



Of the \$356 million from foundations available for women and girls of color (WGOC) in 2017<sup>1</sup>, less than \$60 million, about 16.8%, was specified as benefitting organizations by and for WGOC in the South. There are nearly 27 million WGOC in the South, which works out to **\$2.22** of foundation funding per woman or girl of color—less than half of the national average of \$5.48.

A 2019 survey<sup>2</sup> about the work and funding of organizations based in the United States and its territories found that organizations by and for WGOC in the South<sup>3</sup> made up 26.8% of respondents. This data brief highlights the work and funding situation for these organizations, primarily to help them raise funds to support their work but also to inform interested donors.

## WHO ARE ORGANIZATIONS BY AND FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS OF COLOR IN THE SOUTH?

Almost half (46.4%) of Southern organizations serve one subpopulation (e.g., Indigenous women and girls). Among those that serve a specific subpopulation, more than half (50.4%) focus on Black women and girls

More than half (52.9%) of Southern organizations include trans women in their work and nearly half (49.0%) include gender non-conforming people

About 2 in 5 (41.2%) of Southern organizations work only or mostly with girls; about 1 in 6 (16.2%) work only with women

71.7% of Southern organizations were led by WGOC and 45.6% were founded by WGOC

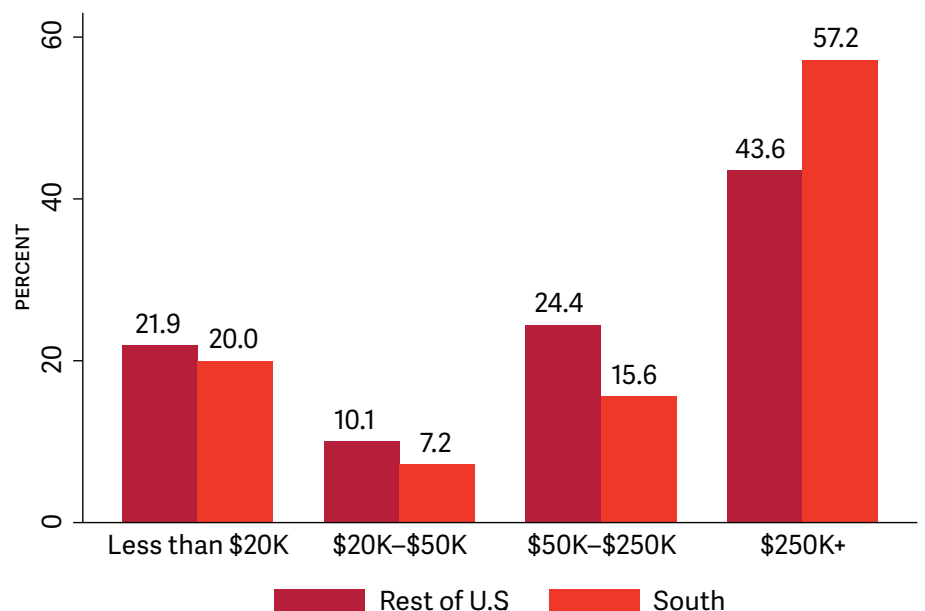
Common topics include: health equity (75.5%), economic justice (72.0%) and criminal justice (71.7%)

Common strategies include: community organizing or base building (76.0%), service delivery (73.7%) and voter registration (71.4%)

Southern organizations use an average of 3.5 strategies

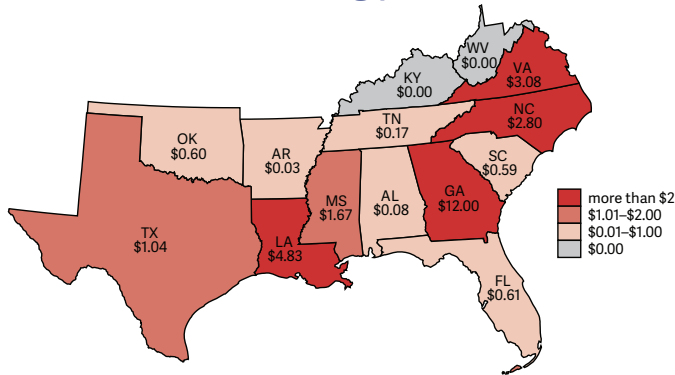
About 1 in 4 (27.2%) Southern organizations have a budget of less than \$50,000. Organizations in the South were slightly more likely to have a budget of \$250,000 or more than organizations located in other parts of the country (57.2% versus 43.6%). However, Southern organizations that focus on Black women and girls were much less likely to have budgets of \$250,000 or more (49.1% versus 59.6%).

Revenue for WGOC Organizations in the South, 2018



## WHAT IS THEIR FUNDING SITUATION?

### Foundation Funding per WGOC, 2017



Southern organizations experienced higher levels of all barriers to foundation funding than organizations in other regions, including identifying funding and opportunities relevant to their communities, excessive administrative work for grant success and encountering unresponsive funders. The barrier of needing more expertise to look for funding opportunities was significantly higher for them than for organizations in other parts of the country (54.2% versus 43.0%).

More than half (53.2%) receive foundation funding

69.2% receive government funding on some level (state, local or national)

Although a larger proportion of Southern organizations receive foundation funding, the median grant size is very small—only \$12,350 compared to a median of \$35,000 for all foundation grants reported to Candid in 2017.<sup>5</sup>

Funding for organizations by and for WGOC in the South was unevenly distributed. The states receiving the most foundation funding per woman or girl of color are Georgia (\$12.00) and Louisiana (\$4.83). Some states with higher absolute dollar amounts are actually in worse shape. For example, Texas ranks 7th in overall foundation funding, but 34th in funding per woman or girl of color. Three states—Alabama, Arkansas and Tennessee—report less than 50 cents of foundation funding per woman or girl of color.

## HOW TO EXPAND SUPPORT?

### NAME THE DISPARITY.

Southern organizations experience all funding barriers more acutely than other groups. Although a higher proportion of Southern organizations receive foundation funding, the median grant size is very small—only \$12,350.

### TRACK FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES.

Foundations should identify aspects of the work of Southern organizations by and for WGOC that fit into other funding strategies, including work that is:

- By and for Black women and girls. A quarter of organizations in the South focus on Black women and girls and these organizations were much less likely to have budgets greater than or equal to \$250,000 compared to other organizations by and for WGOC in the region

- Inclusive of trans women and girls and gender non-conforming people
- Intentional about prioritizing community organizing, base building, delivery of services and mutual aid or voter registration
- Strategic. Centering health equity, criminal justice or economic justice

### INCREASE ACCESS.

Foundations can dismantle funding barriers for organizations led by and for WGOC in the South by publicly naming an interest in supporting this demographic in their work, reducing excessive administrative obstacles and being more responsive to groups that do apply for funding.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Candid, 2019. Data provided through an authorization memo between Strength in Numbers Consulting Group, Inc. and Candid. Data include grants awarded or authorized by U.S.-based independent, community, corporate, operating foundations, and grant-making public charities in 2017 for giving in the United States and territories and include search codes "women and girls and any ethnic/racial minority". See <https://taxonomy.candid.org/populations> for further information. The data in this report are based on available data through the Candid database and are not comprehensive of all grants awarded by all U.S. foundations.

<sup>2</sup> The survey conducted by Strength in Numbers Consulting Group included 979 organizations who self-identified as by and for WGOC in the United States and its territories.

<sup>3</sup> The Ms. Foundation has identified the following states as part of their Southern strategy: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

<sup>4</sup> Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2016. *The Status of Women in the South: Executive Summary*. Available at: <http://statusofwomensdata.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Executive-Summary.pdf>, accessed August 20, 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Candid, April 2020. *Key Facts on U.S. Nonprofits and Foundations*. Available at: <https://www.issuelab.org/resources/36381/36381.pdf>, accessed May 20, 2020.

**Suggested Citation** Howe, E.E. and Frazer, S. (2020) *Pocket Change: A Data Brief on Southern Organizations by and for Women and Girls of Color*. The Ms. Foundation for Women: New York, NY. [forwomen.org](http://forwomen.org). Access date.