



# THE ORGANISED MANY

**A gender justice agenda for action**

**Summary report**

 **GLOBAL 50/50** | in DIALOGUE

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**We all hold some form of power. The question is whether we can bring that influence together. Going it alone is a losing strategy. Collective action is a different kind of power.**

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Between January and May 2026, more than 150 gender justice leaders, from grassroots women's rights organisations to multilateral agencies, came together across four convenings and a survey of the field, hosted by Global 50/50, an independent think tank that holds some of the world's most powerful institutions to account on gender.

In 1995, 189 governments adopted the Beijing Platform for Action, still the most complete agenda for gender equality the world has set itself. Three decades on it remains largely undelivered, and the ground it covers is now the direct target of an organised countermovement.

Gender justice protagonists are up against a real and rising opposition. Convenings described a well-resourced, coordinated and disciplined countermovement waging a global campaign against gender justice, and against the people, organisations and systems working to reduce inequities, achieve equality and realise justice. By strategically wielding financial, narrative, political and organisational power, the anti-gender, anti-rights opposition has overturned laws, dismantled institutions built to advance gender equality and disrupted and diminished lives.

**A rapid review by Global 50/50** in early 2025 found that within weeks of the orders, 20 of the 72 US-headquartered organisations in our Global Health 50/50 Report sample had removed gender equality and diversity language from their websites, nearly all of them holding US federal grants or contracts. **Holding the Line (2025)** then confirmed the full-year picture: workplace fairness and equity policies down 33 percent among organisations with US federal funding, workplace gender equality policies down 19 percent, and, for the first time since monitoring began in 2017, the direction of change backwards across every variable we assess, reversing the steady gains recorded from 2020 to 2024.

## **Rising support for global solidarity**

Global Nation's annual Ipsos survey of more than 22,000 people across 31 countries found agreement rising on all three of its measures of global solidarity, across every generation, every income group and every level of education, and in nearly all countries. The authors' reading is that it is precisely the threats to the international system that are making people value it more.

Global Nation, *At its darkest hour, is internationalism back?*, May 2026 → [globalnation.world](https://globalnation.world)

## **About this research**

This report draws on four convenings held between January and May 2026 – a feminist roundtable in Kuala Lumpur, a side event on the margins of Women Deliver in Naarm (Melbourne), a technical workshop at Fondation Brocher in Hermance and a convening at the World Health Assembly in Geneva – and on a survey of the gender justice field conducted in April 2026. Approximately 120 people took part across the convening series and more than 40 online respondents completed the survey, representing feminist movements, multilateral institutions, government ministries, philanthropy, academia, civil society, the private sector and frontline service delivery.



**The train of weaponisation of gender has been coming down the tracks for years. At Global 50/50 we are focused on how we reverse it, together, with more joined-up strategies than we've ever attempted before.**

Professor Sarah Hawkes, Co-CEO, Global 50/50

## The action agenda

Now is the time for the pro-justice movement to respond and defend progress for everyone. Drawing on those conversations, and analysing them for their strategic recommendations, we identify five priority actions that will provide strategic gains towards gender justice.

### 01 Get political and organised around power

As a field, we know and work with evidence and technical fixes; the opposition knows how to exercise power and is adept at controlling agendas. These gaps are contributing to why we are losing ground. Better understanding of the gaps requires comprehensive mapping of where anti-gender actors operate across spaces of power – particularly financial, legal, political, commercial and digital spaces; and where our own assets, allies and openings lie.

Closing these gaps means engaging with legislative and political strategies to promote gender justice, including by making it politically costly to side with the anti-gender, anti-rights opposition, or to shelter in professed neutrality, rather than merely virtuous to stand against it. Global leadership transitions provide windows of opportunity to win public commitments for delivery on gender justice goals. We must also turn the same questions on ourselves: who convenes, who decides, who gets counted.

### 02 Connect the movements and resource a shared infrastructure

Feminist movements have long distinguished the *power over* that the opposition wields – the concentrated financial, legal and political muscle to compel and constrain – from the *power with* i.e. acting together and the *power within* i.e. claiming one's own standing to act. Expanding on the *power with*, we will be stronger when we align with other movements on issues of social justice and put aside our internal divisions to present a more united front.

The anti-gender, anti-rights opposition is disciplined, often aligned, and generates unity across its groups, while the divisions among our own movements are exploited against us. We need a cross-movement alliance around a handful of priorities we can win, not a coalition of everything. Build it on the alliances, funds and networks we already have, and sustain the movement through regular convening, a shared digital hub, and a live, shared map of who and what we can call on.

### 03 Reposition strategic communications and narrative capacity as foundational and fund it

Narrative and communications occupy a space where power is gained or lost. The anti-gender, anti-rights opposition understands this and treats communications as a critical investment while we have too often treated it as a budget line to cut. We need more than just more financial resources, we need to be better at delivering narratives that resonate widely across multiple audiences. In the era of the attention economy, evidence-led claims, even when careful and qualified, risk being lost.

Moving from defence to offence means funding feminist communications as core work: supporting feminist media; turning our evidence into narrative; and focusing on expanding the reach to carry narratives and ideas across channels, media and a range of languages, cultures and demographics. With this approach we can reach the sympathetic majority and take back the narrative and language the opposition captures, manipulates and exploits.

### 04 Change how the work is funded and make the gender-responsive investment case

Funders are encouraged to change the terms on which they deploy their financial resources and power. Funding practices today put the heaviest financial risks on the recipient organisations least able to absorb them. Women's rights and feminist organisations need core, flexible, multi-year funding not short-term investments.

Further, finance ministries and the planners who deploy public capital should apply a gender lens to investment decisions as standard, and steer that money towards what advances gender justice. Funding decisions that ignore gender still produce gendered outcomes, with hidden costs for women and worse results for everyone.

## **05 Expand and sustain independent monitoring and establish a standing accountability mechanism**

We need independent monitoring of institutions' commitments and performance on gender justice. The power of monitoring is as a basis for action and a pillar for accountability. Without it, we cannot demonstrate progress, expose regression or hold power to account. One such mechanism, a Lancet Countdown on Gender Justice, is being explored by Global 50/50 and The Lancet. Each year it would track what governments and institutions commit to and what they deliver, focused on gender and health, and potentially climate. Over time, it could extend to other sectors – ultimately making non-delivery on gender justice commitments publicly expensive.

**The current rollback on rights, justice and equality is not inevitable - it is constructed and can be de-constructed. If we organise, fund the work and hold the line together, this moment becomes an opening, not a loss.**

These five priorities are not a panacea for the full range of substantial challenges we are up against. They do, however, represent actionable, time-bound opportunities for supporting the gender justice movement at a time of powerful, organised opposition.

Participants did not resolve whether gender justice remains the right entry-point frame in every setting, what a shared endpoint would look like, or whether existing measurement frameworks are adequate to the moment. The report sets these out as open questions rather than forcing agreement. None of them blocks the five actions, which command support across the convenings and the survey regardless of where participants stand on them.

Following the convenings Global 50/50 has made a start on advancing this agenda. We have launched an open letter to the next UN Secretary-General setting out five commitments to make gender equality real: Measure it, Analyse it, Centre it, Fund it, Institutionalise it. We have also launched an **ecosystem-wide consultation** on the shared digital hub. Design work on the Lancet Countdown is underway and open to partners, with a convening of funders to follow.

No single organisation can do this alone. Advancing this agenda will take partners, funders and allies across the movement, and Global 50/50 will keep convening so we can all build this power together.



**The few are powerful. The many are organised.**

Professor Kent Buse, Co-Founder and Co-CEO, Global 50/50

## **Work with us**

If you want to fund this work, partner on it, or join others determined to advance gender justice, get in touch at [info@global5050.org](mailto:info@global5050.org). **Read the full report →**