



**VITAL VOICES**  
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

# COURAGE AND CONNECTION



**2024 ANNUAL REPORT**



## LETTER FROM ALYSE NELSON



Dear friends,

The work of Vital Voices is founded upon a few simple ideas. First, that women's leadership is needed for communities to thrive. Women have solutions, expertise, and life experience that will shape our world for the better. Second, that true investment is needed in order to make women's leadership a reality. Wherever we see potential, we must be active allies, putting our financial resources, contacts, and time into supporting the bold ideas of women who are paving new paths forward on the world's greatest challenges. Third, that investment must be steadfast. Women leaders who have the vision and drive to make a lasting change need long-term, sustained support.

As you will see on the pages that follow, Vital Voices and the Network of Women Leaders that is the lifeblood of our organization works on the most important issues of our time. Violence against women. Forced and early marriage. The extreme vulnerability of girls and women in armed conflict. Discrimination in education and employment. Health care disparities. The climate crisis. Safeguarding democracy in the biggest election year in history—in which women led the rise against authoritarianism all over the world.

Our Network includes leaders in government, business, public policy, and the non-profit sector. They come from 188 countries. Their strategies for change are multi-faceted, and their ideas are bold and boundless. What threads this diverse network together? What can 47,000 Network Women have in common? We see it in every leadership program cohort, every panel discussion, every policy campaign: Vital Voices Network Women have the **courage to lead** and the knowledge that **connecting is key**—linking issues, root causes,

and most importantly, exchanging ideas to give and receive insight, perspective, and mutual support.

Throughout 2024, these common values of courage and connection were bright spots even in the toughest of times. We served 1,245 women and girls directly across our programs in 2024, and an evaluation of our programs shows a multiplier effect, with our program participants in turn reaching hundreds of thousands through their own organizations and advocacy. Our Crisis Response supported 115 threatened women leaders in 23 countries with rapid-response financial resources—and provided training and tools to dozens of others to help them prepare for digital and physical attacks. We worked alongside women inside and outside Afghanistan who dare to dream, to speak out when they can, work quietly when they must, and who will never give up on building a country that recognizes women's autonomy and worth. Thousands of participants in our acclaimed leadership programs tell us that the contacts made in our programs have been transformational to their lives and careers—one of the many things that makes me feel so proud of Vital Voices.

Thank you, to each and every one of you, for your own steadfast commitment to our collective work. I hope you find the Vital Voices community to be a source of inspiration for your own bold moves.

With gratitude,

Alyse Nelson,  
President and CEO  
Vital Voices Global Partnership



## ABOUT VITAL VOICES



For more than 27 years, Vital Voices Global Partnership has been investing in women leaders solving the world's greatest challenges. We are "venture catalysts," identifying those with a bold vision for change and partnering with them to make that vision a reality. We scale and accelerate their impact through long-term investments to expand the skills, connections, capacity, and visibility of women leaders.

Vital Voices provided early support for leaders who went on to become Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, U.S. Youth Poet Laureates, prime ministers, and breakthrough social entrepreneurs. Since its founding in 1997, Vital Voices has directly supported more than 47,000 women changemakers across 188 countries and built a powerful global network of women leaders who are daring to reimagine a more equitable world for all.



## 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

# \$2.5 Million

Disbursed more than \$2.5 million in urgent assistance funds to 778 survivors of gender-based violence

# 80

Activated the Vital Voices building—the Global Headquarters for Women’s Leadership—by hosting over 80 events, ensuring that our home serves as a hub for women leaders to convene and connect

# 115

Supported 115 threatened women leaders in 23 countries with rapid-response financial resources

# 15,000

Number of Vital Voices Community Hub interactions

# 512

Provided direct training to 512 women leaders from 82 countries tackling the world’s greatest challenges





# LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

Vital Voices leadership programs provide women with critical skills training and access to our network of over 47,000 global changemakers. In 2024, 512 women leaders participated in our leadership programs—all of them driven by a belief in the power of courage and connection to find solutions to the greatest challenges we face.

The remarkable women changemakers we support through leadership training are determined, passionate visionaries. They are social impact entrepreneurs, peace builders, activists working on a diverse array of issues, and current and aspiring political leaders who hail from every corner of the globe. Their solutions are rooted in art, journalism, technology, business, and more. They are innovators, dreamers, and disrupters, and they seek to build a future anchored in equality, opportunity, and justice for us all.

Through Vital Voices programs, women grow their leadership skills, meet like-minded peers and mentors, and expand their personal and professional networks as they participate in proven curricula. Our programs also initiate participants into our Vital Voices Global Network of women leaders, a key entry point for further opportunities for visibility, thought leadership, and collective action.

Fellowship programs are adapted to the needs and interests of each specific cohort, but they are all founded upon the Vital Voices Leadership Journey model, a set of practices developed through decades of working with impactful women leaders.

The model has five practices:

- 1. A Driving Force or Sense of Mission**
- 2. Strong Roots in the Community**
- 3. An Ability to Connect Across Lines that Divide**
- 4. Bold Ideas and Bold Action**
- 5. A Resolve to Pay it Forward**



**“The freedom to take the lessons and run with them... every part was shared with respect for our individual contexts. I felt part of the big picture but still celebrated for my individuality.”**

## LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (CONTINUED)

### Vital Voices Global Fellowship (VVGf)

In 2024, Vital Voices proudly launched the inaugural Vital Voices Global Fellowship (VVGf), a transformative 10-month program that unites exceptional women leaders from diverse sectors. The fellowship integrates two pillars of our programming: VV Engage (Public Leadership) and VV Venture (Social Entrepreneurship), with an emphasis on fostering collaboration to drive systemic change. Supported by key partners including Bumble, FedEx, and the Freeport-McMoRan Foundation, this competitive program brought together 53 fellows—representing 39 countries across five continents.

A key component of the fellowship is its focus on cross-issue collaboration aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By connecting women leaders across sectors and regions, the VVGf fosters a community of changemakers equipped to address global challenges through innovative and intersectional solutions.

Vital Voices also invested in strengthening its alumni engagement to foster meaningful, lasting connections. This year's alumni programming focused on strategic planning and incorporating new tools to help fellows remain resilient, connected, and impactful in their communities.

### VV Venture

*Supports purpose-driven women leading for-profit businesses with social missions.*

In partnership with FedEx, 25 extraordinary fellows gained critical expertise in branding, marketing, strategic communications, and stakeholder engagement. They receive tailored support to refine their market positioning, communicate their impact effectively, and scale their businesses in alignment with the SDGs—all while building the strategies and partnerships necessary for long-term impact.

# 98%

of VV Venture participants strongly agree that they have gained knowledge and skills applicable to their work—and...

# 100%

feel more confident in their abilities to use those skills and knowledge

**“The session on the imposter complex was equally transformative—it helped me uncover the internal barriers that have been holding me back from reaching my full potential.”**

— VV Venture Fellow



## LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (CONTINUED)

### VVEngage

*Supports outstanding women political leaders making and influencing policy across the globe.*

In partnership with the Freeport-McMoRan Foundation, this competitive program brought together 27 public leaders, selected for their outstanding leadership potential and commitment to public service. Led by global experts, the program included negotiation, digital communications, online safety, fundraising, and coalition building. Through the Council of Women World Leaders, fellows also received mentorship from former female heads of state, offering invaluable insights and guidance.


### Fortune—U.S. State Department Mentoring Program

*Enhances the business and leadership skills of international women professionals.*

The Fortune—U.S. Department of State Global Women's Mentoring Partnership is a public-private partnership between Fortune's Most Powerful Women, the U.S. Department of State, and Vital Voices Global Partnership. It draws on the expertise of America's most accomplished leaders to enhance the business and leadership skills of international professionals. In 2024, Vital Voices welcomed 19 mentees from 16 countries to the program. Over the one-week program, mentees convened in Washington, D.C. for a group mentoring workshop with top women executives, leadership and communications trainings, panel sessions with senior women leaders, and community building activities.

Additionally, a week-long International Alumni component was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka to engage and support 22 previous program participants from four countries across the South & Central Asia region. Participants were joined by mentor Rasha Qamheyeh, Founder & CEO, Event Horizon, who facilitated trainings throughout the week and shared her leadership and business insights with the group.

*As of early 2025, this program no longer operates. Many thanks to all those who participated as experts, partners, mentors, and mentees through the years.*



**“I’ve made strong progress toward the goals I identified during the baseline survey, particularly in expanding my network, strengthening my leadership voice, and increasing the visibility of my work. The program gave me practical tools and a supportive community that helped me refine my strategies and move closer to systemic impact.”**

— VV Engage Fellow

**19**

years longevity of  
Fortune—U.S. Department  
of State Mentoring Program.

## LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (CONTINUED)

### Global Ambassadors Program (GAP)

*Provides mentorship opportunities for emerging women leaders.*

Now in its 23rd cohort, the Global Ambassadors Program, a partnership between Vital Voices and Bank of America, took place in June in New York City. The Global Ambassadors Program connects women at a tipping point in their professional, business, and leadership paths with established women executives who serve as Global Ambassadors for mentorship.

We take an innovative, immersive approach to mentoring in regions around the world. This year's mentees included 15 women from 9 countries who are in the handcraft and handmade industries. These women leaders received targeted training, access to a network of support, technical assistance from a team of expert global trainers, and built relationships with their peers and an extraordinary group of mentors who volunteer their time for the purpose of "paying it forward" to others.

- > **100% of program participants state the program exceeded their expectations**
- > **298 total new connections made**
- > **93% maintained or increased their confidence as a leader**

**"Connecting with fellow mentees was incredibly valuable. We shared challenges and success stories, realizing the potential for collaboration within our sector. These interactions sparked ideas for future partnerships."**

— Mentee, Global Ambassadors Program





## LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (CONTINUED)

### WomenLeaders India Fellowship

*Supports women leaders in India who are addressing urgent economic and social issues.*

The WomenLeaders India fellowship, in partnership with Reliance Foundation, invests in dynamic women leaders from across India who are driving change within their communities as entrepreneurs, social innovators, and leaders. 2024 brought our second cohort of fifty women together—chosen for their deep commitment to Climate Resilience, Education, Sports for Development, and Livelihood Generation, and their use of innovative solutions to address some of India's most pressing challenges.

The ten-month program combined virtual and in-person trainings in Mumbai, thematic SDG Pods, peer-to-peer learning, and a mentor for personalized guidance to amplify their work and influence. Together, the program seeks to create a strong, connected ecosystem of women leaders catalysing change across India.

**“My mentors . . . challenged me to dream bigger, build systems, refine my vision and lead with clarity and courage.”**

— Rufsana Begum, Program Manager and Regional Lead at Voyage Educare Foundation

**“This fellowship didn’t just connect us; it propelled us forward. Each conversation, each exchange of ideas opened doors to collaboration that will reshape social work in India.”**

— Reethika Kuruvilla, Founder and Managing Trustee of the Ashoka Tree



## LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (CONTINUED)

### Next Movers

*Advancing the Next Generation of Women Leaders.*

The second cohort of the Next Movers program, in partnership with Bumble, is designed to connect and elevate a dynamic group of emerging women leaders driving meaningful change in their communities and beyond. These six visionary women are boldly challenging the status quo—working to **eradicate violence, dismantle stigma, and expand access to critical resources in pursuit of gender equity.**

Over the course of six months, participants engaged in tailored leadership training, peer-to-peer learning, and dedicated mentorship. The program supports their growth across key leadership and operational skills, while also accelerating the impact of their initiatives. A competitive grants process provides financial resources to help fuel their work.

- **100% said that the Next Movers program met or exceeded their expectations, and they would recommend this program to a friend or colleague**

Next Mover Josefa Araya of Fundación Antonia in Chile utilized a Next Mover grant to sustain a campaign focused on intimate partner violence. The “Everyone Knows Someone” campaign aimed to bring awareness to a simple truth: we all know a person who suffers from intimate partner violence—and we all have a part to play in changing the status quo.



**“Through the program, I met incredible leaders with diverse stories, and many shared their struggles with similar challenges. Hearing them speak about navigating self-doubt or breaking stereotypes made me realize how much these experiences are universal and also how isolating they can feel. It showed me the importance of claiming my unique leadership style without apologizing for it.”**

— Soumya Dabriwal, Next Mover

# RISING VOICES

To forge a brighter future, Rising Voices invests in those who will craft it. Although they are often more civically and politically engaged than their elders, the ideas of girls and young women are frequently discounted. The initiatives under Rising Voices respond to this, supporting early interventions to develop the leadership potential **of women leaders aged 25 and under**. Our tailored programming offers training, mentorship, and social-impact funding to support Rising Voices fellows as current and future changemakers and leaders by helping them gain the tools and support systems to flourish on the global stage.

## Voices That Inspire

*Supports young women who are making a positive impact in Latin America*

In partnership with Procter & Gamble, the Voices that Inspire (VTI) program expanded its regional impact through a series of in-person gatherings held across Latin America. Between February 12 and March 1, the VTI team hosted six convenings in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, and Panama, bringing together 36 alumnae for a two-day leadership experience in each country. Each gathering featured a visit to the local P&G office, where participants pitched their community projects and received personalized feedback and mentorship from P&G executives during roundtable discussions. These sessions offered valuable guidance and professional insight to help strengthen and advance their work. The second day focused on cultural connections and community engagement. Participants engaged in cultural activities unique to each country and had the opportunity to connect with local leaders from the Vital Voices Network. These gatherings reinforced a sense of shared purpose, cross-border collaboration, and continued investment in women-led solutions.





## RIISING VOICES (CONTINUED)

### Grassroots Voices

*Supports young women leaders in the U.S. who are implementing community-focused projects.*

Participants in Grassroots Voices are young women, ages 18-25 and based in the U.S., who are already engaged in grassroots justice work on some of the biggest obstacles that society faces today, like mass incarceration, social inequity and pay gaps, reproductive justice, and more.

Over seven weeks, participants develop their leadership capacity. Grassroots Voices participants are individually matched with a mentor who can give them tailored advice for their unique challenges. They also have the opportunity to apply for a grant to fund a project in their community.

Many thanks to Sarah Johnson and Sarva Rajendra for their support for this wonderful program!

### Rising Voices High School Clubs

*Supports high school girls in the DC area to begin social impact clubs at their school focused on a core issue area important to them.*

In 2024, we re-launched our Rising Voices High School Clubs with a focus on the DC area and a newly developed VVLJ for Youth curriculum. The 10-month program is designed to introduce girls to the first steps of social impact work and to support them in developing collective action plans. We were so pleased to work alongside 6 young women to develop social impact projects and lead clubs. Each club was paired with a VV network mentor to support their work and leadership growth.

### International Day of the Girl Summit

In October 2024, our Rising Voices team proudly hosted our inaugural International Day of the Girl Summit at VVHQ! We welcomed 20 DC-area high school girls for a full day of panels, workshops, and mentoring, all aimed at empowering the next generation of female leaders. Key speakers included Dr. Jennifer Hawkins, Senior Global Peace and Security Advisory, U.S. Department of State.

A big thank you to the Washington Spirit community impact team for joining us and providing life skills and mentoring sessions to the students. Their partnership helped equip these young women with the tools and confidence to lead and drive change in their communities.

**In 2024, Grassroots Voices distributed \$30,000 in grants to 7 participants working in areas like hygiene poverty, LGBTQ rights, and wellness.**

**20**

DC-area high school girls attended Vital Voices' inaugural **International Day of the Girl Summit** for a full day of panels, workshops, and mentoring, all aimed at empowering the next generation of female leaders.



# LEADERSHIP EVOLUTION

## VV Visionaries

*Invests in trailblazing women by increasing their access to leadership training and the networks that sustain them.*

In 2024, the VV Visionaries program in partnership with the Estée Lauder Emerging Leaders Fund (ELELF), the charitable fund of Estée Lauder, continued to invest in those who are redefining leadership in their everyday lives. Over the course of the year, the VV Visionaries program ran three cohorts with a total of 150 participants representing 50 countries. Each leader completed a seven-week curriculum grounded on the Vital Voices Leadership Journey.

Twenty standout leaders were selected to join us at the Vital Voices Headquarters for a 3-day, in-person summit. This immersive experience included workshops and networking opportunities to deepen connections and strengthen their impact.

## Emerging Leaders Beautiful Forces

Vital Voices was selected to be the inaugural partner of the Estée Lauder Emerging Leaders Beautiful Forces grants--supporting VV Network alumni who are leading NGOs, businesses, or implementing projects that advance a bold idea. \$200,000 in grants were given to four recipients who demonstrate innovative thinking, a desire to challenge the status quo, and the ability to take calculated risks to solve a problem impacting their communities:

**Amina Mohamed, Canada.** Mohamed is the founder of Cameras for Girls, an organization that challenges gender disparities in media, equipping girls in Africa with cameras to empower them with greater access and opportunity in media-based careers.

**Consuelo Hermosilla González, Chile.** Hermosilla González is the founder of Fundación Antonia, an organization that works to eliminate intimate partner violence by providing free care and support to survivors, while raising awareness to eradicate gender violence in Chile.



**“While there’s so much work still to be done, knowing that we are part of a global network of powerful changemakers has reinforced my commitment to the work I do. The support, insights, and shared determination from this cohort have made me feel even more empowered to continue pushing forward, knowing that together, we can create the impact we’re all striving for.”**

— Rockyath Adechoubou,  
VV Visionary

## LEADERSHIP EVOLUTION (CONTINUED)

**Olasumbo Adeleke, Nigeria.** Adeleke is the executive director of Gender Power Africa, which works to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, especially women and youth, in rural communities through economic empowerment, training and capacity building.

**Renata Koch Alvarenga, Brazil.** Koch Alvarenga is the founder of EmpoderaClima, a youth-led organization that raises awareness about the impacts of climate change on women and the role of gender-transformative climate education.

### Bold Movers

*Invests in women who are working toward gender equity by advancing workplace inclusion, addressing challenges for working mothers and caregivers, and changing the cultural perceptions of women in society.*

The Bold Movers program, in partnership with Stuart Weitzman, launched its inaugural cohort in 2024. Each pillar of the Vital Voices Leadership Journey featured Vital Voices network leaders and Stuart Weitzman/Tapestry senior leadership speaking about their professional journeys and bringing the pillars to life. In honor of International Women’s Day, the Stuart Weitzman team hosted the fellows for a day of panels, mentorship, and fun at their New York City headquarters. We were thrilled to distribute \$40,000 in grants to 4 program participants working on projects supporting caregivers.

- > **100% said the program met or exceeded their expectations**
- > **Bold Movers participants served or engaged 159,062 individuals in the past year—46,235 of whom were served for the first time**



**“This experience has given me the confidence and tools to give life to my ideas, and provided me with a new framework for looking at the priorities I want to support.”**

— Bold Mover participant





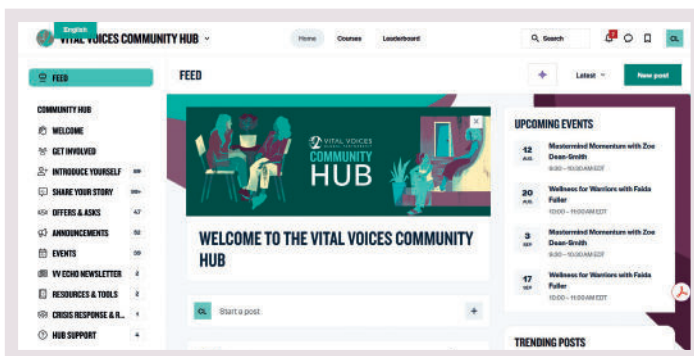
# COMMUNITY HUB

At Vital Voices, we know that together, the impossible becomes possible. In 2024, we launched a brand-new Community Hub to enable leaders to connect, organize, learn, and share across geographies and time zones. Designed with a global perspective and supporting seven languages, the Community Hub offers a social feed and chat function, resources and tools, and a digital component for all Vital Voices Programs, allowing our network members to engage anytime and from anywhere.

- > Number of New Users: +2,000
- > Number of Community Hub Interactions: +15,000
- > Number of Programs Launched: 47
- > Total Number of Sessions: +63,000

## Core Uses by Network Women

- > Programmatic learning experiences shaped by action.
- > Live events that elevate voices and catalyze movements.
- > Inspired and informed through a dynamic social feed.
- > Connect deeply with other network members driving shared impact.
- > Exchange ideas, insights, and innovations that help solve global challenges.
- > Receive support and resources to navigate crisis.
- > Gain access to thought leadership, gatherings, and convenings.



**“The Community Hub is where technology meets our mission—connecting women leaders across the globe to increase capacity, build collective strength, and craft solutions that reshape the world. Every click sparks a new path, and every conversation fuels change.”**

— **Tara King-Hughes**, Vice President of Tech & Data at Vital Voices



**“The Vital Voices Community Hub is where our network truly comes alive. Designed to meet the evolving needs of our alumni and members, it offers opportunities to connect across geographies, access practical resources, and engage with a supportive network for guidance and inspiration. The Hub is here to support you at every stage of your leadership journey. It’s more than a space for connection; it’s a living, vibrant community where collaboration, conversation, and collective action thrive.”**

— **Leah Lizarondo**, Vice President of Global Network

# WOMEN AND CLIMATE PROGRAM

Women leaders, particularly those from marginalized and Indigenous communities, are at the forefront of climate solutions, yet they remain underfunded and underrepresented in decision-making spaces. Women's roles in food production and water collection, which are increasingly strained by climate change, place them on the frontlines of this crisis. Additionally, young women face barriers to participation despite their activism, innovation, and critical role in driving intergenerational climate justice. Vital Voices bridges this gap by convening the world's most innovative women leaders, emerging and established, and amplifying their impact across systems and sectors.

With the support of our donors, Vital Voices built upon our many years of investment in and partnership with women leaders in the environmental justice field to expand our climate engagement strategy—deepening our participation in global climate policy spaces, elevating the voices of women on the frontlines of environmental change, and strengthening a global network of women leaders driving inclusive climate action.

## PANEL SPOTLIGHT

From COP29 to COP30 with COP16—Joining Pathways in Advancing Gender and Indigenous Women's Rights.

Vital Voices and the Nizami Ganjavi Center held a joint panel at COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, focused on gender equity and Indigenous women's rights within climate initiatives.

### MODERATOR

**Hafsat Abiola**, Climate Justice Program Lead at Vital Voices Global Partnerships

### SPEAKERS

**Maria Fernanda Espinosa**, President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly and Co-chair of the COP29 Advisory Committee

**VV Network leaders had a strong presence at 6 major convenings—COP16, COP29, CBD, UNCCD, World Bank, IFC—ensuring that women's innovations are highlighted.**

- Vital Voices co-organized four panels during COP29 with the Climate Investment Funds (CIF), WOCAN, and the Nizami Ganjavi Center, highlighting barriers to climate finance for women-led solutions, and exploring strategies to elevate Indigenous and women-led leadership.

**Intensive engagement with women leaders is a hallmark of Vital Voices support.**

- It has been a privilege to partner with Fany Kuiru Castro, the first woman to lead the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), which represents 511 Indigenous communities and territories across the nine countries that share the Amazon Basin.

**Building our Network to ensure that a diversity of voices are included is always a priority for us.**

- We brought 15 additional climate leaders into the Network, from all over the globe—including important youth activists.

**Caroline Madeiros Rocha Frasson**, Director of Public Policy and Engagement at LACLIMA and co-founder of the Amazonians for Climate Network (RAC)

**Tarja Halonen**, former President of Finland

**Eka Tkeshelashvili**, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

**Jean Baderschneider**, board member of Fortescue Metals, Fortescue Future Industries, and the McCain Institute



# CRISIS RESPONSE PROGRAM

The Crisis Response program was created to respond to two realities. First, women who speak truth to power are targeted with violence, threats, and intimidation at alarming rates. Second, when emergencies strike—from armed conflict to natural disasters—women are on the front lines of response, organizing their communities and countries to save lives. Vital Voices sees its role as that of an active ally, walking hand in hand with women leaders in times of crisis. Taking a proactive approach, we also help women leaders to protect themselves before emergency strikes, working with them to prepare for threats and reduce the severity or occurrence of crises in the first place.

The Vital Voices Crisis Response Program, which launched in 2022, approaches crisis management through three pillars: **Readiness**, **Response**, and **Recovery**.

This year, we deeply invested in our **Readiness** pillar, increasing the ability of women to respond before a crisis occurs through actionable training and planning. This included a specialized **Toolkit** for women leaders, focusing on digital security, arrests, kidnapping, disaster response and areas where women leaders are facing the most threats.

- > **Supported 115 threatened women leaders in 23 countries with rapid-response financial resources**
- > **97% percent of women leaders reported feeling emotionally safer after receiving Crisis Team support, and 94% percent reported feeling physically safer**

In 2024, we **Responded** to every major, acute crisis where women were at direct and disproportionate risk. We supported life-saving operations in **Sudan**, coordinating the evacuation of 42 women to safety, responded to the devastating conflict in **Israel**, **Lebanon** and **Gaza**, and responded rapidly to the fall of the Assad regime in **Syria**, supporting nine women leaders. We gave grants and other assistance to three women-led NGOs in **Ukraine**. We also coordinated the response to a kidnapping, and subsequent safe release, of a women leader by a criminal gang in **West Africa**.

**“A responsive, effective program uniquely addressing previously unmet needs of global women leaders.”**

— *Independent Evaluation, 2025*



## CRISIS RESPONSE PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

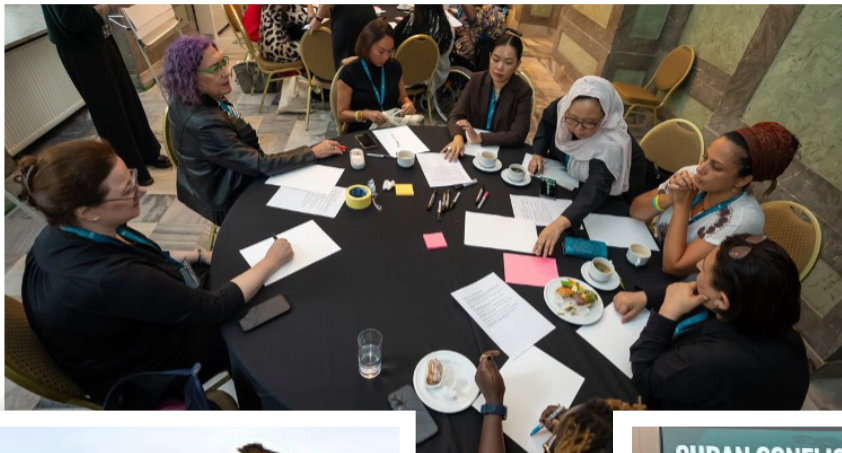
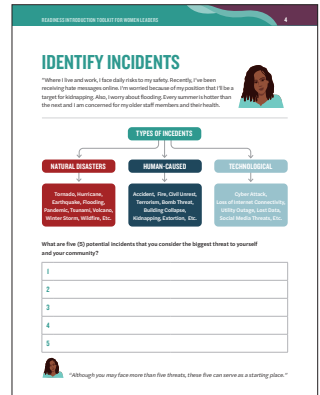
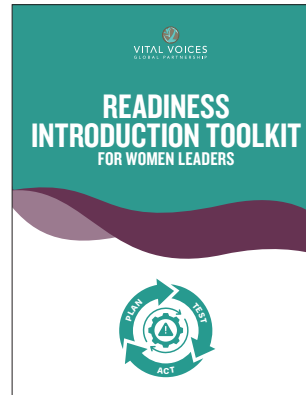
Care and community are key elements of our **Recovery** pillar. Mental health support was mentioned over and over again as transformational part of our Crisis Response program, with long-term benefits for activists under threat. Our program also gives beneficiaries access to the Vital Voices Global Network of 47,000 women leaders and connects them to cross-sector leadership and funding opportunities to support their work.

**“It has been a long time since this emotional and mental fight was in myself. But after the support, I could not only change myself but the community.”**

— Woman Leader, Madagascar

**“Therapy was so helpful beyond the funds...it really changed my life.”**

— Moroccan women leader, speaking about Crisis Response mental health support



# CRISIS RESPONSE IN ACTION

## Meeting immediate needs and providing steadfast support

Lina, a 25-year-old Syrian political activist, is at the forefront of exposing the Assad regime’s brutality against the Syrian people. Through her activism, she played a pivotal role in uncovering war crimes, including the discovery of mass graves, and using her platform to advocate for justice—both for Syria and for human rights globally. She built a movement that is instrumental in shaping the online narrative of Syria, amplifying the voices of those working for democracy on the ground.

When the regime collapsed, our team engaged with activists like Lina to provide support. We provided direct assistance so that she could access safe transportation back to Syria, improving her security in a volatile political environment that put her under threat. With our assistance, she was able to safely return to Syria for the first time in over a decade and continue her advocacy. Her powerful documentation of on-the-ground realities continues to serve as a model for those pursuing justice and democracy in Syria.







# LEADING THE RISE: WOMEN FOR RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

## A Global Action Summit

From September 9 to 12, 2024, Vital Voices, in partnership with the Empiria i Wiedza Foundation, hosted Leading the Rise: Women for Rights and Democracy. The Global Action Summit in Warsaw included women with direct experience protecting rights and democracy around the world, “leading the rise” against authoritarian practices. Together these women connected causes, and shared best practices at the local, regional, and global level—which were incorporated into a crucial new resource after the Summit, entitled *The Anti-Authoritarian Playbook*.

Participants joined from across the globe, with diverse expertise in **countering digital dictatorships, online violence, rigged and manipulated elections, and entrenched authoritarianism**. Political leaders, elected officials, community leaders and activists, journalists, and influencers shared crucial learnings.

**Why Now?** In 2024, more than half of the world’s population lived in countries holding nationwide elections. Women are instrumental in holding the line between democracy and the rise of authoritarianism, between peace and conflict, and in determining if the movement for rights and democracy will backslide or advance.

And in many ways, they have the most at stake. Women are increasingly in influential positions of leadership – yet their rights and positions are under direct threat. They are frequently the first to be targeted in the rise of authoritarian regimes and practices.

**Why Warsaw?** Organizing the gathering in Warsaw has special significance given Poland’s role in supporting Ukraine from the first hours of the 2022 Russian invasion, along with their ongoing support and programs for women at the forefront of fighting for democracy. The Central European region is subject to security and authoritarian risks; recent EU elections confirmed the increasing strength of right-wing political parties. This event also marks a return to Vital Voice’s roots. Vital Voices began in 1997 as a conference bringing together women leaders in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to explore women’s roles in the world’s new democracies and free-market economies. The ensuing decades saw a rise in the participation of women in positions of leadership. The Summit aimed to ignite the power of the Vital Voices Global Network to answer the threat of backsliding and advance the movement for women in leadership.





# AFGHANISTAN UPDATE



Vital Voices' history of sisterhood and support for women leaders in Afghanistan has continued—and will not stop until every Afghan woman and girl has the right to live with freedom and autonomy. The Taliban's take-over of Kabul in 2021 marked the collapse of the Afghan government, creating chaos and uncertainty for 39 million people—and for women leaders on the Taliban “kill list,” a threat of imminent violence and death.

Vital Voices immediately mobilized our global network to support high-risk women leaders—successfully evacuating 1,200 women and their families to Albania, where they received care and essential support for food, shelter, lodging, hygiene, medical aid, and psychosocial assistance, alongside meticulous planning for their resettlement with dignity. **We are so proud to report that every person evacuated has now been permanently resettled, with the majority in Canada and others in the U.S. and Europe.**

With the support of our donors, Vital Voices continues to walk alongside women leaders in Afghanistan. Our **Aghaaz program**—which means the “beginning”—provides holistic support for Afghan women in exile, addressing gaps in other resettlement programs by providing grants to Afghan, women-led organizations Afghan Canadian Women for Global Cooperation and Women for Afghan Women to provide resettlement support; fellowship opportunities and scholarships for Afghan women; and grants to NGOs who are leading advocacy efforts, such as FARAGEER and the Afghan American Foundation. We work carefully and confidentially with women leaders inside Afghanistan. And we work to ensure that gender apartheid and the plight of Afghan women and girls are not forgotten on the international stage.



Women in Afghanistan face severe restrictions, including bans on education beyond age 12. Women are forbidden from going to a male doctor. Women can only travel, even short distances, with a male guardian. Their ability to work is severely limited, and women have been banned from most public sector jobs and employment with NGOs. They are forced to conceal their faces, bodies, and voices in public. These edicts and many, many more, are not only controlling women—they are erasing women and girls from society.

## AFGHANISTAN UPDATE (CONTINUED)

“At Vital Voices, I am part of a team that refuses to look away. We are quietly working directly with women still leading change inside Afghanistan, those who are teaching, organizing, and advocating for justice despite immense risk. We help women develop digital and business skills so they can work safely from home and provide for their families. We support law students and advocates who are quietly building the foundations for future accountability. We keep

alive the networks that connect and protect women based on the trust, leadership, and resilience that will outlast this regime. For more than two decades, Vital Voices has stood with Afghan women through education, empowerment, evacuation, and now, through resistance and resilience.”

— Spouzhmai Akberzai, Program Manager, Vital Voices

## AGHAAZ ~ THE BEGINNING

### Overview

The Aghaaz program is dedicated to advancing Afghan women’s rights, leadership, and civic engagement. Aghaaz focuses on international advocacy, systemic reform, and direct support to Afghan women leaders, both inside Afghanistan and in the diaspora, working to safeguard their rights and freedoms under Taliban rule and in displacement.

### Building Tech Skills for Employment

Equipping young women in Afghanistan with practical digital and technology skills through a structured fellowship program, followed by direct connections to international tech companies for global employment opportunities.



### Documentation of Human Rights Abuses

Training 75 women lawyers across Afghanistan in the documentation of human rights abuses by the Taliban and in relevant international legal frameworks to hold perpetrators accountable for human rights violations.



### Women in Peace Building

Supporting women-led organizations to advance women’s rights and ensure Afghan women’s voices are meaningfully included in the Doha peace process and negotiations with the Taliban.



### Ending Gender Apartheid

Supporting Afghan women leaders’ initiatives with UN member states to recognize gender apartheid as a crime against humanity and to advance accountability for the Taliban regime through the UN legal framework, the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the case of Afghanistan.



### Amplifying Afghan Women’s Voices

Bringing visibility to Afghan women leaders whose resilience and hope will shape the future of Afghanistan.



### Investing in Leadership

Providing direct support to influential Afghan women supporting women’s education, employment and advocacy



### Pressing for Systemic Change

Leveraging international mechanisms to protect the rights of Afghan women and girls



# WORKING TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## Voices Against Violence: The Gender-Based Violence Global Initiative

Voices Against Violence (VAV) is a public–private partnership led by Vital Voices and funded with support from the U.S. State Department and the Avon Foundation for Women.\* VAV is designed to ensure that victims and survivors of gender-based violence and harmful practices have better access to the services, protection, and justice they deserve.

Together, a consortium of partners including Vital Voices, Equimundo, CARE, and Global Fund for Women worked to provide:

- Increased access to global resources to address urgent needs in the aftermath of violence or the threat of violence
- Improved protections and access to justice
- An international network to serve as a focal point and coordinate efforts around gender-based violence

**Urgent Assistance Funding** is a key element of our Violence Against Women program. The focus of our Urgent Assistance Fund (UAF) is on survivors of extreme forms of gender-based violence—cases that require extensive expertise and sensitivity to the needs of survivors. In 2024, 152 cases of extreme violence were taken on by our team and incredibly committed local partners. The most common type of support needed by the survivors was medical, followed by legal and housing.

Since this program began in 2014, Vital Voices has supported:

- 6,027 survivors of extreme violence
- 64% were adults and 36% were children
- Afghanistan was the country with the most cases, followed by Zimbabwe

\*VAV no longer operates as of early 2025. We thank our many partners, experts, staff, donors, and most importantly, the survivors who trusted us over many years.



## STORY OF IMPACT

Amina (name changed to protect confidentiality) is a mother of four children. She was abused physically and psychologically by her husband and mother-in-law, and her children faced extreme physical violence perpetrated by their father. Amina was referred to our Urgent Assistance Fund after abuse by her husband resulted in a broken hand and an injury to her head. Through UAF, Amina was able to receive funding for six months for her medical bills, follow-up appointments, relocation assistance for herself and children, and to receive psychosocial support for the trauma she and her children faced. Ultimately, thanks to the legal assistance provided by UAF, Amina was able to press charges and begin the process of getting a divorce. Relocation to a safe place away from their abuser, providing long-term peace away from the violence they endured for so long, has put Amina and her children on a path to recovery.



## VV Thrive: Technical Institutes

Our local partners, big and small, consistently seek enhanced regional engagement, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building alongside financial resources. Our dedicated partners and staff work every day to stop the epidemic of violence against women—whether it be intimate partner abuse, sexual assault, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, femicide, or other traumas that women and girls the world over endure every day.

To help meet this need, Vital Voices created VV Thrive, implemented over 2023 and 2024, bringing together a diverse network of stakeholders from across Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, Eurasia and Europe.

A series of virtual Technical Institutes in each region shared best practices and explored ongoing challenges:

**Latin America and Caribbean:** discussions centered on institutional barriers and the importance of intersectionality, particularly in addressing the needs of migrant populations and promoting positive masculinities.

**Sub-Saharan Africa:** participants emphasized the need for stronger collaboration between civil society and judicial systems, as well as cultural transformation to address deeply rooted patriarchal norms. Sessions were held in both English and French to accommodate linguistic diversity.

**Eurasia/Europe:** sessions revealed concerns about taboo topics, digital violence, and the lack of sustainable funding.

**MENA:** participants expressed interest in developing “one-stop” service centers and overcoming restrictive government policies.

**Asia:** participants discussed the impact of VAV funding and training, highlighting the need for more capacity-building and sustainable funding of this kind.

VV Thrive culminated in a three-day in-person convening in Istanbul in February 2024. This gathering brought together 50 leaders from all five regions, including representatives from the Avon Foundation, UAF, and male allies. Participants engaged in shared learning, discussed survivor-centered approaches, and developed action plans tailored to their regional contexts. Digital security, sustainable funding, and proposal writing were also key topics of discussion.

**Vital Voices Justice Institutes**—in which gender-based violence nonprofit partners, police, public officials, medical professionals, lawyers and judges engage together to discuss concrete solutions to challenges in their country or local context—emerged as a particularly valued component of Vital Voices’ anti-violence programming, with calls for annual sponsorship and follow-up sessions.

We are proud to have fostered a global, collaborative network of advocates, strengthened local organizations, and laid the foundation for future programming that meets the needs of courageous, dedicated advocates on the ground.



## SPOTLIGHT on Sri Lanka

Vital Voices works alongside the Rural Women's Front, a grassroots organization founded in 1988 to advocate for the rights and well-being of rural women, known for connecting women across ethno-religious and cultural divides in post-conflict Sri Lanka. With a focus on promoting peace at all levels of society, RWF emphasizes the importance of nurturing family and community environments free from abuse, discrimination, or violence—with training on human rights and women's rights and the provision of psychosocial counseling and legal support to affected families.

UAF's trust-based model provided crucial breathing room in times of acute need, enabling RWF to extend outreach into previously underserved villages and respond to urgent protection needs, which in turn fostered solidarity across divisions in Sri Lanka's polarized environment.

## SPOTLIGHT on Central America

Vital Voices launched a regional initiative in Central America to address violence against women and girls as a root cause of forced migration, with a focus on El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The project aimed to support local organizations working with at risk populations—particularly indigenous, migrant, and rural women.

This initiative demonstrated the power of localized, women-led responses. Our local partners, chosen for their strong track records, community-based approaches, and potential for impact, received funding to help them achieve their goals, tailored to needs:

- > **ORMUSA (El Salvador)** partnered with municipal governments to provide legal and psycho-emotional support to women survivors of violence, returnees, and internally displaced migrants—primarily addressing violence from intimate partners. ORMUSA also developed a diagnostic report on violence against women and girls and migration dynamics and contributed to a Municipal Protocol for assisting returned migrants.

- > **Foro Sida (Honduras)** focused on empowering young women through leadership training and expanding access to psychosocial and legal services. Building on a previous VV-funded initiative, they trained 75 young women leaders who conducted outreach to 653 individuals. Through Safe Spaces established in four communities, they provided psychosocial and legal services to survivors. Their work emphasized human rights, community engagement, and prevention of human trafficking and forced migration.
- > **WJI (Guatemala)** addressed justice access gaps for rural, Indigenous women. Their Women's Rights Education Program graduated 187 women and girls, while the Adolescent Girls' Program engaged 127 participants in mentorship and leadership development. WJI also trained 120 community leaders to challenge harmful norms and promote gender equity. Legal services reached 267 women, overcoming linguistic and geographic barriers through culturally relevant support.

A regional panel hosted by Vital Voices in November 2024 featured leaders from the three partner organizations and was opened by Secretary Alejandra Mora of the Inter-American Commission on Women. Panelists shared insights on legal and emotional support, community capacity building, and policy advocacy, while also discussing persistent challenges such as legal gaps, justice barriers, and cultural resistance.

## VVPeace

*Supports women leaders working to address gender-based violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia.*

The Intergenerational Fellowship on Women, Peace, and Security in South Central Europe, or VVPeace, is made possible by Voices Against Violence. Four fellows focused on cross-regional strategies to address women, peace, security, and GBV.

# SEEN AND HEARD

Today, only 16 countries have a female head of government. Women make up less than 24% of the world's parliamentarians and 5% of its mayors. Less than 20% of the world's landholders are women. And just 24% of top news editors are women. By amplifying the work of women leaders through visibility and thought leadership, Vital Voices seeks to change the current landscape. Our vision is to bring into being a world in which women are seen, their voices are heard, their expertise is sought out, their innovation is honored, and their inclusive model of leadership is celebrated and shared.

## VITAL VOICES GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

### 2024 Year in Review

The Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women's Leadership in Washington, D.C.—a first-of-its-kind global embassy for women—is a home away from home for our thousands of network leaders and a hub of collective action and empowerment. The Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women's Leadership was designed by women for women, and we provide free and reduced-rate use of the space for our social justice allies. Below is a small sample of over 80 events hosted at the Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women's Leadership in 2024:

**Author talk with former First Lady of Canada Sophie Gregoire Trudeau**, for her book "Closer Together Knowing Ourselves, Loving Each Other." Vital Voices board member Huma Abedin moderated the talk, which also featured special remarks from First Lady Dr. Jill Biden.

**Kode With Klossy's CODE-A-BRATION.** A free opportunity for young women and gender expansive teens to engage with key computer science, connect with their peers, and have fun along the way!

**Black Her Stories Live Event: The Politics of Care and Creative Practice**, organized by Vital Voices fellow Michaela Ayers.

**United Nations #WeTheWomen breakfast reception.** With remarks from Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed, German Minister for Economic Cooperation



# 80

events were hosted at the Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women's Leadership in 2024.





## SEEN AND HEARD (CONTINUED)

and Development Svenja Schulze, and Norwegian Minister of International Development Beathe Tinnereim.

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual HBCU Women's Leadership Summit**, bringing together 80 women leaders from 28 different HBCU's across the country. Hosted by Running Start and Xceleader, the event focused on empowering HBCU women leaders shaping the future through their leadership journey.

**Using Your Vote as Your Voice.** Vital Voices collaborated with Elle Magazine, Argent, and When We All Vote for an evening dedicated to the importance of voting.

### **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of Geraldine Ferraro.**

A gathering honoring the first woman nominee for Vice President, with a screening of Geraldine Ferraro: Paving the Way, and a conversation between Director and Producer Donna Zaccaro, Senator Kristen Gillibrand, Senator Amy Klobuchar, and Speaker Emerita of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, moderated by Nina Easton.

**Addressing Gender Based Violence and Migration in Central America.** Our Latin America & the Caribbean team at Vital Voices hosted three partner organizations to engage in a riveting panel, opened by Secretary Alejandra Mora of the Inter-American Commission on Women. This discussion highlighted the work of Viviana Patal, of the Women Justice Initiative (WJI) based in Guatemala, Rebeca Alejandra Torres Martínez of FOROSIDA in Honduras, and Rhina Graciela Juárez Lazo of ORMUSA in El Salvador.

**Third Anniversary of the Fall of Kabul.** A community briefing on the political situation in Afghanistan and the Doha Peace talks. During this event, Vital Voices launched the Aghaaz Program, which aims to support Afghan women through fellowships and capacity-building.

**Sudan briefing, in partnership with The Alliance for Peacebuilding and Refugees International.** The event featured opening remarks and a moderated discussion with U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield and U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan Tom Perriello, followed by a panel of Sudanese women leaders, Niemat Ahmadi, Hanin Ahmed, and Samah Salman, to explore the gendered impacts of the conflict, the role of women's leadership in the face of the crisis and opportunities for their influence on the peace process and the future of the country.



# 2024 VITAL VOICES FESTIVAL

The 2024 Vital Voices Global Festival served as a homecoming for our global network, welcoming our fellowship alumnae, councils, partners, founders, and women leaders worldwide to unite for an enriching multi-day convening at Vital Voices Global Headquarters in Washington, DC. We gathered activists, artists, peace builders, entrepreneurs, and innovators for two days of engaging and urgent conversations about how to move our society forward. The schedule included:

## DAY ONE:

### Panel: Women Leading the Rise

- > Moderator: Alyse Nelson
- > Panelists: Nika Kovač, Hanin Ahmed, Zala Ahmad, Aya Chebbi & Roya Boroumand

### Discussion: Art for Peace

- > Speaker: Dr. Maria Zavialova

### Panel: Raising Our Voices for Peace When Others are Talking About War

- > Moderator: Jomana Karadsheh
- > Panelists: Arwa Damon, Dr. Yael Braudo-Bahat & Riman Barakat

### Discussion: Hear My Story: 25 Years Since the War in Kosovo

- > Speaker: Shyrete Sulimani

### Panel: Voices Against Violence

- > Moderator: Shawna Wilson
- > Panelists: Daniela Grelin, Christina Shawaqfeh Lopez & Priti Pakar

### Special Remarks

- > Speaker: Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta

### Panel: Voices of Solidarity

- > Moderator: Amber Tamblyn
- > Panelists: Gary Barker, Luis Almagro, Omaid Sharifi & Marina Pisklavova-Parker

### Discussion: Intersectionality of Caste & Gender

- > Speakers: Yashica Dutt & Marilyn Edmunds Bowser



## 2024 VITAL VOICES FESTIVAL (CONTINUED)

### Panel: Turning the Tide: How Women are Defending Truth and Preventing Online Violence

- > Introduced by Megan Smith
- > Moderator: Bradley Myles
- > Panelists: Camille François, Nina Jankowicz, Seyi Akiwowo, Maria Beatriz Gasca & Lucina Di Meco

### Panel: Rising Again: Stories of Transformation After Trauma

- > Introduced by Faida Fuller
- > Moderator: Zoe Dean-Smith
- > Panelists: Jessica Minhas, Rosana Schaack, Ariela Suster & Soraya Chemaly

### Poetry Performance

- > Artist: Salome Agbaroji

### Panel: Rising to the Challenge: Exploring Solutions to the Climate Crisis

- > Moderator: Gayle Tzemach Lemmon
- > Panelists: Zainab Salbi, Hafsat Abiola, Alexia Leclercq & Manira Alva

### Vital Voices Townhall: The Power of Collective Action

- > Moderator: Karla Ruiz Cofiño
- > Speakers: Jane Anyango, Maya Tamayo, Samara Castro, Elsa Marie D'Silva & Maria-Laura Fera

### Collective Action Sessions

- > Collective Action for Women Led Climate Solutions
- > Collective Action to Combat Tech Enabled Gender Based Violence

## DAY TWO:

### Glass Workshop by FUZED

- > Leaders: Victoria Zitrin & Maddy Morgan

### Panel: Measuring the Impact of Women's Leadership

- > Panelists: Victoria DeFrancesco Soto, Donna McLarty, Tara King-Hughes & Rachel Kupfer

### Panel: Women Defending Democracy

- > Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton
- > Panelists: Maria Ressa, Susana Muhamad, Suyen Barahona, V Pappas, Priyanka Chaturvedi & Mu Sochua

### Panel: When Women Rise

- > Moderator: Huma Abedin
- > Speakers: Diane von Furstenberg, Donna Langley & Bonnie Hammer

### Closing Performance: Women Leading the Rise

Artist: Shanelle Gabriel

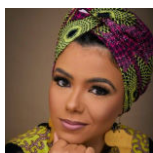




# 2024 GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Each year, Vital Voices celebrates remarkable women whose leadership is shaping our world for the better. The Global Leadership Awards highlights the work of these extraordinary women and provides them with capacity-building programming.

## Our Honorees:



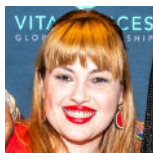
**Aya Chebbi** is a Pan-African feminist who rose to prominence as a leading voice for democracy during the Tunisian Revolution of 2010-2011. Chebbi served as the first-ever African Union Special Envoy on Youth and the youngest diplomat at the Chairperson's Cabinet, impacting over one million young people during her tenure. Chebbi is the Founder and President of the Nala Feminist Collective (Nalafem), Africa's largest multigenerational platform of women politicians and activists committed to transformative feminist leadership.



President **Hilda C. Heine** was the first woman to be selected as president of the Marshall Islands, serving in this capacity from 2016-2020 and re-elected in November 2023. In addition to being a crusader for gender equality and women empowerment, she's also a strong advocate for education, sustainability and human rights. President Heine has also worked as a classroom teacher, school counselor, and college president. She has served as an advisor to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, and under her leadership, the Marshall Islands became the first country to submit new, binding sustainability targets in line with the Paris Agreement. President Heine serves as an advisor to the Women United Together Marshall Islands, a non-governmental organization that she co-founded in 1987.



## 2024 GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS (CONTINUED)



**Nika Kovač** is the founding director of The Research Institute of 8th March, a movement-building organization that uses storytelling and advocacy to confront gender and economic inequalities across Slovenia.

Kovač and her team initiated the Slovenian #metoo campaign (#jastudi) and successfully advocated for the legal redefinition of rape and sexual violence using an affirmative consent model, “Yes means yes.” Kovač coordinated two winning national referendum campaigns: against the privatization of water in 2021 and against political influence on public media in 2022. She also led the most extensive “Get-Out-The-Vote” campaign in Slovenian history ahead of the 2022 Parliamentary election, which contributed to a 71 percent voter turnout. She is currently coordinating the “My Voice, My Choice” campaign across Europe.



**María Susana Muhamad González** is a Colombian politician with Palestinian roots. She has served as Colombia’s Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development since August 7, 2022. She has served as

Bogotá’s Secretary of the Environment, Secretary General of the Mayor’s Office, and Councilor of Bogotá. Muhamad is a renowned environmentalist in Colombia and abroad. Her efforts are directed at positioning Colombia as a world power of life. Her advocacy centers around establishing compliance with international agreements on climate change and biodiversity loss, protecting environmental defenders, and fighting against deforestation in the Amazon region.



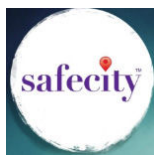
**Maria Ressa** co-founded Rappler, a digital news site leading the fight for press freedom in the Philippines. As Rappler’s CEO, Maria has endured political harassment and arrests by the government. Rappler’s battle for truth

and democracy is the subject of the 2020 documentary, “A Thousand Cuts.” In October 2021, she was one of two journalists awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her “efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for democracy and lasting peace.” In 2022, Ressa was appointed to the United Nations Panel of the Internet Governance Forum. She is an inaugural Carnegie Distinguished Fellow at Columbia University’s Institute of Global Politics, and a professor at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs. Maria focuses critical attention on the breakdown of our global information ecosystem and how communities can hold the line to protect democracy.





## 2024 GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS (CONTINUED)



**Safecity** received Vital Voices' first-ever collective action award. This mobile app and platform crowdsources personal stories of sexual harassment and abuse in public spaces. Its data, which can be anonymous, gets aggregated as hot spots on a map indicating trends at a local level. This data is used by individuals, communities, and local governments to identify factors that lead to violence and to improve public safety.

Safecity is the flagship program of the Red Dot Foundation, created by ElsaMarie D'Silva. Its critical technology and best practices have been made available to leaders throughout the Vital Voices Global Network, who have implemented local Safecity initiatives of their own including:

India—Supreet K Singh and Tania Echaporia

Kenya—Jane Anyango

Trinidad & Tobago—Nicole Joseph Chin

The Philippines—Maya Tamayo

Croatia—Dunja Bonacci

Guatemala—Maria Lidia

Nicaragua—Xiomara Diaz

Romania—Cristina Horia

Nigeria—Tessie Nkechi Udegboke

Brazil—Samara Castro

Malaysia—Radziah Radzi

United States—Sophie Sandberg

Presenters at the 2024 Global Leadership Awards included Founder of the #metoo Movement

**Tarana Burke**, Secretary **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, philanthropist and entrepreneur **Diane von Furstenberg**, Former President of Mauritius **Ameenah Gurib-Fakim**, CNN International Correspondent **Jomana Karadsheh**, Chair of NBCUniversal **Donna Langley**, and Co-Author of PBS NewsHour **Amna Nawaz**.

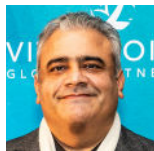




# VOICES OF SOLIDARITY

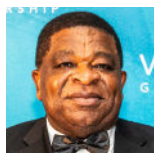
The Voices of Solidarity Awards highlights the importance of male allies to the fight for women's rights. Gender equity benefits everyone, and it cannot be achieved by women alone. This work must be undertaken by all who seek to live in a world marked by equality, opportunity, and justice. Each year, the Voices of Solidarity Awards recognizes remarkable men who have shown courage and compassion in advocating on behalf of women and girls globally.

Vital Voices held the 11th Annual Voices of Solidarity Awards at the IAC Building in New York City. Hosted by the Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation, the honorees included:



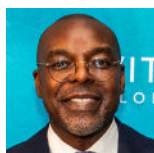
**Erfaan Hussein Babak**, a human rights advocate from Swat Valley, Pakistan, defied his conservative upbringing to champion women's rights. Inspired by the violence his mother and sisters faced, he founded

The Awakening in 2012 to challenge patriarchal norms and support survivors of abuse. Through Pakistan's first Women Jirga, a 24/7 helpline, and the Dastageer Legal Aid Center, Erfaan provides critical support for women and involves men and boys in promoting gender equality.



**Martin Chungong**, the first African and non-European to be elected as Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, has dedicated his professional life to promoting and strengthening democracy

worldwide, and is globally recognized as a leader in fostering dialogue and conflict resolution, particularly in countries emerging from conflict or in transition, and in developing programs that help parliaments become more gender-sensitive, transparent, accountable, representative, and effective democratic institutions.



**Chid Liberty** is an award-winning social entrepreneur and impact investor who co-founded Africa's first Fair Trade Certified apparel factory, Liberty & Justice, to empower displaced women in Liberia.

Recognized by Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Chid has received numerous awards and is a Managing Partner at Liberty Friedman.



# GLOBAL MENTORING WALKS

## Celebrating International Women's Day With Purpose

International Women's Day recognizes women's contribution to global progress and reminds us of the work that remains to advance women and communities everywhere. It is the ideal opportunity to demonstrate the power of women's leadership and unite women in support of other women. Through the Vital Voices Global Mentoring Walk, mentors and mentees come together to walk in their communities, sharing challenges and solutions and forming supportive bonds that foster growth.

This global movement began with one women's effort to share her knowledge and experience with aspiring women leaders. Geraldine Laybourne, Founder and former CEO of Oxygen Media, responded to requests for advice from young women by inviting them to meet her for a morning walk. It became a routine for Laybourne, and an invaluable opportunity for women who wanted to learn from her experience. A longtime friend of and board member for Vital Voices, Laybourne introduced the concept to leaders of our Global Leadership Network, who in 2008 took the idea to their home countries and coordinated the first annual Vital Voices Global Mentoring Walks. Since then, over 1,300 walks have been coordinated in over 60 countries—with close to 150,000 participants worldwide!

### 2024 By the Numbers:

100 walks  
29 countries  
9,846 participants  
48 Flag Bearers

### Locations include:

Accra, Ghana  
Celaya, Mexico  
Durban, South Africa  
Igboukwu, Nigeria  
Mumbai, India  
New York City, USA  
And many more!



**“The Mentoring Walk was a transformative experience. I gained practical advice and a renewed sense of purpose.”**

— Savior Iwueze, Student,  
University of Lagos

**“This event highlighted the power of collaboration and mentorship in driving change.”**

— Dominion Herbert, Student,  
Yaba College of Technology







# GLOBAL DIALOGUE

## Ideas to Impact: Uniting Minds, Building Solutions

The Vital Voices Global Dialogue unites leaders from diverse fields to engage in open, solutions-focused discourse that illuminates the challenges and opportunities of our time. From August 28-30, 2024, at the home of the Human Safety Net in Venice, we convened 40 dynamic women from every region of the world to discuss this pivotal moment.



As global crises mount and a wave of authoritarianism threatens to pull the world backwards, far too many leaders are choosing to

spread fear and sow division. When we listen to the loudest voices, it seems like new threats are always looming and a dark future is a foregone conclusion.

Participants at the Global Dialogue discussed paths to a different future. Leaders who know that solidarity, compassion and inclusion are far stronger than fear. Leaders who share power instead of hoarding it. Leaders who inspire action for collective progress.

The Global Dialogue enabled Vital Voices to gather important insights to help shape its programming on Women for Rights and Democracy. Participants included women from different countries, generations, and perspectives to ensure that Vital Voices is learning from and serving a broad swath of women leaders worldwide.

## DVF AWARDS

Vital Voices was thrilled to be a part of the DVF Awards, held in Venice, Italy in August 2024. This event honors extraordinary women and provides grants to further their important work.

The 15th annual DVF awards included several Vital Voices Network Women. Reem Al-Hajajreh, a Palestinian advocate and Director of Women of the Sun, and Dr. Yael Admi, the Israeli co-founder of Women Wage Peace were honored for the Mothers Call—dedicated to finding common ground for a peaceful

resolution in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Xiye Bastida, the 22-year-old Re-Earth co-founder from Mexico was honored for her crucial climate justice activism.

Reem, Yael, and Xiye were honored alongside Jacinda Arden, former Prime Minister of New Zealand; Dr. Alessandra Kustermann, an advocate for reproductive rights and the prevention of domestic violence; and Mrs. Graça Machel, a stateswoman from Mozambique, for a lifetime dedicated to improving the life conditions of women and children.



# IMPACT FUND

## Invest in Women Who Use Their Power to Empower

Vital Voices has launched an exciting and ambitious \$100 million campaign to ensure that women's voices are loud and clear in every discussion and debate.

Chaired by Diane von Furstenberg, the Impact Fund will enable us to invest in our future—creating the resilience, flexibility, and program growth needed to expand the reach and power of the Vital Voices Global Network at a time when it is needed more than ever. This \$100 million fund will provide the training, amplification, and networks that women leaders need to revitalize economies, reimagine political systems, and unlock the potential of women and girls.

When you invest in one woman through Vital Voices, you ignite a ripple effect that reaches far beyond her. Alumnae of our programs don't just grow their own leadership; they multiply impact across communities, sectors, and generations. Our research shows that:

- > They form 60+ new partnerships, building bridges across industries and geographies.
- > Their organizations touch hundreds of thousands of lives each year, in some cases reaching more than 610,000 people annually.
- > And the cycle continues: 82% of alums go on to mentor others, ensuring the next generation of leaders rises even stronger.

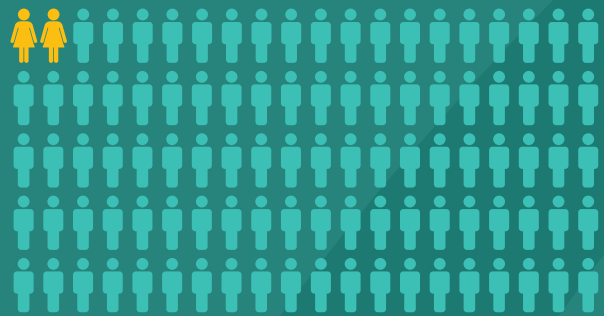
## Thank you to our Impact Fund supporters:

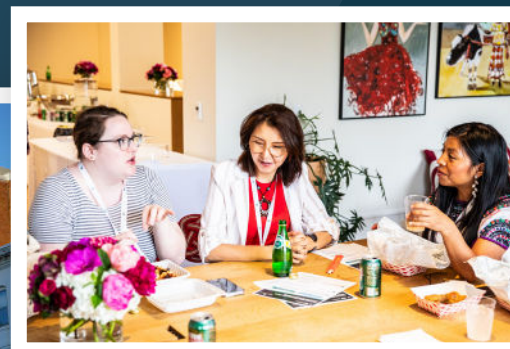
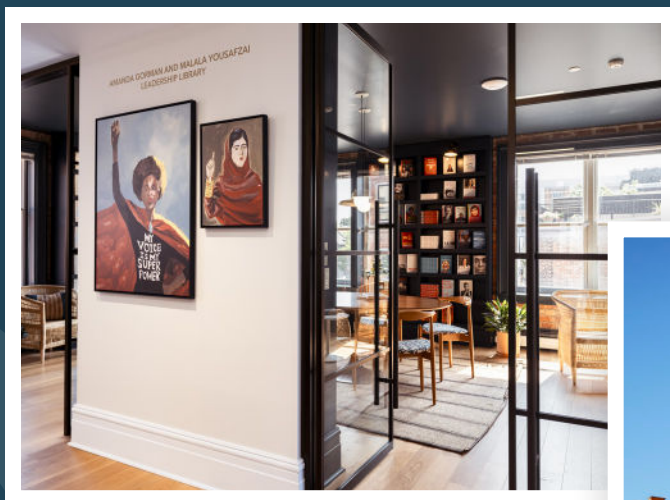
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To find out more about the Impact Fund, please email [development@vitalvoices.org](mailto:development@vitalvoices.org).

# JUST 2%

of philanthropic support goes to organizations that support women and girls. This massive under-investment has stifled women's voices and opportunities to shape the decisions that affect our lives.





## FOUNDING MEMBERS

### Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women's Leadership

The Founding Members are a small group of dedicated, dynamic philanthropists and foundations who made a campaign commitment of over \$250,000 to the Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women's Leadership. Founding Members are dedicated to catalyzing women's leadership and catapulting the world toward the goal of global gender equality. Vital Voices Global Partnership thanks all our Founding Members for their commitment and solidarity.

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# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 6,206,728	\$ 7,908,370
Certificates of deposit 7	1,100	71,094
Grants and contributions receivable, net	6,841,375	9,122,432
Government grants receivable	1,954,141	706,901
Accounts and contracts receivable	17,598	91,352
Prepaid expenses and deposits	467,587	261,447
Property and equipment, net	40,610,248	41,656,890
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 56,168,777</b>	<b>\$ 59,818,486</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 708,598	\$ 688,894
Accrued payroll liability	654,405	535,198
Grants payable	387,606	120,657
Refundable advances	629,068	641,639
Funds held on behalf of others	8,213	8,205
Bonds payable, net	24,756,415	25,373,943
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>27,144,305</b>	<b>27,368,536</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Without donor restrictions	18,879,035	18,668,884
With donor restrictions	10,145,437	13,781,066
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>29,024,472</b>	<b>32,449,950</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 56,168,777</b>	<b>\$ 59,818,486</b>

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	2024 Total	2023 Total
<b>REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>				
Grants and contributions	\$ 5,266,612	\$ 6,356,335	\$ 11,622,947	\$ 18,894,517
Government grants and contracts	11,281,320	-	11,281,320	10,092,700
Contract revenue	302,753	-	302,753	472,948
Special events revenue	905,418	-	905,418	1,016,278
Donated services	48,210	-	48,210	60,345
Other revenue	317,750	-	317,750	251,457
Net assets released from restrictions:				
Satisfaction of program restrictions	6,924,626	(6,924,626)	-	-
Satisfaction of time restrictions	3,067,338	(3,067,338)	-	-
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>28,114,027</b>	<b>(3,635,629)</b>	<b>24,478,398</b>	<b>30,788,245</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Program Services:</b>				
Global Network and Regional Engagement	12,361,315	-	12,361,315	11,789,286
Leadership and Social Impact	3,484,545	-	3,484,545	2,444,723
Global Engagement and Public Awareness	2,219,908	-	2,219,908	1,172,223
Issue Advocacy	2,031,338	-	2,031,338	1,601,709
Crisis Response	1,778,045	-	1,778,045	1,818,504
Global Leadership Awards	1,419,041	-	1,419,041	1,395,550
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>23,294,192</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>23,294,192</b>	<b>20,221,995</b>
<b>Supporting Services:</b>				
Management and general	2,355,019	-	2,355,019	1,511,561
Development and fundraising	2,197,665	-	2,197,665	2,061,553
Fundraising—cost of direct benefit to donors	57,000	-	57,000	103,740
<b>Total Development and Fundraising</b>	<b>2,254,665</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,254,665</b>	<b>2,165,293</b>
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>4,609,684</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,609,684</b>	<b>3,676,854</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>27,903,876</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,903,876</b>	<b>23,898,849</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets from Operations</b>	<b>210,151</b>	<b>(3,635,629)</b>	<b>(3,425,478)</b>	<b>6,889,396</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>18,668,884</b>	<b>13,781,066</b>	<b>32,449,950</b>	<b>25,560,554</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 18,879,035</b>	<b>\$ 10,145,437</b>	<b>\$ 29,024,472</b>	<b>\$ 32,449,950</b>



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