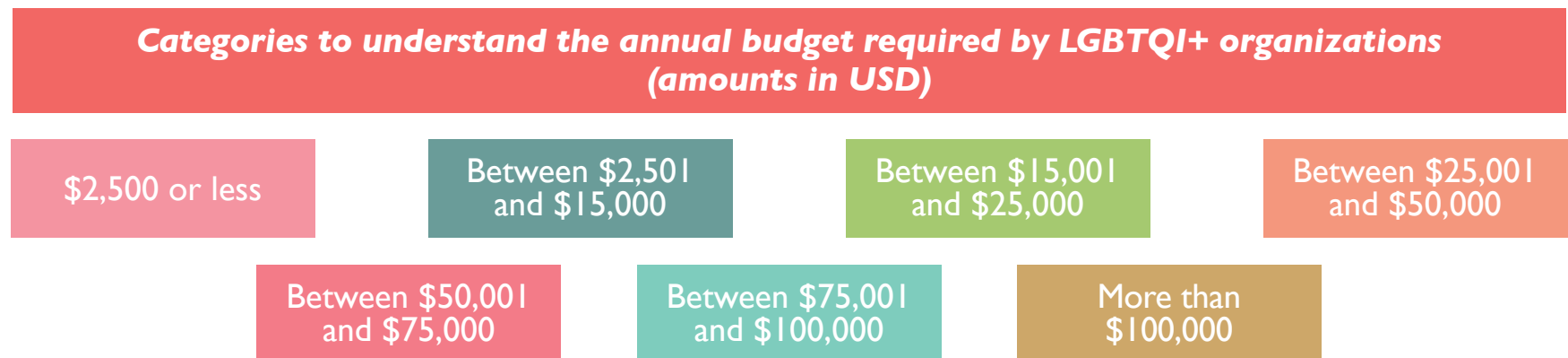
More than
\$25,000

We found that 61% of organizations work with a budget of less than \$5,000. The great majority (44%) have a budget of \$2,500 or less. Only two organizations reported having an annual budget of over \$100,000. This data reveals that LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico operate with limited resources and insufficient funding to guarantee their sustainability.



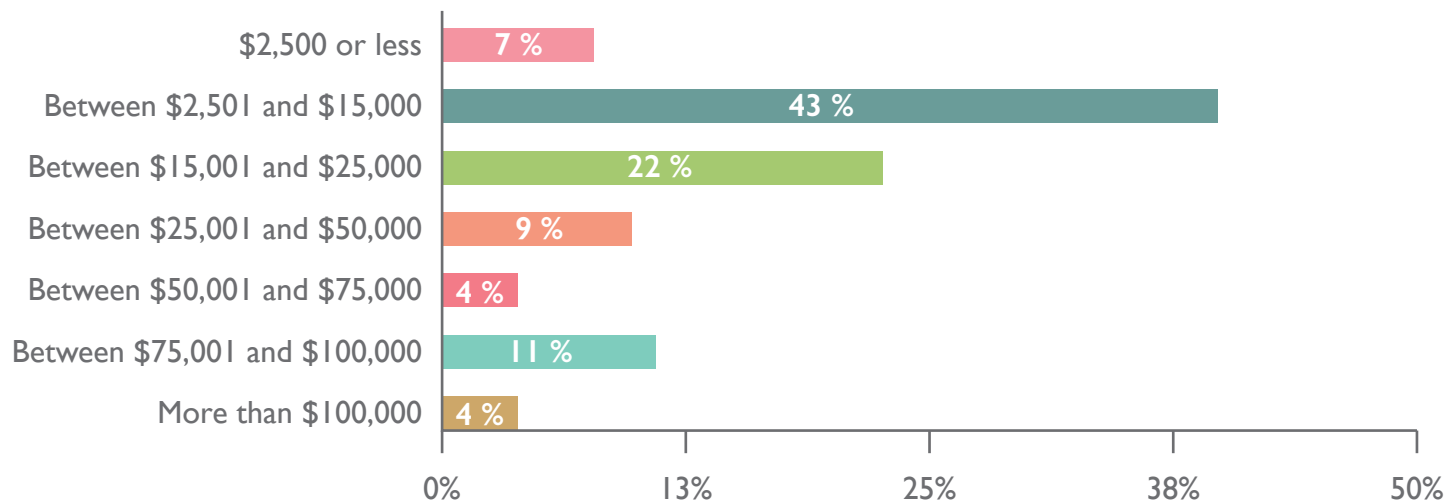
4.2 Annual budget required by LGBTQI+ organizations

Knowing the annual budget that is required allows us to understand organizations' projections for successfully carrying out their objectives and activities. To obtain this information, we asked organizations to indicate the range that best represents the budget that they would need in order to carry out their annual activities and projects:



According to the results obtained, 43% of organizations would need a budget between \$2,501 and \$15,001, while 22% indicated that they would require between \$15,001 and \$25,000. From these results we can deduce that the majority of those who responded to the survey do not have sufficient annual budgets. It may be necessary for intermediary organizations to strengthen smaller organizations in their administrative infrastructure so they can manage more robust donations and resources.

Another finding was that organizations have grown used to working and carrying out activities with very limited financial resources, putting at risk the income of those who work for them, and even their safety, as well as the sustainability of their results and impact.



As we have noted earlier, research participants perceive their movement to be in an emerging stage. This means that in order to grow and become stronger they need support that allows them to develop their capacity for resource management, both financial and human.

4.3 Understanding the current funding that LGBTQI+ organizations in Mexico receive

Understanding the ways in which funding is granted to organizations helps us understand why certain strategies are prioritized above others. In order to obtain these results, we asked organizations that receive funds to indicate the kind of funding they receive based on the following categories:

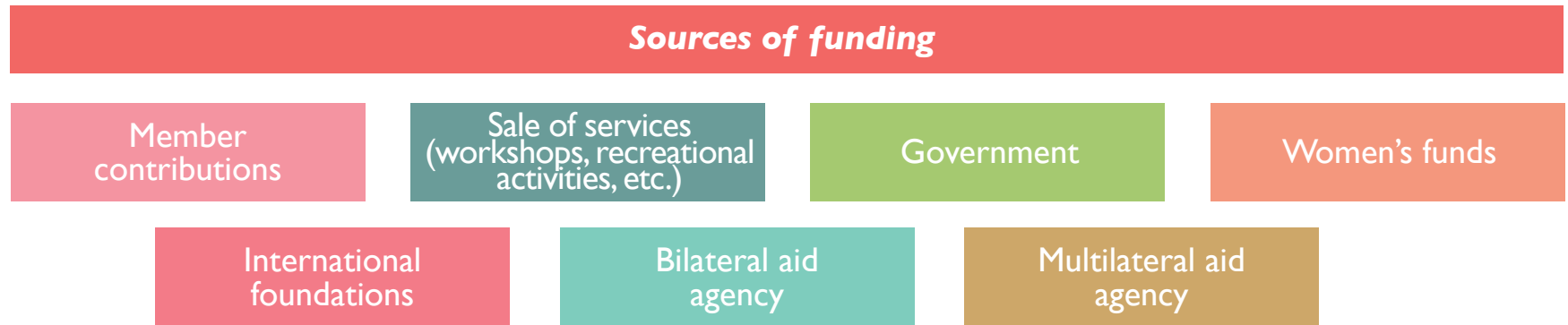
Categories to understand the current funding that LGBTQI+ organizations in Mexico receive	Yes	No	No response
The majority of donations are for general/institutional support.	24%	48%	28%
The majority of donations are for project-based support.	60%	7%	33%
The majority of donations are for short-term or annual support.	52%	17%	31%
The majority of donations are multi-annual support.	6%	59%	35%

The results show that the majority of funding that organizations receive are for short-term or annual support (52%) and for project-based support (60%). This explains why the primary strategies that they carry out are focused on short-term projects which, according to the results of the MCAT survey, are generally focused on educating and awareness-raising about LGBTQI+ issues.

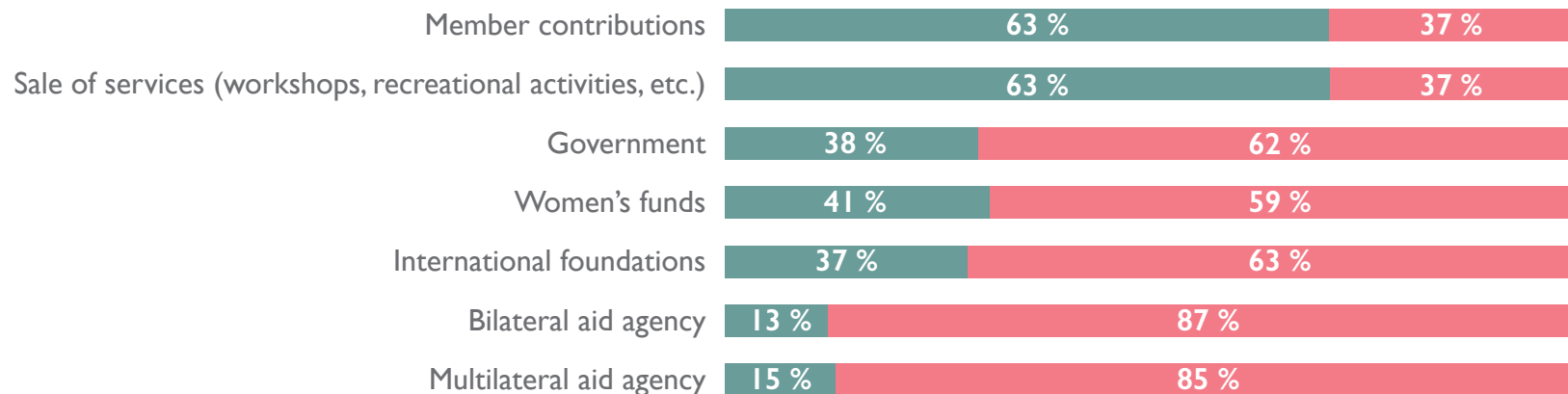


4.4 Primary funding sources

Understanding the primary sources of funding for organizations allows us to map who is contributing resources to the movements, and explore new forms of support. We asked participants to indicate whether or not they receive funding for their organizations from the following sources.



The majority of those surveyed revealed that their primary sources of funding are individual contributions by their members and sales of services (63%) followed by women's funds (41%), governmental resources (38%) and international foundations (37%).



That the primary sources of funding come from organizational members and the sale of services might indicate that these organizations are off the radar for donors interested in the issue, or that there is limited funding to support the movements. Likewise, the results obtained emphasize the lack of diversity of funding sources and the enormous need for institutional strengthening of LGBTQI+ organizations.



4.5 Donor mapping

The following is a mapping of donors that are currently investing in LGBTIQ+ movements in Mexico:

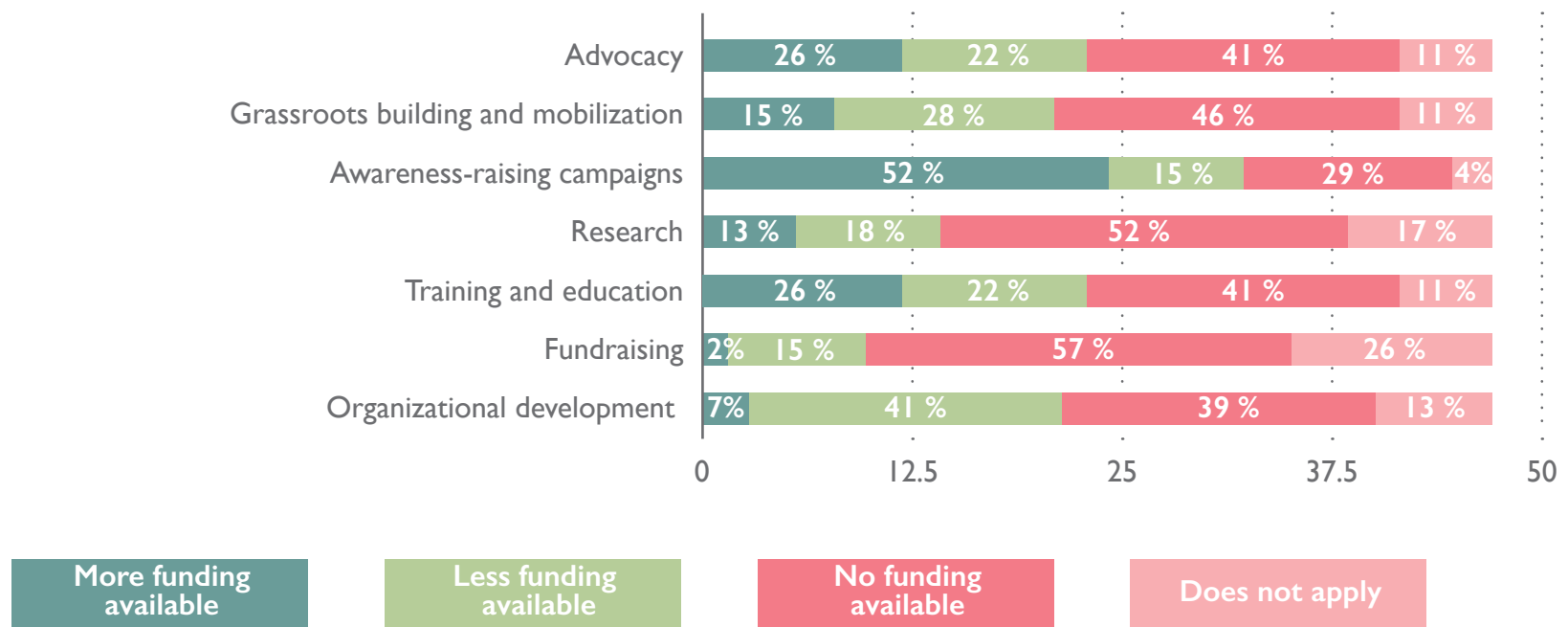
Sector	LGBTIQ+ Funder
Women's funds	Fondo Semillas / Astraea / Mama Cash / FRIDA / Global Fund for Women (GFW)
Private foundations	True Colors United / Arcus / Levi Strauss Foundation / American Jewish World Service (AJWS) / Foundation for a Just Society (FJS) / Open Society Foundation (OSF)
International NGOs	IPAS (México)
Businesses	Doritos / Uber / MAC Cosmetics
Governmental agencies (at state and federal level)	General Area for Equality and Social Diversity's Program for Social Co-Investment (DGIDS) / Mexico City Youth Institute (INJUVE) / Human Rights Attorney General for the state of Guanajuato / National Electoral Institute (INE) / National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) / National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED) / Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL) / National Center for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS (CENSIDA) / Mexico City Human Rights Commission / Mexico City Council to prevent and eradicate the discrimination (COPRED) / Ministry for Rural Development and Equity for Communities (SEDEREC) – Mexico City
Official development aid (ODA)	FNUAP / UNHCR / SETEM Euskadi (Basque Country) / some embassies (Germany, Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, United Kingdom); USAID
Other donors	International Trans Fund / Grupo de Mujeres Diversas GMDe / Prometeo Project / Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund / Inner Pride



4.6 Funding by strategy

Participants were asked to rank which of the following strategies have the most, least, or no funding, as well as those activities that do not apply to the work they do.

Organizations received the highest percentage of funds for awareness-raising campaigns (52%). Taking into consideration other findings that suggest that organizations received the majority of their funds for short-term projects (see section 4.3), it is not surprising that there are few resources for organizational development, with 39% of organizations saying there is no funding available.



4.7 LGBTQI+ populations funded

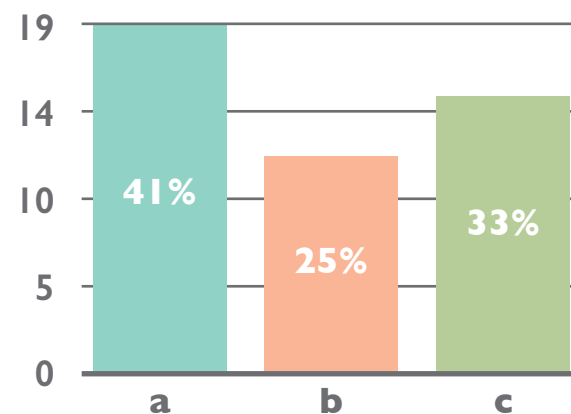
Despite not having any question on the survey that focused on which movements receive more funding, we compiled comments from interviews and during the analysis meeting that showed the perception that groups of gay men and trans women currently have greater access to economic resources. Participants felt that groups of lesbians, trans men and intersex people face greater challenges for funding, which is commonly linked to lower institutional capacity. Groups comprised of bisexual people are generally less visible and therefore there is limited information in regards to their resources.

There is a general need to understand how funding is distributed among diverse LGBTQI+ movements and its impact on divisions, capacities, and possibilities for movement building around broader agendas.

4.8 Obstacles to obtaining funds

In order to understand the obstacles that organizations face in obtaining resources, we asked survey participants to indicate the greatest obstacles they encounter. The results can be observed in the following graph:

- a) They are not legally registered.
- b) They do not have anyone that can write proposals.
- c) They have never asked for funds beyond voluntary contributions from their members.



The results obtained show that the greatest obstacle for 42% of organizations is that they are not legally constituted.

According to activists in the analysis meeting, in terms of geographic coverage, the majority of resources tend to be centralized in Mexico City. Groups from other states have greater difficulty in obtaining governmental funding, which comprises their third largest funding source.¹³

Groups listed various difficulties in regards to funding in response to an open question on the survey, not the least of which was the fear that they are “selling out” their work or the movement by requesting funding. Other difficulties mentioned included:

- Small groups located in periphery zones cannot fulfill the high-impact indicators demanded by funders.
- There is little opportunity for under-represented groups within the broad LGBTQI+ movement to obtain funding.
- Organizations do not have a communications or public relations area that documents activities they carry out.
- There is a lack of knowledge of English, the language in which most proposals must be presented.
- There is a lack of training in project design.
- There are insufficient organizational activities to justify more financial support.
- There is little or no fixed salary for organizational members, which affects the time they can dedicate to activism.
- Organizations have no direct relationship with potential donors.
- There are a lack of human resources in the organization.
- Organizations do not have a fundraising area.
- There is less professionalization outside of Mexico City and other big cities.

¹³ On February 14, 2019, after organizations responded to the survey on funding, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador emitted a memorandum (Circular Uno) to definitively end government funding to civil society organizations because it had “resulted in discretion, opacity and corruption.” Answers regarding government funding may be different in the future based on this change.

5. CONCLUSIONS

By way of summary, below is a compilation of the main findings which highlight both achievements and challenges for LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico:

- **Issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity, and violence against LGBTQI+ people have been promoted in society, culture and the media.** This represents an opportunity to strengthen the work of LGBTQI+ movements.
- **There have been advances in the formal recognition of rights and in legal protections** that are useful in continuing to build a more inclusive society where the full rights of LGBTQI+ people are respected throughout the country.
- **The political culture for LGBTQI+ movements is changing.** An example of this is the increased support for LGBTQI+ candidates (from different parties) in the most recent elections.
- **There is a perception that LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico are weak and fragmented.** We can infer that this is part of why there is not a consolidated national coalition or platform that represents or defends LGBTQI+ people with the government and other public institutions.
- The generalized perception is that **there is a need for a common agenda and to strengthen movements** in many ways, in particular, their advocacy capacity. In order for this to occur, movements need spaces to meet, participate and make decisions, not only to develop an agenda, but also to plan and analyze their successes and challenges. The organizing committee for the annual Pride Parade is currently one of the only permanent spaces for collaboration and organization among movements.

- Within the broader movement **there are more discriminated populations** such as trans groups and others that are almost entirely invisible, such as the indigenous population. Within LGBTQI+ movements, intersectionality is necessary to give greater voice to more marginalized populations because of their geographic location, ethnicity, age, work, religion, etc.
- The lack of representation of all groups in the broad movement **generates disparity in access to power and resources**. In addition, support is concentrated on certain agendas – like gay men around HIV/AIDS – that are more visible in political and funding spaces.
- **There is little acknowledgment, inclusion and acceptance of faith-based LGBTQI+ groups within the broad movement.**
- There is an **emergence of new leaders** within LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico that makes intergenerational dialogue urgent, as well as the professionalization of new leadership.
- Participants referred to the need to **strengthen and broaden alliances with other movements** such as groups that work on human rights, feminists, among others.
- **Safety, protection and human rights defense for the LGBTQI+ population is a significant challenge** since they are at high-risk of violence, aggressions and even murder.
- **The resources with which LGBTQI+ organizations operate are insufficient.** Organizations have become used to working in precarious conditions that affect their income and safety. Additionally, **the majority receive resources destined only for short-term projects.** This situation impedes them from strengthening their organizations, which would allow them to be more sustainable and to envision longer-term goals.
- **Organizations need to diversify their funding sources.** The most common funding sources are individual contributions and the sale of services. This is in part owing to the fact that many organizations are not legally constituted, which impedes them from accessing other funding. In addition to the **lack of professionalization** and the limited capacity to respond to the requests of institutional donors.



6. THE WAY FORWARD

6.1 Recommendations for LGBTQI+ movements

This study was carried out with the objective of beginning a conversation, not providing scripted solutions. Based on participant reflections, we would like to present the following recommendations that might be useful for strengthening LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico:

- Take advantage of visibility around sexual orientation and gender identity to jointly organize and advocate as a broad movement.
- Generate spaces for reflection and organization to build a collective political agenda and follow-up on work plans and proposed actions. There are currently LGBTQI+ groups or networks within public sector institutions that could represent potential opportunities to build alliances and advance agendas.
- Generate strategies for organizational strengthening under a common agenda.
- Promote the transference of knowledge between those who have more experience within the movement and new generations of leaders and smaller organizations. Strengthen groups of young people by means of training in advocacy and fundraising skills, as well as lobbying, leadership and teamwork.
- Seek out allied organizations and people that can engage in strategic litigation to strengthen advances in legal protections.
- Prioritize the voices and needs of those that are most invisible and without representation in decision-making, placing emphasis on promoting intersectional leadership in a way that takes into consideration the most marginalized populations.
- Seek out funding for organizational strengthening that allows for legal constitution, long-term planning and project development and management so they can diversify funding sources and achieve greater sustainability.



6.2 Recommendations for Donors

through his study we hope to spark conversations, not only with those that comprise LGBTQI+ movements, but also with those interested in supporting and funding them. Therefore, we asked members of LGBTQI+ organizations in the analysis meeting to write down recommendations for donors, with the idea of providing a guide to those interested in funding these movements in Mexico. The recommendations were grouped under the following categories: a) issues to strengthen and prioritize within movements, b) funding and, c) criteria for determining priority geographic areas to support.

6.2.1 Issues to strengthen and prioritize

Participant responses can be classified into three areas that LGBTQI+ movements consider priority to fund: Safety, legal protection, and inclusion and acceptance.

6.2.1a Safety

- Documentation of claims of violence against LGBTQI+ people. In order for this to occur it is necessary to increase the capacity of movements to systematically document and denounce hate crimes at the national level (in a decentralized way, with documentation at the state level), including the murder of LGBTQI+ people.
- Training on the effective implementation of protocols, namely the National Protocol for the Behavior of Personnel in Attorneys General Offices in Cases that Involve Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. Including,
 - Training local LGBTQI+ groups on the Protocol and how to use it to advocate for and support LGBTQI+ people who are victims of crime.
 - Training local LGBTQI+ groups on the Protocol and how to use it to advocate for and support LGBTQI+ people who are victims of crime.
 - Development of indicators of violence motivated by hate or prejudices based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

- Advocacy with pertinent public authorities for the creation of a national governmental registry of violence against LGBTQI+ people at the state and federal levels.
- Capacity strengthening for comprehensive collective protection among diverse LGBTQI+ groups and organizations, in particular in the most violent states in the country. By encouraging LGBTQI+ actors to recognize themselves as human rights defenders they can use this internationally recognized framework as another tool for protection. Relatedly:
 - Promotion of contact with existing protection networks and organizations; adequate training adequate training on security measures (digital, physical, tools for risk assessment, safety planning, self-and collective-care and wellbeing, etc.); and further development of safety capacity in these movements.
 - Development of appropriate protocols to address violence within LGBTQI+ groups and organizations or by external people.
- Development of large-scale campaigns to raise awareness and eradicate stigma and violence against LGBTQI+ people. This is crucial to counteract the growth of fascist and conservative discourses that have gained legitimacy and support among the population in Mexico, and in the region as a whole.

6.2.1b Legal Protection

- Support for the continued progress and expansion of legal protections for LGBTQI+ people such as:
 - Expansion of non-discriminatory language in Article I of the Constitution, and in other relevant laws. Include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity and expression” instead of “sexual preferences” (as it currently appears).
 - Advancement in legal protections related to gender identity at the federal and state level.
 - Promotion of legal defense to ensure that there are federal provisions that increase punishment for crimes based on the sexual orientation, gender identity or expression of the victim, and encourage more states to include such provisions in their penal codes.

- Promotion of legal and public policy provisions against homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, interphobia and lesbophobia.
- Advancement in legal and public policy provisions against the legalization or implementation of conversion therapy at the federal and state levels.
- Organizational capacity building for advocacy. An increase in the capacity for advocacy among diverse LGBTQI+ activists around the country is crucial for promoting legal and public policy protections. There is a need to support the specialization of LGBTQI+ policy advocates in different states throughout Mexico and in specific areas of development and human rights, for example, health, education, etc.
- Support of the migrant LGBTQI+ population. There is a growing migration crisis in Mexico as the number of Central American migrants that come into the country to stay or on their way to the United States has dramatically increased. LGBTQI+ people migrate to Mexico, fleeing from diverse forms of violence, in particular from gangs and a lack of economic opportunities in their countries of origin. Their level of risk and vulnerability is very high, especially among trans women, since many are trapped in criminal sexual exploitation networks within the country. It is necessary to strengthen appropriate services without this necessarily implying the creation of specialized shelters for these population groups.

6.2.1c Inclusion and Acceptance

- Support and strengthening of highly marginalized groups, for example indigenous and afro-descendent, trans, poor, incarcerated and homeless LGBTQI+ people. This should be a priority to build truly inclusive movements and agendas.
- Creation and consolidation of state-level work to counteract high levels of centralization in the country, where it is said that actors in Mexico City frequently impose their agendas and strategies on the rest. This could truly harness existing capacity in certain states with high levels of professionalization among LGBTQI+ activists.
- Development of mass campaigns in traditional media and social networks.



- Promotion of cultural change by:
 - Supporting LGBTQI+ artists and their organizations and initiatives in different parts of the country.
 - Specific projects aimed at influencing the media and social networks.
 - Education and awareness-raising among parents and family members of LGBTQI+ people to prevent violence, victimization and discrimination.
- Actions to counteract conservative public narratives:
 - Work with the media, social networks and other forms of mass communication to position new and different narratives that help to bring visibility and awareness and counteract discourse that is openly inciting hate and violence against LGBTQI+ people in the country.
 - Partnerships between LGBTQI+ people and bloggers/influencers and other public opinion leaders that work in traditional media as well as social networks and other virtual spaces.
- Support the articulation and formation of coalitions at different levels including:
 - Resources to ensure that LGBTQI+ movements have their own meeting spaces in different regions of the country and at the national level. It's necessary to inject resources in processes that could help to collectively build movements, while respecting the rhythms of organizations and movements in different parts of the country.
 - Capacity strengthening for conflict resolution between LGBTQI+ people and organizations so they can reach agreements and shared agendas that allow them to strengthen their movements.
 - Strategies that raise awareness, and generate mechanisms to treat discrimination and violence within LGBTQI+ movements, especially practices related to sexism, *machismo* and classism.
 - Alliance and coalition building with other key allies of LGBTQI+ movements: feminists, human rights defenders, groups that work to promote the secular state, or groups that work with migrant populations.



- Research activities, including studies that generate hard data, for example the financial situation of LGBTQI+ people, as well as the historical memory of the movements. This could provide valuable information for promoting the rights of these communities with governmental institutions, donors and other stakeholders.
- Campaigns and other strategies that contribute to preventing suicide among LGBTQI+ children and youth.

6.2.1 Issues to strengthen and prioritize

Those who participated in the analysis meeting made recommendations regarding Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and the follow-up provided by funders to their grantees. The following are some of the suggestions that were gathered:

- Publish RFPs in Spanish.
- Protect sensitive data on organizations and their members.
- Grant flexible funding.
- Offer different types of funding for different types of organizations.
- Carry out site visits and have greater contact with grantee organizations.
- Support the most excluded and invisible population groups in order to not perpetuate inequality within the LGBTQI+ community.
- Continue to carry out mapping of the most urgent needs and priorities for movements.
- Support groups who want to becoming legally constituted to help with their financial sustainability.



6.2.3 Criteria to determine geographic zones to support

Another recommendation mentioned was to decentralize funding to move beyond Mexico City. Although there are significant lags in LGBTQI+ rights throughout Mexico, a series of considerations has been proposed to prioritize certain organizations in specific geographic contexts. The suggested criteria are:

- States with high conservative presence
- States where there is important intersectional work being done to include crucial marginalized populations, like afro-descendent, rural or indigenous LGBTQI+ population
- States located along the border that have frequent migrant transit
- States with higher levels of violence against LGBTQI+ people

The recommendations provided by research participants make evident their desire to decentralize the support received, contextualize the needs of each group and region, and expand strategies that aim to strengthen the movements.

7. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

For this research, different methodological tools were used to compile a broad range of quantitative and qualitative information. The work was carried out by the following means:

1. **Bibliographic review** of LGBTQI+ rights in Mexico, the assertion of those rights and relevant additional documentary information.
2. **Mapping of 200 organizations**, experts and activists working for LGBTQI+ rights, which served as a database to invite activists and organizations from these movements to participate in the online surveys.
3. **Online survey to evaluate social movement capacity**, 52 participants responded. The Movement Capacity Assessment Tool (MCAT) was used, which is explained in more detail below.
4. **Online survey of the current funding context for organizations within the LGBTQI+ movement**, 46 participants responded. Both the funding and the MCAT surveys were applied between August 6 and October 27, 2018.
5. **In-depth interviews** with 11 activists, selected from the participants who completed the surveys.
6. **A participatory analysis meeting** with 20 members of diverse LGBTQI+ organizations in the country, selected from the survey participants, to discuss the preliminary results of the surveys, deepen analysis of the context, and develop recommendations.

7.1 Mapping organizations

The mapping consisted of searching for and collating contacts and information about organizations and people known to Fondo Semillas that work with the LGBTQI+ community. We then asked them to respond to the surveys and to share them with their networks. Given that it was not an exhaustive mapping exercise, the study is not representative of the movements in Mexico in their entirety. However, Fondo Semillas strove to include organizations beyond its feminist allies in order to have a more general vision of the context in Mexico. The additional mechanisms by which we sought contacts were social networks, web pages, search engines and presence in key spaces for the movement such as public policy roundtables, academic spaces, among others.

7.2 Online surveys

Both online surveys were shared with more than 200 contacts, of which 52 responded to the MCAT and 46 to the survey on the funding context.

7.2.1 Movement Capacity Assessment Tool (MCAT)

The MCAT survey is a tool developed by Global Fund for Women. Its categorization of the stages of movements is based on the theoretical framework developed by the social activist, feminist, researcher and writer, Srilatha Batliwala. The survey's objective is to provide a collective assessment of the strengths, needs and priorities of a social movement so that its members can generate debate about how to face challenges and advance together.

7.2.1a Characteristics of research participants

The 52 responses to the MCAT were comprised of 37 organizations (71%) and 15 individual activists, as well as other experts, who did not represent any specific organization (29%). Seventy-three percent of the responses came from people under 35 years of age. Forty nine percent of participants were based in Mexico City, 43% outside Mexico (in the states of Aguascalientes, Baja California, Campeche, Chiapas, Coahuila, Guerrero, Jalisco, Leon, Puebla, San Luis Potosi, State of Mexico, Tamaulipas, Yucatan, Zacatecas), and 8% did not identify.

7.2.1b Self-identification of movement participants

People surveyed self-identify with the following movements:

- LGBTTTIQ+ movement: 31%
- Lesbofeminist movement: 27%
- Queer movement: 11%
- Trans movement: 11%
- Transfeminist movement: 10%
- Lesbian Bisexual Trans movement: 4%
- Intersex movement: 4%
- Gay movement: 2%

7.2.1c Types of organizations that participated

The organizations identified as:

- Grassroots or community based organization: 57%
- National non-profit organization, research center or agency: 21%
- Local network or coalition: 3%
- Regional (domestic) network or coalition: 5%
- TNational network or coalition: 3%
- Regional (international) network or coalition: 5%
- International network or coalition: 3%
- Donor: 3%



7.2.1d Time that organizations have been involved in the movement

- 50% have participated four years or less in the movement.
- 225% have participated between five and nine years in the movement.
- 25% have participated ten years or more in the movement.

7.2.1e The roles that the participating organizations play

Organizations identified their role in the movement as focused on the following types of work. Participants could selected two types.

- Awareness-raising: 100%
- Strategic support for LGBTTTQI+ organizations: 39%
- Political advocacy: 36%
- Service provision: 14%
- Mobilization and activism: 22%
- Capacity building for other groups: 19%
- Leadership development: 19%
- Support infrastructure; 8%
- Coalition building: 3%
- Fundraising and resource management: 3%



7.2.2 Survey on funding situation

This survey received 46 responses by organizations, groups and collectives from 14 states who also responded to the MCAT survey and therefore have similar characteristics as those mentioned above. This survey was designed by the consultant, Lydia Alpízar Durán with the intention of understanding the funding situation for LGBTQI+ movements in Mexico, as well as detecting the priorities and obstacles that organizations and their movements face in this area.

7.3 In-depth interviews

Eleven interviews were held with activists, representatives and members of diverse organizations in different regions throughout Mexico.¹⁴ Participants were from organizations that ranged from the newest to those that participated in historic LGBTQI+ activism landmarks. The information obtained allowed for a deeper understanding of the plurality of positions and perceptions that exist within the movement.

¹⁴ Participants were from Mexico City, Puebla, Campeche, Jalisco and Tamaulipas.





Analysis meeting

The meeting was carried out parallel to the Forum for Feminist Reflection and Analysis in 2018, organized by Fondo Semillas on September 21, 2018. The analysis meeting with members of LGBTQI+ organizations brought together 20 participants from 11 states around the country who were selected in an effort to achieve geographic and thematic representation within the movements. Arcus Foundation and C&A Foundation also participated as observers due to their interest in the issue. The meeting allowed for diverse collective reflections on the current political and social context affecting movements, as well as the political agenda for the broader movement. It also allowed for deepening findings from the online surveys and the development of a first draft of recommendations for donors.

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Arcus Foundation

Arcus Foundation is a global leader in its cause for people to live in harmony with one another and the natural world. Arcus believes that respect for diversity among people and in nature is essential for a positive future for our planet and for all of its inhabitants. The Foundation works with experts and activists to guarantee that LGBT people can thrive in a world where social and environmental justice is a reality.

Global Fund for Women

Global Fund for Women is a global champion for the human rights of women and girls. It uses its powerful networks to find, fund, and amplify the courageous work of women who are building social movements and challenging the status quo. By shining a spotlight on critical issues, Global Found for Woman rallies communities of advocates who take action and invest money to empower women.

Fondo Semillas

Fondo Semillas is a feminist fund that mobilizes resources and supports grassroots organizations to achieve gender equality in Mexico. It dreams of a country where all women can make their own decisions and have access to resources and services, safe and fair work, justice, and happiness. Over the past 29 years, Fondo Semillas has directly benefited more than 685 thousand women in all their diversity, and 2.5 million more people indirectly.



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Illustrations: Emilia Schettino
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