



RCD Women's News

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An introduction to Sustainable Funding

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Women's organisations are facing an uncertain future. The move away from grant-making and towards the commissioning of public services means that women's organisations are increasingly missing out on funds. Funders lack an understanding of the specific needs of women and children, worsened by the gender-neutral approach to grant making and the commissioning process. Small and specialist organisations are most at risk; for example, Imkaan reports that 50% of specialist Black, Asian and minority ethnic violence against women organisations have closed in the last 5 years (Imkaan 2008).

Women's organisations need to find ways to diversify their income. Relying on just one or two sources of funding can be dangerous for financial sustainability. 'Sustainable funding' is not a particular pot of money, or about getting better at fundraising, but an approach to funding. The key elements to this approach are:

- Diversifying your income so that if you lose one source of funding it doesn't threaten your whole organisation and the essential services you offer
- Strategic planning including a long-term funding strategy
- Understanding which sources of income are most appropriate for each of your activities or services
- Development of partnerships
- Being open to new ideas and opportunities
- Understanding that this approach may require new skills to access new sources of income
- Understanding your costs – there is never enough money to go round, but it is essential that you have a detailed understanding of your costs in order to make informed choices.

There is a range of income sources available to women's organisations. The range consists of gifts (individual donations, support from business, 'in-kind' donations), and moves across through grant funding (mainly from trusts and foundations), to public service contracts (from local authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Learning and Skills Councils, etc.) and finally to trading goods or services (sometimes called 'social enterprise'). In an ideal world, organisations would have funding from each of these sources, or at least achieve diversity within one part of the range (e.g. a mix of different grants).

Not all organisations will be able to generate funds from every income stream and every organisation is unique. Nevertheless, many groups have great potential for developing new sources of income and for moving away from complete reliance on charitable donations and time-limited grants.

If you are interested in finding out more about this approach to funding, please come to one the Women's Resource Centre's free training days. In the next 6 months we will be running training on strategic planning, writing successful funding proposals, understanding commissioning and procurement, developing effective partnerships and social enterprise for the women's sector. These training days are open to any women's organisation in London.

For more information and booking forms, go to www.wrc.org.uk or contact WRC's Sustainability and Development Team on **020 7324 3047** or email development@wrc.org.uk.

Funding news

Female Genital Mutilation Special Initiative Launched (UK)

The City Parochial Foundation (CPF), Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (EF) and Rosa (the UK's Women's Fund), three independent charitable organisations, have announced a special initiative to strengthen community based prevention work to protect the rights of children with a particular view to reducing the risk to girls and young women in the UK of undergoing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in all its forms.

Community organisations based within practising communities, in particular, women's organisations can apply to develop a programme of work with young people, parents, faith leaders, and/or the wider community to raise awareness about this harmful practice and to empower communities to say no.

Eligible costs could include: staffing; peer advocacy schemes; creative projects; resources; volunteers expenses; and relevant running costs. Funding is available for one, two or three years. Application deadline: **24 July 2009**. See: www.cityparochial.org.uk/cpf/news/female_genital_mutilation_fgm_special_initiative_launched.html

Sheila McKechnie Awards 2009

The Sheila McKechnie Foundation is a charity that supports individuals working for positive social and environmental change: from people campaigning for improved disabled access on local transport; to individuals campaigning on climate change issues.

Winners of this year's SMK award would be supported to successfully plan and bring about change and get their voice heard.

Application deadline: 30 June 2009. Email awards@smk.org.uk or call **020 7700 8231** Or visit www.sheilamckechnie.org.uk for an application form and more information.

Training

Rights of Women training in partnership with the Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP)

Finding refuge? Claiming asylum in the UK and financial support throughout the process
24 June 9.30am - 4.30pm, Kings Cross, London

This one day course will enable participants to learn about the practical support available to women seeking asylum. This course will enable you to advise women through the asylum process and will provide an essential grounding in asylum law and the way that cases are decided. The course also covers asylum support law including financial support for failed asylum seekers.

Asylum and immigration law: protecting women from violence and securing their position in the UK

2 July 10am – 4.30pm, Manchester

This one day course will illustrate how you can support asylum-seeking women, European Economic Area (EEA) nationals and women with no recourse to public funds to access services. This course will provide an understanding of the law that determines who is entitled to remain in the UK and access financial support, in particular women affected by violence.

Both of the above courses are aimed at first tier organisations and advice givers. In addition to full training notes and materials, all participants for both courses receive a copy of the publication 'Pathways to Justice: BMER women, violence and the law.'

For more information contact the Training Officer on **020 7251 6575** or email training@row.org.uk www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

Cost: RCOs - free; small voluntary sector - £100; large voluntary sector - £130

If you would like to submit an article to *RCO Women's News* about your RCO's work, or would like to write about a topical issue, please email: development@refugeecouncil.org.uk.