

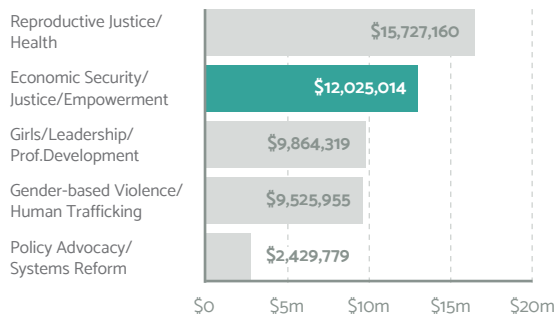
women's economic MOBILITY HUBS

a **wfn** initiative



Across the country, growing evidence demonstrates that women are fundamental drivers of economic growth, and essential to developing new economies and strategies that center the principles of gender justice.

Funding for economic security is a priority for women's foundations, who invested over **\$12 million in 2018**. The efforts of these funds ensures that a gender lens remains a central focus and priority in our communities during this uncertain moment in history.



The economic impact of COVID-19 has had dramatically unequal consequences for the livelihoods of women and girls across the nation. Innovative and targeted community approaches are increasingly critical to the response and recovery effort.

WFN'S WOMEN'S ECONOMIC MOBILITY HUBS INITIATIVE

The Women's Funding Network, with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has launched a new initiative of five regional and four state focused Women's Economic Mobility Hubs to improve the economic opportunities for women in their individual communities.

For this pilot project, WFN is supporting each Hub with technical assistance, capacity building strategies, and shared learning opportunities. These learnings will be shared with WFN's global network to boost the larger movement with policies and practices informed by organizations on the ground. The goal of this work is to provide lasting improvements to economic mobility and security for the women in these regions and leadership for the next phase of change.

Key barriers to economic mobility for women include:

- Unstable housing and homelessness
- Gaps in wages between men and women, particularly for black and brown women
- Absence of education and training
- Insufficient mentoring and coaching
- Biases in hiring and a shortage of job opportunities
- Limited access to transportation
- Scarcity of affordable and quality childcare
- Lack of health care and paid leave

Key conditions created by systemic barriers include:

- Intergenerational cycles of poverty
- Domestic violence

Participating hubs will address the key barriers & conditions most relevant to their communities using seven Hub strategies:

- Soliciting knowledge & solutions from those closest to the issues
- Conducting research to foster better understanding
- Lifting up intersectionality
- Employing multi-faceted approaches
- Fostering cross-sector collaborations
- Engaging in culture change strategies
- Leveraging impact through convenings

Regional engagement matters.

Targeted engagement will help identify community assets and key influencers to collectively build strategic efforts and move investments that build lasting opportunities, economic mobility, and security for women. Hubs will address the range of social, economic, health, and environmental conditions necessary to help women thrive within their regional ecosystems.

FIVE REGIONALLY FOCUSED HUBS

» The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham

WFGB's hub is dedicated to growing a stronger workforce of women by embedding student-parent success models in Alabama systems.

Goals: Collaborate with community colleges, employers, and other community agencies to meet the demand of 500,000 skilled workers by 2025.

» Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis

Working with grantee partners, WFGM is establishing an Economic Mobility HUB Community Council to provide a greater understanding of critical conditions impacting low-income women and children and expanding partnerships with influencers to leverage their leadership in these communities.

Goals: Fostering a strong collaboration between community members and public systems to invest funds and create a roadmap to mitigate barriers before they happen.

» Chicago Foundation for Women

The CFW's hub is building a network between existing community organizations to create a continuity of structured support for women and girls in the Englewood community, where 60% live below the poverty line and 49% are not in the labor force.

Goals: Model a scalable approach to addressing systemic barriers to economic mobility, while ensuring that at least 60 women achieve a stable income of at least \$40k per year over the next five years.

» Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona

WFSA's hub is applying a two-generation approach focused on providing childcare and other support mechanisms that help women pursue education and improve their earning potential.

Goals: Benefit children and their families by increasing the opportunities for women to achieve a living wage, where 37% are currently living in low income households.

» Western New York Women's Foundation

WNYWF's hub is identifying barriers and connecting parents with resources including childcare, healthcare, emergency grants, coaching, and mentoring.

Goals: Improve retention of women in education that leads to family sustaining jobs, decrease systemic barriers for single mothers, and propel cultural changes that increase job success.

FOUR STATE FOCUSED HUBS

» Women's Foundation of Arkansas

WFA's Women Owned Economic Mobility Hub is piloting a community-led model that will increase the net-worth of Black women entrepreneurs' by building trust and support within the entrepreneurial ecosystem..

Goals: Increase access to financial and social capital while creating a scalable model for community led philanthropy with a gendered and racial lens.

» The Women's Foundation of Colorado

WFCO's hub is combining its WAGES program with statewide research, a 50+ member policy workgroup, women's impact investors, and 100 organizations and social enterprises under one umbrella, to create an ecosystem of resiliency and response to COVID-19.

Goals: Build public will to value women as major economic drivers and insure that the state's recovery efforts are women-centered and women-led.

» Maine Women's Fund

Wabanaki Public Health and MWF are focusing the work of the Wabanaki Economic Mobility Hub to explore, evaluate, and improve the supports for economic mobility for women and their families in each of the five Wabanaki tribal communities.

Goals: Create a deeper understanding of the cultural context and critical social, economic, health, and environmental conditions facing Wabanaki women and their families.

» Iowa Women's Foundation

IWF is leveraging its hub to host monthly convenings with 30 communities in Iowa that are setting strategies and benchmarking goals aimed at removing barriers to women's economic security by improving access to childcare and regaining ground lost to COVID-19.

Goals: Foster a growing and sustainable childcare sector enabling women to remain and/or return to the workforce, access education programs, and participate in job trainings.

In these uncertain times, it is vital that we support women's funds and foundations so they can continue this critical work. Without their efforts, women disappear from the conversation and, as a result, from the economic equation entirely.