

[Publish What You Fund](#) has tracked international funding to women's financial inclusion (WFI) in Kenya. Our aim was to provide greater insights into the funding landscape to support policymakers, funders, and gender advocates. This is part of a [broader programme](#) which examined funding for WFI, women's economic empowerment (WEE), women's empowerment collectives, and assessed gender integration approaches in [Bangladesh](#), [Kenya](#), and [Nigeria](#).

Our [methodology](#) for tracking funding to WFI utilised a market system-based approach to identify funding going to the core, supporting functions, and rules of the market system. We tracked funding from bilateral, multilateral, development finance institutions and philanthropic organisations between 2015–2019.

### International funding to WFI remains a small proportion of funding to WEE

International grant funding to WFI increased between 2015–2019 but remained a small portion of total WEE funding to Kenya. In total we identified 67 grant funded projects and ten non-grant (loans, guarantees, and equity) funded projects with WFI activities. There was insufficient data for the non-grant funding to make trend observations.

In many cases, WFI activities are a sub-component of a larger project. To reduce the risk of overestimating funding amounts for projects supporting WFI, the rest of our analysis uses project numbers as the unit of analysis.

### Poor reporting among development finance institutions (DFIs) is a barrier to tracking WFI funding

A more comprehensive picture of the WFI international funding landscape is undermined by gaps in funder project level reporting of non-grant financial flows to publicly available sources. We conducted a deep dive into DFI non-grant funding to test our methodology to see if a different approach would reveal additional funding, which it largely did not. However, the lack of detailed and accessible project level funding reporting by DFIs inhibits effective analysis of funding contribution not only to WFI but to financial inclusion (FI) overall.

### Which groups of women did this funding intend to support?

Our analysis found that 48 of the 67 grants specified certain groups of women that they intended to support. Of the WFI projects that did specify a group of women, farmers were the most commonly cited group. Projects which aimed to support women farmers included WFI activities to improve access to and usage of financial services, while others focused on the establishment and improvement of farmers' self-organised saving and credit organisations. Other projects specified women entrepreneurs, rural and urban slum women, poor women, and women from marginalised communities as the main group they intended to support.

Eight of the non-grant projects specified a group of women. The most commonly cited was women entrepreneurs and women with SMEs, followed by marginalised and young women. Women-owned SMEs in Kenya account for 40% of all SMEs<sup>a</sup> and one of the main factors that affect them is accessing affordable formal financing options.<sup>b</sup> Identifying the specific group(s) of women that the funding is intended to support greatly enhances our ability to identify gaps in funding and address the differential needs of women given that economic empowerment and access to resources are shaped by intersecting discriminations.

### Who funds WFI in Kenya and how?

The top grant funders of projects with WFI activities in Kenya included Mastercard Foundation, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Germany's Federal

<sup>a</sup> IFC World Bank, 2016 Banking on Women: Creating value for banks and boosting economic growth

<sup>b</sup> Kamunyu, Caroline Wairimu, and Dr. Fridah Simba Theuri. 2017. Review of Factors Affecting Growth of Women Owned Small and Medium Enterprises in Kenya: A Survey of Women-Led SMEs in South Coast Ukunda. OSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM) 19 (3): 60–66. [www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org)

Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. Collectively, these funders accounted for 85% of international grant funding to projects with WFI activities in Kenya.

Figure 1 shows the top 7 international grant funders we identified (by number of projects) and provides a nuanced picture of how funders are embedding WFI into projects in Kenya. Our analysis suggests that overall grant funders are mostly integrating WFI activities into broader WEE/gender, FI, and other broader development projects (60 of the 67 grant projects). We identified seven projects that were standalone WFI projects. All non-grant projects were integrated into FI or broader development projects.

### International grant funders mostly integrated WFI into broader development programmes

Number of projects

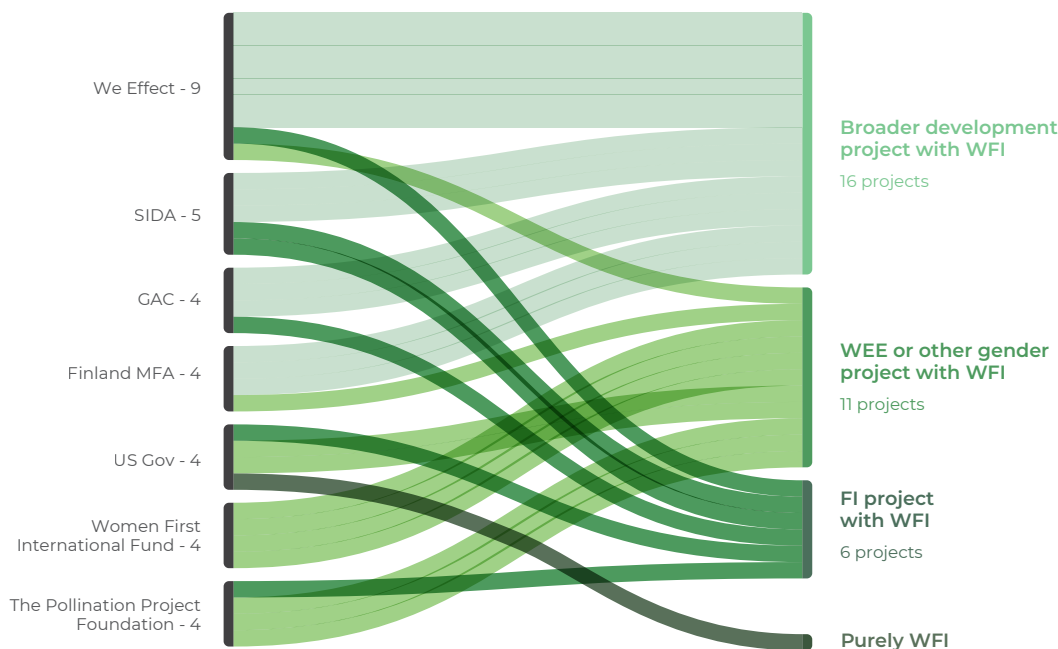


Figure 1: Top seven WFI grant funders (by number of projects) mapped to project types (2015-2019)

### How are funders targeting the financial market system?

When applying a market system-based approach<sup>c</sup> we found that grant funded WFI projects supported three of the market functions almost equally. This included projects targeting the supporting functions of the market system (28 projects), supply side activities (24 projects), and demand side activities (21 projects).

All ten non-grant projects targeted the supply side while one also had funding towards supporting functions. We did not identify any grant or non-grant funded projects in our review that supported the rules function of the market system.

### COVID-19 and WFI funding

Given the time frame and data constraints, we had limited data available to analyse funding addressing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We identified four grant funded WFI projects that targeted recovery post-COVID-19, all funded by SIDA. Three of the projects reprogrammed their funds to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 by addressing poor access of women and youth to financial services, advocating for women to have the same right as men to financial resources, and addressing key barriers to financial inclusion and trade facilitation.

<sup>c</sup> Projects can target more than one market system function.

Our complete report series can be accessed [here](#).