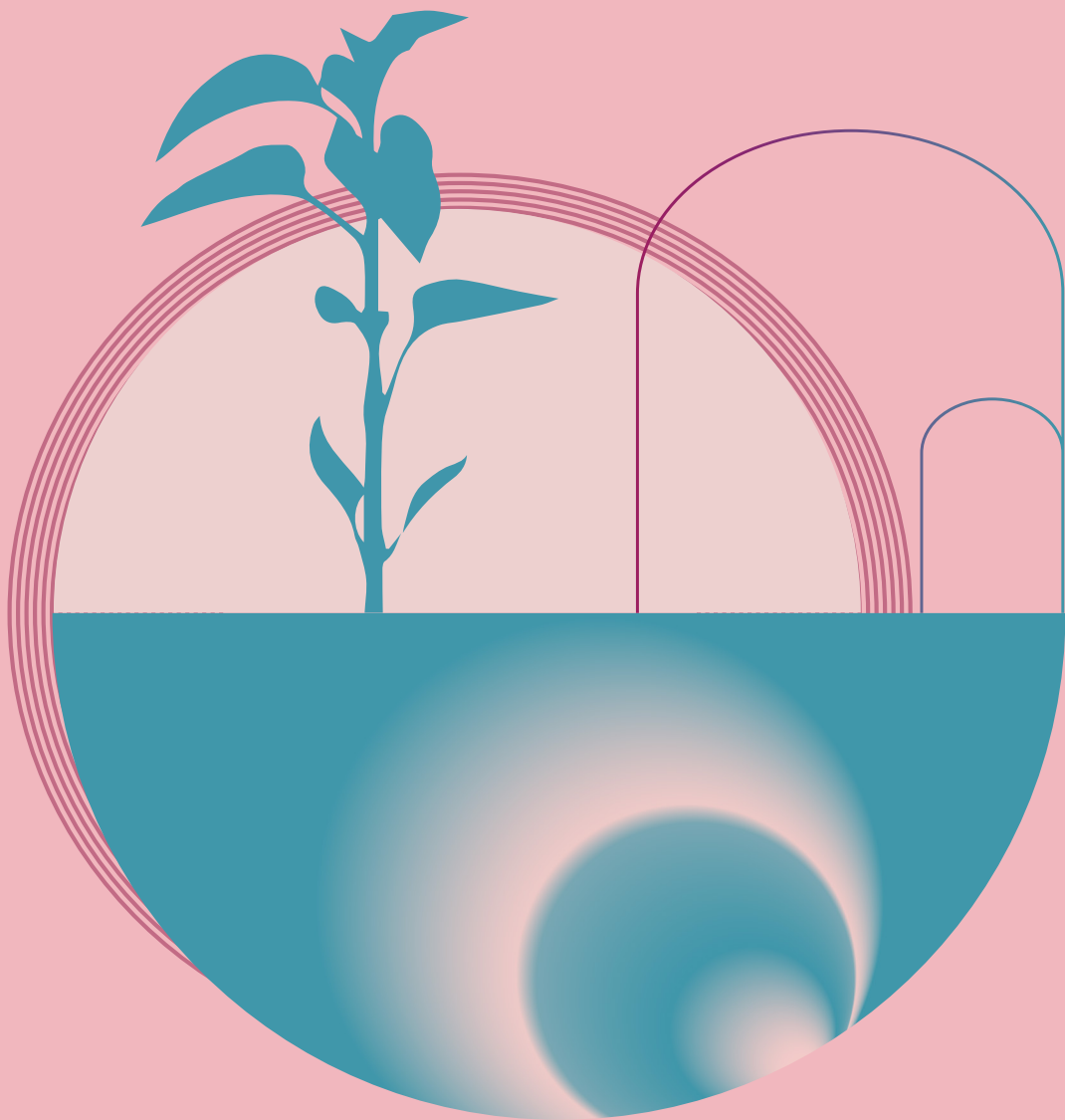


# Reconstruction Women's Fund

Annual report



# Reflection on 2025



*It is only when we untangled ourselves from 2025, we realized how challenging it was for us. The wave of funding cuts and freezes started by Trump in the US, was felt in the Balkans as well. Donors got scared and decided to pause resourcing feminist and gender movements waiting for the storm to pass. Of course, there were those donors that continued to support feminist movements and women's organizations with decisiveness and courage. We are closely watching how are we going to exit the crisis, and it seems to us, that it is going to be difficult for some time. We worked hard on finding new donors, and we faced new challenges. Our goal is to diversify our resources as much as possible so we can weather the storms and be reliable support to the movement. That goal comes with a lot of obstacles and, in these pages, you can testify how we are managing the crisis.*

# Partnerships in 2025



In our well know initiative, [\*On the Right Track\*](#), we had a chance to meet the groups that are working in Europe. We had a meeting in Warsaw in September where we worked on 4 themes selected by activists. We decided to form groups that will address political violence, reproductive health, LGBTQI+ rights and antiracism. We had over 60 activists from Europe including Georgia and Armenia that took part in different session from *Queer Arab resistance to Connections between climate justice and reproductive rights*. The forum was precious because activist had a chance to share knowledge and experience about their local struggles and responses to anti-gender politics. One of the conclusions of the meeting is that we must build supranational alliances that will include the possibility of disagreement. One of the participants shared that "one of the most significant aspects of the meeting was the possibility of live connection from the whole region. The space made possible significant networking, open dialogue and exchange of experiences beyond virtual meetings. I would underline interactive sessions where we shared practical challenges and strategies, as well as safe and inclusive atmosphere where we could speak openly."

Our initiative with sister funds [\*Fund Her Now\*](#), where we are trying to unlock new funding from corporate sector so they can support feminist movements, is taking shape and in the last year we have had many meetings, sharing of strategies and thinking further about steps on how to get resources. Our challenges are not only fear from new sphere of work but the fact that working with corporate sector sometimes goes against anti-capitalist and antiracist principles. We are not saying that there is no good money in corporate philanthropy, rather we are using different languages and often times we do not know how to build bridges. In Paris, we attended a working group meeting for gender "netFWD" in OECD's organization. The meeting under the name "Rethinking Gender Financing in An Era of Uncertainty" gathered corporate and bilateral donors as well as few nongovernmental organizations. Even though the situation is uncertain, it was encouraging to see the dedication of all actors to gender equality and efforts to provide continued and efficient financing in complex environment.

At the end of the year, we traveled to Malmo to attend the "Impact Week" conference, for us, a completely new spaces that brought us a lot of insight, but also opened new doubts and questions for thinking through our work in the fund. It is the biggest conference dedicated to social impact investing with several hundreds of participants – starting from investment funds, corporate foundations to nonprofit organizations. Conference affirmed what we long suspected – that this kind of philanthropy is moving away from traditional grantmaking and is putting focus on social entrepreneurship and investment with financial return. Even though basic motive for this kind of investment is sustainability of organizations, our concern remains over how to implement these kinds of models on work of women's organizations without ruining the basic principles of work.



Impact Week, Malmo

One of the most exciting novelties is our participation in SAWA mechanism. It is a mechanism made to respond to women's funds' needs as a way to continue Fenomenal Funds' work. The basic premise is that the members of Prospera can unlock together more money in corporate philanthropy and with high net individuals. It exists for several years and was created thanks to McKenzie Scott's gift. This year we finished strategic planning and one round of distribution. Starting with next year, all women's funds members of Prospera are part of the mechanism. Given that the network has 47 funds, we are excited about the next phase when we are going to fundraise for resilience for women's funds in the Global South and East.



# *Two important events*



## *FEMNET meeting in Bar*

Since last Fall, we are sensing tectonic changes in civil society in the region but also in Europe. As funds that follow financing trends, we have noticed first changes several years ago. Conscious of donor's exhaustion and ephemerality of "geopolitical spots" in political decision making about financing, we – Trag Foundation, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, RWF and Ecumenical Women's Initiative – started a conversation on how to respond to the coming challenges. We have recognized that we are connected through common problems. Some of these include backsliding in democracy of our respective governments which are more often using formal and informal tactics to suffocate disagreement, to limit activism and marginalized independent voices. Other challenges are growing nationalism and militarism – powerful forces that can jeopardize stability of the region and destroy difficultly won changes in society as well as in organizations of civil society that still have a key role to play in creating dialogue, peace building and human rights.

The reduction of resources in 2025 is estimated to be around 600 million dollars and it represents a direct threat to social, gender, and climate justice. Our first response was to unite our resources and connect women activists from Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia so that we can build solidarity and strengthen the protection of women's human rights, democracy and equality in the region. Aware of the holes in the present practices, we wanted to introduce new knowledges and approaches in order to strengthen mutual relationships within the movement, but also between movements that share our values.

This year, we held first common regional meeting where we gathered activists from the region. Despite bleak picture, we celebrated sharing and gathering.

The central themes of the meeting were climate justice and antiracism. In the previous years, we noticed that climate justice and actions is taking more and more space in activism but that it lacks connection to feminism. Even when it happens, there is a rather thin line that connect the two. In the workshop, we discussed the connections between climate justice and feminism, and we also learnt how to best connect the two. We also repeated the workshop on antiracism. We are especially proud that it was greatly received. Historical consciousness is important but it is also important to acknowledge how and when these systems are being reproduced in Europe and in the Balkans in the present.

In understanding different forms of oppression, we used insights by John Bell

about 4 types: ideological, institutional, internalized and interpersonal. It is clear that all these types are intertwined and inform each other. During our groups' work, we also learnt how pyramid of racism works in Serbia but also in other different countries of the region. We learnt what in literature is called peripheral *whiteness* in the Balkans. The system of racial classification has positioned Eastern Europe as not so white. Other used descriptions are *conditional whiteness*, *liminal whiteness*, *off whiteness*. Accents, dressing, a way of behavior of working class in the Balkans and Europe lead to designation of not so white. However, maybe the most useful term is *Peripheral Whiteness*: the ways in which global racial order sculpts paradoxically local landscape so that European white race is not assigned all the way to the people from the Balkans. At the same time, people in the Balkans (Serbs, Croats, Albanians...) are white in relation to racial blacks – mostly Roma communities. In other words, the majority populations in the Balkans can be both victims of racism (diaspora in Europe) and racists (towards Roma, AfroSerbs, Chinese, migrants...).

Antiracism rests on the following desirable practices: Gratitude, Motivation, Learning, Modesty, Uncomfortableness, Compassion, Guilt directed toward reparation, Interest. Desirable reactions are: acceptance, listening, reflection, understanding, apology, engagement, processing, believing. We concluded the workshop by group work on how does antiracist organization look like; how to become dedicated to hiring nonwhite people | how to address harms and injuries that arise in the work space.



Femnet, Bar



# Welcoming filia.die frauenstiftung

This year, we organized an exciting and fulfilling visit with sister fund filia.die frauenstiftung from Germany and their individual donors. This was a rare opportunity to connect donors and local groups. We have visited Talas TIRV, Alternative center for girls, BEFEM, Incest Trauma Center, Labris, Roma youth organization of Serbia, in their own spaces and we grateful to our hosts. We talked about women's human rights, LGBTQI+ rights in Serbia, Roma rights and new wave of activism, and also about the situation in cultural sphere. A special occasion was a visit to a cultural center in Markovac, their library on wheels, and abandoned cultural center they remodeled and where Yugoslav spirit lives on with contemporary cultural program for community as well as struggle to keep a cultural space open; we also visited a local reading room Ekatarina Pavlovic. With local groups, we showed to our visitors some of the most important and forgotten spaces of resistance and knowledge while discussing the political turmoil in contemporary Serbia.

Filia welcoming



# Reconstruction in the world!

We traveled a lot around the world this year. We went to Brussels in October for grantee meeting organized by Alliance for Gender Equality. With their support, we organized the first FEMNET meeting in Bar, 4 workshops in antiracism and safe spaces. In Brussels we have had the opportunity to meet other partner organizations – from sister funds to collectives as “My Voice My Choice”, and also see different efforts to build and sustain feminist and other progressive movements.

From Brussels we traveled to Omiš to participate at the regional meeting of women's funds. We started the meeting with retrospective of the last 25 years of work of European Chapter of Prospera International Network of Women's and Feminist Funds. We concluded that crises and turbulences were always part of the work, and that currently we are maybe experiencing the biggest crisis in funding ever. From our sisters in Georgia, we heard that they had to stop their work due to foreign agents' laws, from Ukrainian fund we heard the difficulty of working in war conditions in the last 4 years, we talked about the student movement in Serbia and global crisis in funding. However, these meetings are always important to us because they remind us that we are not alone and that we have sisters around the world who struggle for the same goal – a more just world for all. In that spirit we finished the meeting by making a plan and concrete steps of action for the next year. We are about to embark on many travels, learnings, questionings, and we will keep you posted about everything.



Alliance for Gender Equality, Brussels

**Peace Direct** meeting, learning and celebration of peace activism gathered 545 people from 85 countries, strengthened the narrative that peace wear many hats but also layered, visible and invisible clothing. We had a meeting in October in Kenya, and it was an arena for researching how we support peace, and what actions are authentic and not only those that are modern in relation from the above.

With a rich program, and consultations with the community, the gathering demanded from us to create our presence based on our needs, priorities and interests. It is safe to say that we all had a unique experience in this gathering. We all know the problems – a geopolitical situation, genocides and wars, difficulty in maintaining positive peace on territories not officially in conflict, deep polycrises that often time slow down our work in the field. We know that we wake up anxious wondering how long the organizations will last and how they will survive; how long will it take for our friends to endure the war conflicts. We also know about the potential damage if our long-term efforts are discontinued in the struggle for democracy and peace. We know that price is much more expensive than losing funds. The value of this gathering was precisely that we stepped away from superficial panic – it did not release us from panic but it gave us layers of other materials: hope, trust, imagination, alliances, alternative pathways in situation when philanthropy and institutions are not enough; when we feel lonely and abandoned; when we face those who are suffering from the actions of our own country like in the case of Palestine and Serbia's export of arms to Israel. Again and again, it was important to face these complex realities with honesty and courage. Many conversations focused on hope in local fundraising in community, with tone of successful examples on how

leadership in community can mobilize on a direct level. It is also important due to its focus on building strong ties of trust and relationships that are at the heart of long-term changes we are seeking to incite. But this idea also got challenges – those who are a threat to peace, financially supported by some of the richest people on the planet – do peace building communities have a luxury of self-reliance? The answer is decidedly no, and this is why we need further alliances built on trust between activist and donor sector. We will see how this will be in the future and what steps are going to be take, but it remains one of the highlights of the meeting.





Peace connect, credits: Peace Direct, Brian Ongoro



NetFWD, Pariz



Prospera Chapter, Omiš



Prospera Chapter, Omiš

# *It's sweetest at home!*

With a keen eye on savings, we have not visited that many groups this year. However, we tried to be present through other types of support and communication, especially when it was critical, and when activists were suffering repression and pressures, we showed up with solidarity from kind words to direct actions.

We followed through with [March 8th activities](#) that, this year, went hand in hand with student protest.

We also survived our own doubts, questionings, and reflections – and we approached it with feminist lenses and deep friendship we nurtured in the Fund.



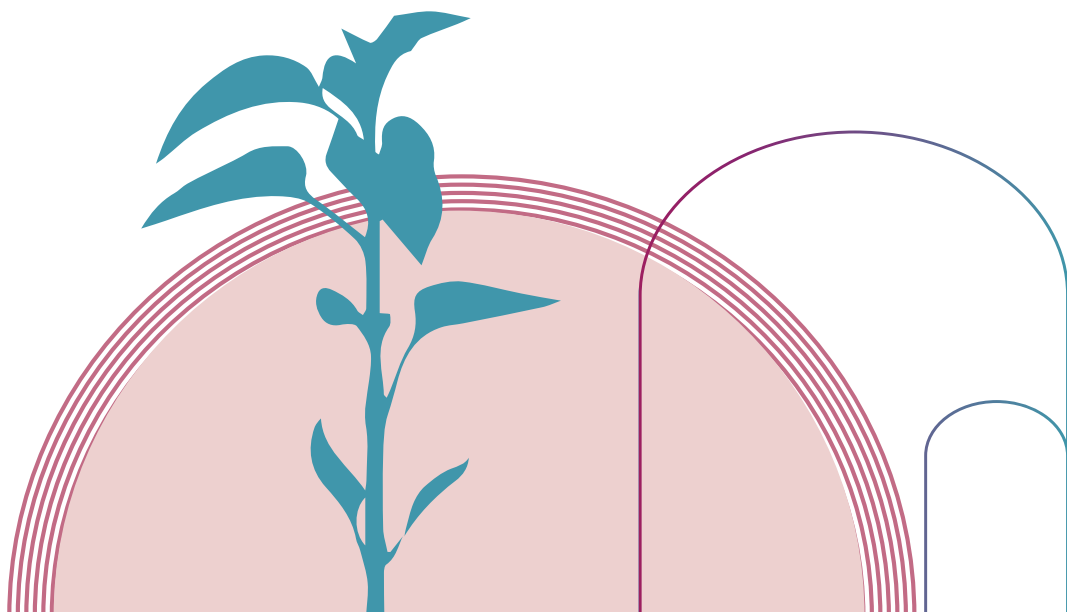
## **Newsflashes:**

### **Archive and Library**

We finished an *Online Archive and Library of RWF* that soon we will post on our website. Currently, the Archive and Library have over 230 publications categorized according to prevalent themes.

We are continuing our cooperation with Beopolis bookstore in Belgrade, with independent space CK 12 in Novi Sad, places where you can buy our publications by donation.

We translated and will publish in 2026, online book *Feminist Potency or Desire to Change Everything – Contemporary Feminism as new internationalism* by Veronica Gago.

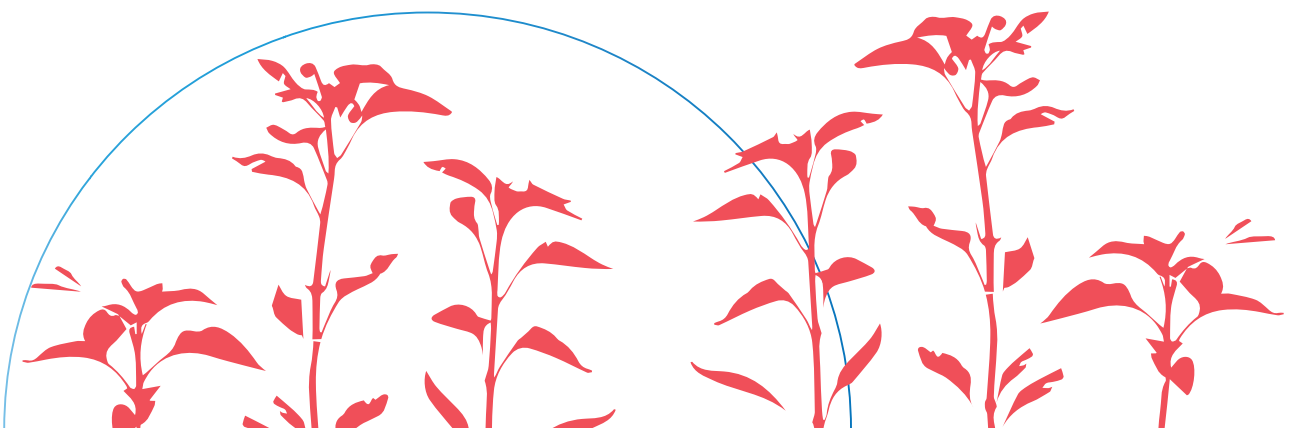


## ***The year of antiracism!***

This year we continued working on antiracism. Aside from published translations on antiracism, we organized 4 workshops that took antiracism from different perspectives. Our first workshop was dedicated to racism and how urbanism affects segregation. The settlements where Roma live, firstly, need to be named as *favelas* because it contributes to understanding the awful conditions for life. Second workshop was dedicated to racism and the violence of social policies in Serbia. We learnt how social work generates racism, and also, we learnt about antiracist approach to social work. On third workshop, we encountered the work of European Center for Roma Rights and learnt about mechanism and practices that the organization uses to document cases of racism, and its responses. On the last workshop we saw how racism affects women and how to talk about gender based violence in Roma community. We learnt a lot. And we learnt that antiracism is about understanding how racism works so we can have adequate practices to address it.

## ***Feminist House!***

Many circumstances have slowed down the process about dreaming the Feminist House; we accepted the slowing down but we are also starting to fundraise for the house. We imagined it as a place of gathering, work, and imagination. We had one meeting with the feminist groups and started conversations about principles of building this space. We have a consensus that the house will implement the antiracist principles as well as protocols for disabilities. We cannot wait to locally fundraise for this house in 2026.



# GRANTMAKING:

## IN NUMBERS:

**GENERAL SUPPORT:  
16 GRANTS**

**AWARDED SUPPORT  
27.414.968 RSD**

**SPECIAL FOCUS:  
46 GRANTS**

**AWARDED SUPPORT  
17.922.820 RSD**

**URGENT GRANTS:  
13 GRANTS**

**AWARDED SUPPORT  
1.632.500 RSD**

**STIPENDS:  
11 STIPENDS**

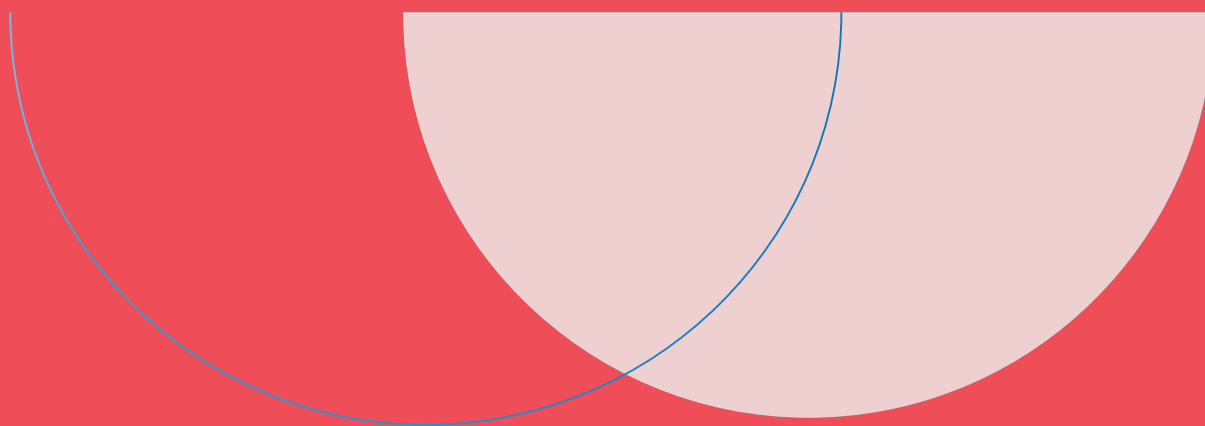
**AWARDED SUPPORT  
939.073 RSD**

Total grants: 86

Total Awarded Support: 47.909.361 RSD

Group's locations: Aleksandrovac, Bačko Gradište, Beograd, Brodarevo, Bujanovac, Čičevac, Kostolac, Kragujevac, Kruševac, Leskovac, Ljubanje, Majdanpek, Markovac, Mošorin, Niš, Novi Pazar, Novi Sad, Pančevo, Pirot, Požarevac, Prijepolje, Subotica, Užice, Velika Plana, Velika Župa, Vlasotince, Vranje, Zaječar, Zrenjanin

Where activities took place: Akmačići, Arilje, Aleksandrovac, Bačko Gradište, Bajina Bašta, Belanovce, Beograd, Brač, Bregovina, Bojnik, Brezovica, Brodarevo, Bublica, Bujanovac, Crna Trava, Čajetina, Čičevac, Dragovac, Dubovo, Đinđuša, Foča, Gložane, Konjarnik, Kosjerić, Kostolac, Kovin, Kragujevac, Leskovac, Lomnica, Ljubanje, Kalna, Kruševac, Kukulovce, Majdanpek, Markovac, Mošorin, Niš, Nova Varoš, Novi Pazar, Novi Sad, Novo Miloševo, Pančevo, Petrovac, Pirot, Potočare, Požarevac, Požega, Preševo, Priboj, Prijepolje, Priština, Radmilovac, Rijeka, Ruma, Srebrenica, Sirogojno, Sjenica, Slavnik, Slišane, Solun, Sofija, Sremski Karlovci, Stara Planina, Subotica, Šabac, Šišava, Turekovic, Tuzla, Ustikolina, Užice, Velika Plana, Velika Župa, Vinarce, Vlasotince, Vranje, Vrnjačka Banja, Vršac, Zagreb, Zaječar, Zrenjanin



# What's next?

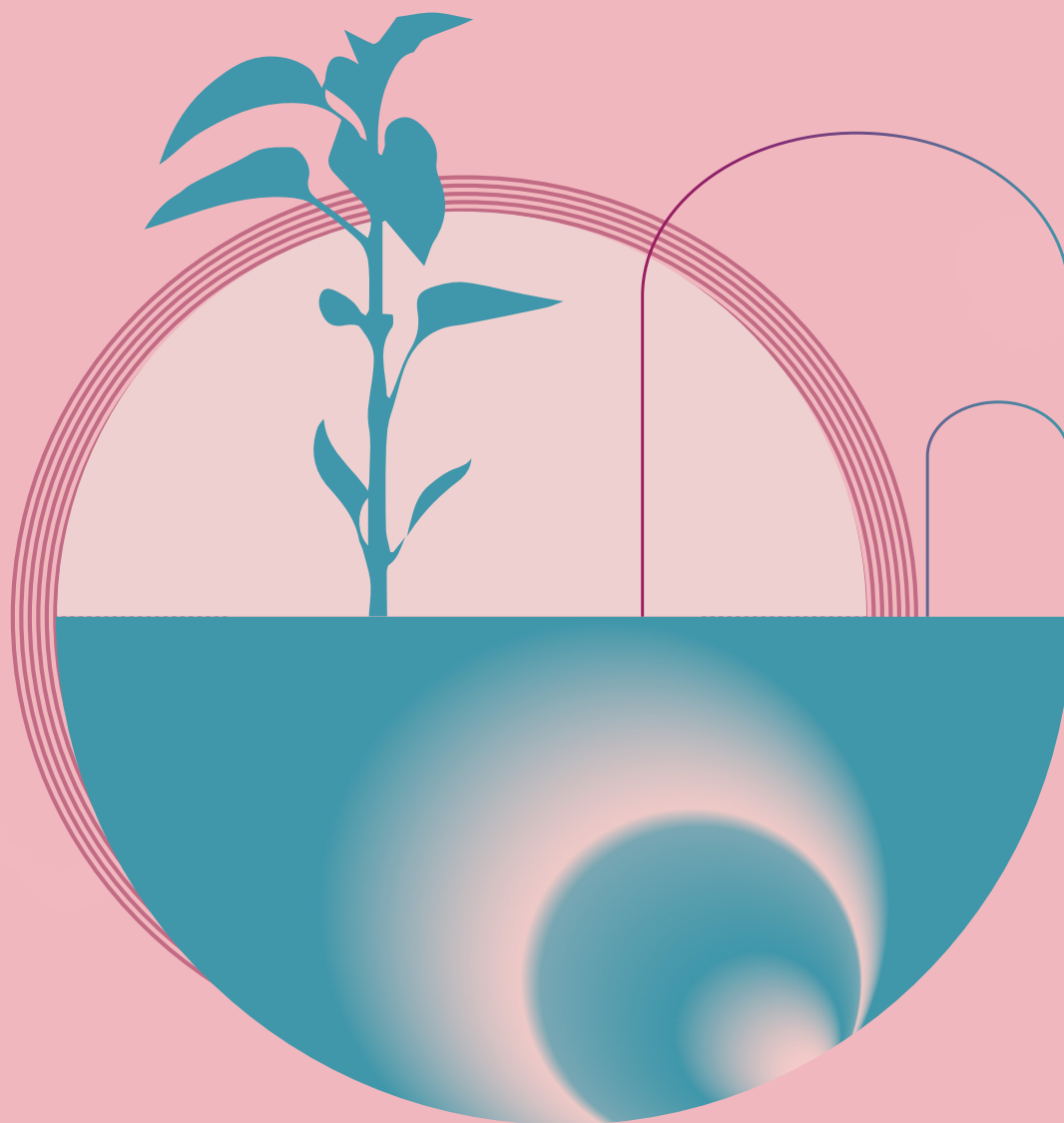
We are expecting next year to be difficult but we are also hopeful that we will manage to fundraise enough to keep working. Our focus will be on the funds from the European Union. We are going to Women Deliver to build new relationships and Philea conferences in May and September.

We will publish a translation of Veronica Gago book. We cannot wait to share her and our desire to change everything.

It will be a challenging year...but we will not give up. We are moving forward decisively and confidently.



# Stay tuned!



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