

Looking Back, Weaving Forward:

Seeding of a
Participatory Fund in
Polycrisis for Central
and Eastern Europe,
the Caucasus, Central
and North Asia.



Dalán Fund





Contents

Seizing an Opportunity - Seeding of Dalan Fund..... 3

- ▶ Political Terrains and Our Grounding Truth
- ▶ Dalan Fund’s Purpose and Role in the Ecosystem(s)
- ▶ Key Pillars of Dalan Fund’s Identity
- ▶ Co-creating the Fund with Regional Intersectional Movements
- ▶ Key Milestones in Dalan Fund’s Co-Creation Roadmap

Moving the Resources - From Survival to Systemic Solutions12

- ▶ Situating Our Communities: Who and Where We Fund
- ▶ Expanding Definitions of Crisis - Our Approach to Crisis Dimension

Building Blueprints - From Strategic Thinking to Strategic Doing..... 17

- ▶ Participatory Decision-making Committee
- ▶ Participatory Crisis Responses to the Regressive Laws in Georgia
- ▶ Spotlight on our Grantee Partners
- ▶ Putting CEECCNA Regions on Funders’ Map - Advocacy Highlights

Our Communities..... 26

Financial Summary and Our Supporters 28



Seizing an Opportunity – Seeding of the Dalan Fund

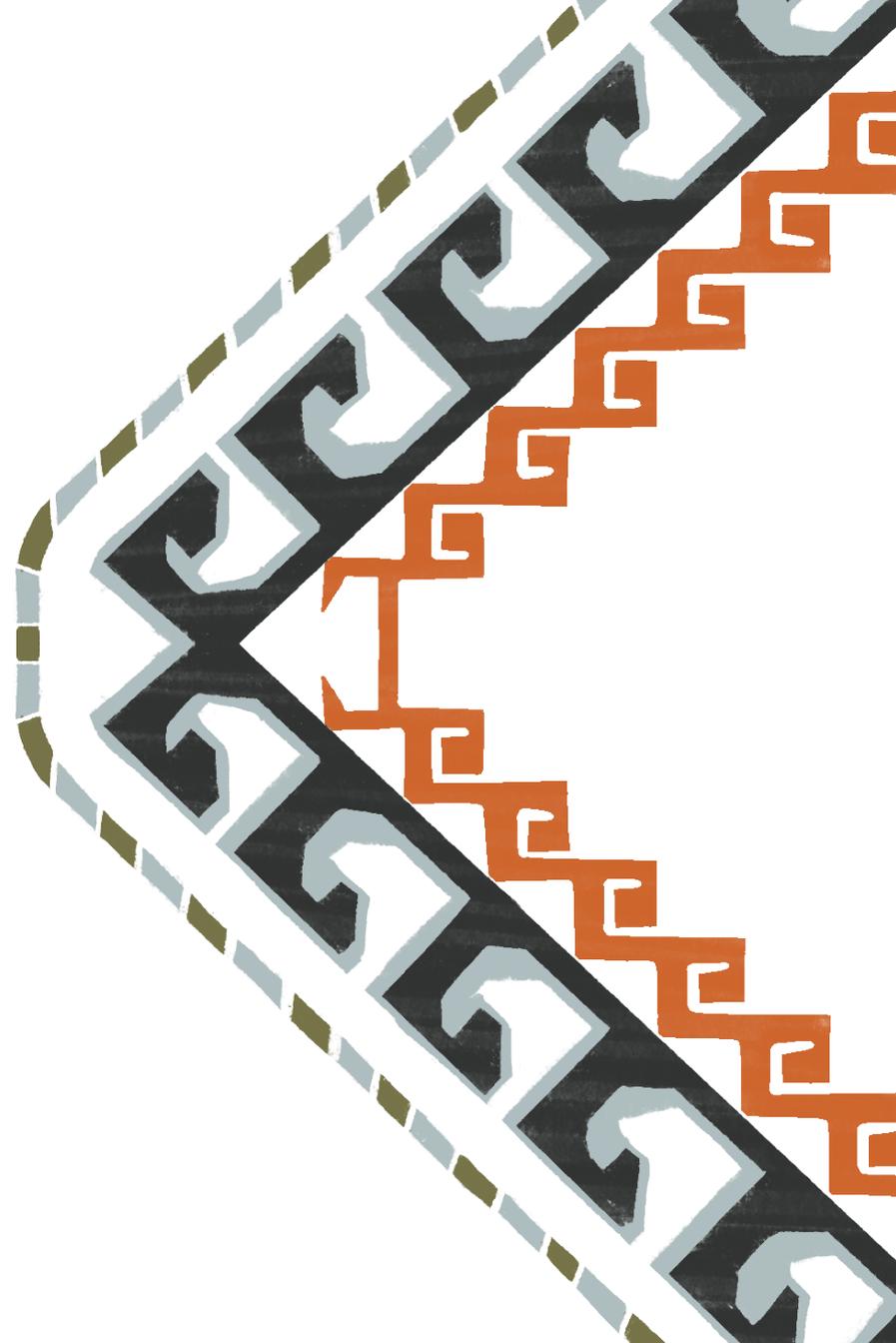


To fill the existing funding gap, in 2023, the Dalan Fund was created with a clear political mission - to transform how Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central and North Asia are resourced, fostering resilience and the collective power of intersectional social justice organizers and movements in and for the regions.



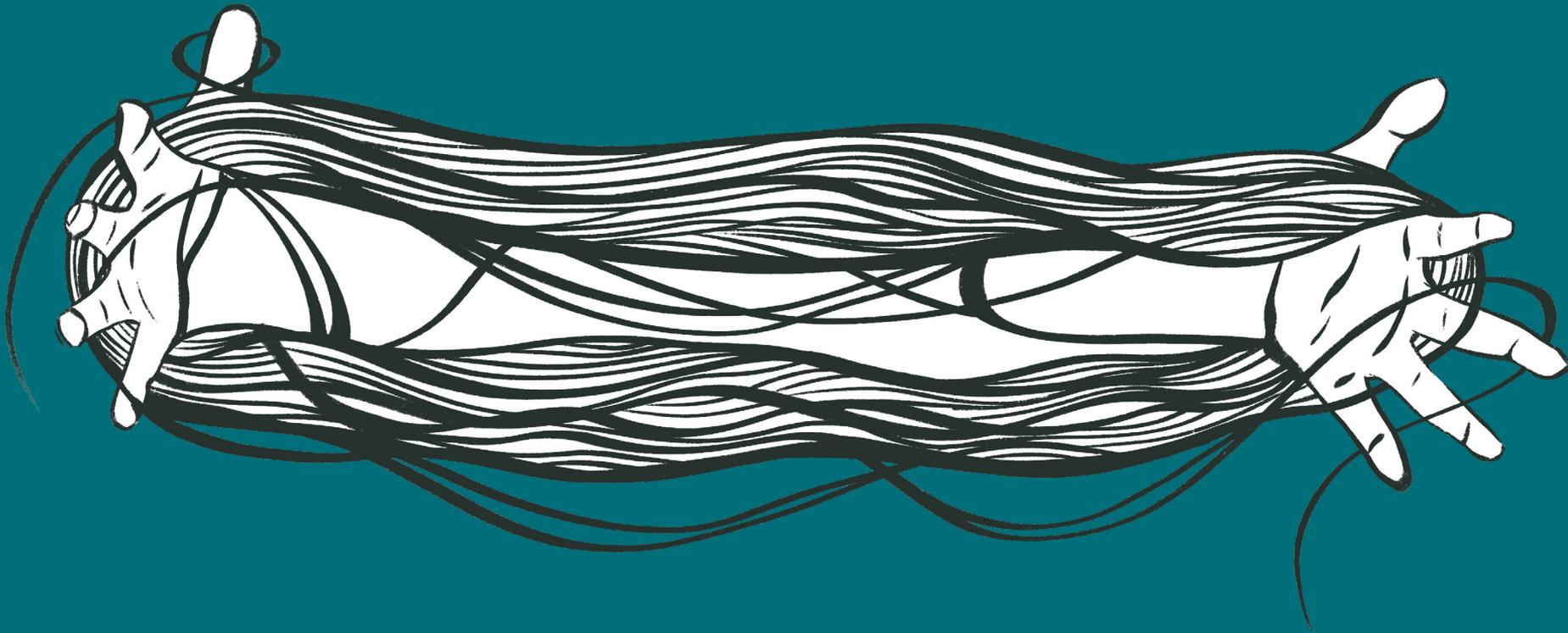
In 2022, six months into the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and decades after Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central and North Asia (CEECCNA) regions living through the cycles of crises and emergencies, an idea emerged to build an activist-led intermediary fund to resource regional intersectional social justice organizing and bridge the gap of systemic underfunding of social justice movements in CEECCNA regions.

The unprecedented interest and a substantial influx of funding into the ongoing war in Ukraine put the region on human rights and humanitarian funders' radar. However, the way funding flowed lacked contextual understanding and analysis of the local and cross-regional community organizing ecosystem, as well as the profound impact the war in Ukraine has had on the entire CEECCNA regions, exacerbating preexisting crises and inequalities.



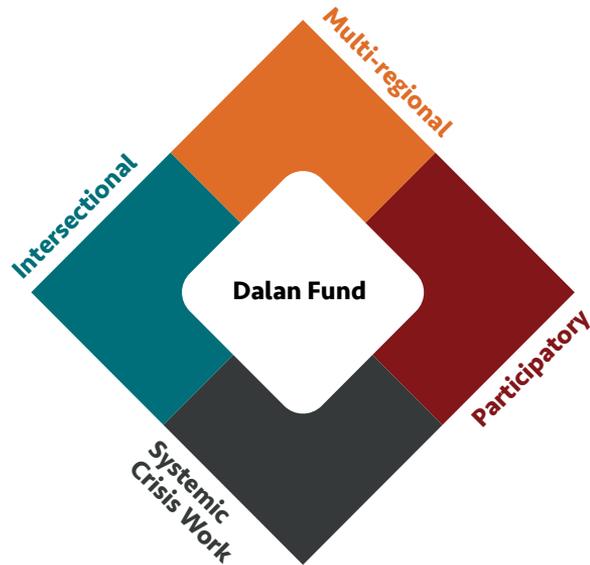
We are a co-conspirator and a thought partner both for movements and for funders, enabling movement sustainability and resilience on the one hand, and a context-responsive, responsible, and nimble funding ecosystem on the other. Dalan Fund is an offering to philanthropy, humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors to channel funding into participatory movement-led resource distribution mechanisms strategically.

Dalan Fund (for a time known as CEECCNA Collaborative Fund) began its Seeding Period in January 2023, running through June 2024. This report reflects on the growth and development of the fund over these 18 months which we used for building the institution with the team, infrastructure, and strategies from the ground up. The seeding period is followed by the Pilot Period (July 2024-December 2025) which serves as a time to test, learn, further explore, expand, and deepen our roots.





Key Pillars of Dalan Fund's Identity



The name of the Fund brings together multiple languages and cultural references from across CEECCNA regions: “Dalan” in Armenian means an arch, a passageway; in the Buryat language, it means a garden bed; in Mongolian, it signifies the edge of the mountain; and in Yakut language, it denotes free, spaciousness. A passageway, a gathering, and resting space, an edge of what is possible, freedom, and spaciousness—these concepts encapsulate the core identity of the Dalan Fund.

Intersectional - We acknowledge that for historically and currently excluded communities, there is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because they carry multiple identities. Our intersectional approach transcends artificial funding silos and is reflective of the complexity of how movements organize **cross-movement, cross-thematic, and cross-identity**.

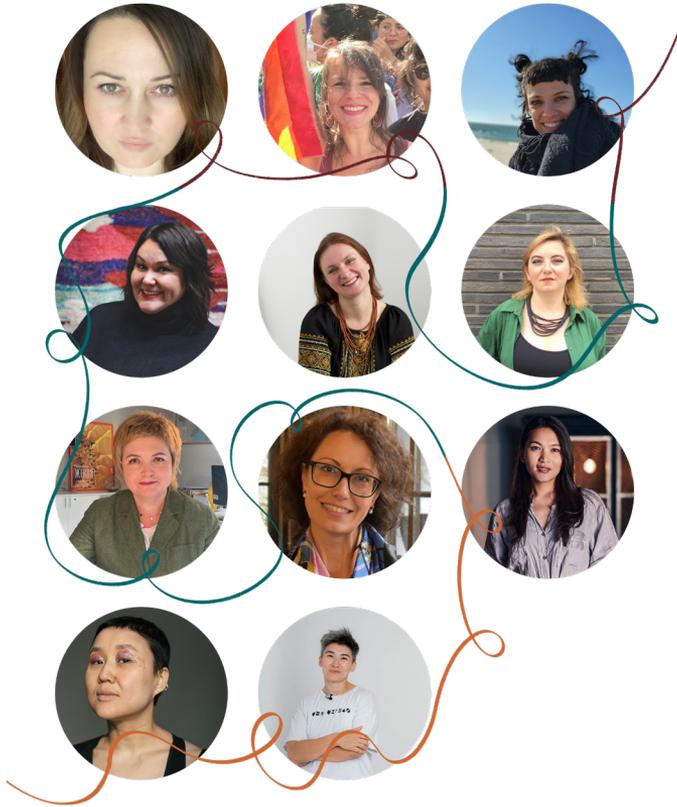
Multi-regional - We recognize the deeply entangled roots of our shared past, diverse realities, and the need for a collective power moving ahead. Centering the decolonial approach to how Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central, and North Asia are seen, understood, and funded, **we deliberately name them as three regions that need simultaneously distinct and interconnected resourcing approaches**. We propel cross-regional and cross-movement collaborations, fostering solidarity, justice, and collective power.

Participatory - We are the first fully participatory regional fund in CEECCNA regions with collective co-design and decision-making processes to ensure that **we are in tune with dynamic and ever-shifting organizing landscapes in the regions**, and we move resources in nimble, responsive, responsible, and strategic ways.

Systemic Crisis Work - We are reflective of the vast array of strategies and tactics employed by organizers in rapidly changing and complex political environments. To provide a systemic response to the poly-crises in the regions, we fund four dimensions of crisis work - **prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery**- leading toward the future visions, imaginations, and systemic alternatives led by local organizers.



Co-creating the Fund with Regional Intersectional Movements - Meet Our Founding Advisory Group



To ensure that the Fund is rooted in regional expertise, and embodies feminist leadership, during the Fund's seeding period, the core team was accompanied and strategically guided by the political analysis and visions of the advisory community and movements in the regions. To break the traditional dynamic of advising structure, we designed and experimented with structures and processes that merely go beyond feeding information into formal leadership. Instead, we established a more fluid model of knowledge co-creation and fund co-design by multiple trailblazing feminists from around the regions, representing various movements and communities such as Romani people, harm reduction networks, trans and gender non-conforming people, Indigenous people, migrant and forcibly displaced and neurodivergent people and others.

To this end, the Founding Advisory Group (FAG) informed and co-created the solid foundation on which the fund is being built and will be expanded. Eleven members of the advisory have complementary expertise in feminist leadership and organizational development, have worked in the philanthropic ecosystem, and are integral parts of local grassroots organizing in the CEECCNA regions. Within the first 18 months of the fund's seeding process, they played a pivotal role in co-shaping and crystalizing strategies and tactics of the fund, developing feminist organizational practices, processes, and structures, and sharpening programmatic areas from the sub-regional and regional perspectives.



Key Milestones in Dalan Fund's Co-Creation Roadmap

October to December 2022 Co-shaping an Idea

- ▶ Over 20 conversations were held with human rights funders to collectively assess regional gaps in the funding ecosystem;
- ▶ 15 CEECCNA activists were invited to a community convening in Barcelona, Spain for initial co-dreaming of a multi-regional funding mechanism;
- ▶ The seeding of the CEECCNA Collaborative Fund (currently known as Dalan Fund) was announced at the Human Rights Funders Festival in Oaxaca, Mexico in December 2022.



Inception convening with 15 regional activists
In Barcelona, Spain November 2022



January to December 2023 Kicking-off the Seeding Process

- ▶ Dalan Fund started its administrative existence with Women Win as a fiscal host;
- ▶ 11 regional activists joined the Founding Advisory Group;
- ▶ The staff grew from two to five, with team members based across from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to Berkley, California;
- ▶ We developed digital security protocols and infrastructure, and designed our Resource Distribution Strategy;
- ▶ Kicked off research on Where is the Money in CEECCNA Regions.



Founding Advisory and Staff Retreat
in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan November 2023



January to June 2024 Solidifying and Expanding

- ▶ Rounds of virtual and in-person consultations were held with CEECCNA activists, who shaped Dalan Fund's Theory of Transformation, and Resource Distribution Strategies;
- ▶ We set up our inaugural Participatory Decision-Making Committee;
- ▶ Dalan Fund was officially launched at Human Rights Funder's Network Festival and Ariadne's Annual Reconnect in Tbilisi, Georgia on April 24th, 2024.
- ▶ We launched our flagship Participatory Crisis Response in Georgia.



Official Launch of Dalan Fund
In Tbilisi, Georgia April 2024



“I was feeling goosebumps and excitement while reading about this newly emerging groundbreaking initiative unfolding in the regions! The phrase “We are the ones we have been waiting for” has been running through my mind while reading every paragraph of the document. And absolutely yes, I feel that this fund has such powerful potential! A unique potential to not only re-define the notion of crisis but also resource (especially underrepresented & excluded) movements’ self-defined priorities. The idea of future visioning especially drew my attention, as on a personal level, I am interested in co-conspiring to imagine and design alternative feminist futures - to unpack the past, shape (and perhaps shake) the present, and build the future on our own terms”

An activist from Kyrgyzstan

When I was reading the concept note, the expression I got lingering at the back of my brain was - “becoming greater than the sum of our parts”

An activist in exile from the Russian Federation

“I find it really expressing everything that we feel on a daily basis. Thank you so much for initiating this great, well thought out and such timely opportunity”

An activist from Armenia

“The analysis, leadership, and sense of urgency behind the creation of the Dalan Fund struck us immediately. The CEECCNA regions has always been underfunded but in recent times it has become clear that movements in the region have experienced an increasing backlash to the gains they helped to carve out in previous decades. Dalan Fund is engaging experts with many years of supporting gender justice movements to help strengthen and sustain activists in the CEECCNA regions in a truly participatory way. We’re honored to support this brilliant Fund in getting support to frontline movements.”

Katrin Wilde, Executive Director of Channel Foundation

“Over breakfast this morning my partner said, that dinosaurs died out, but chickens survived. This made me think about the resilience our diverse social movements have and the revolutionary potential they hold beyond NGOization. Dalan Fund and the way you work gives me hope that we can nurture the chickens part of our movements - the underground organizing that is happening when things get difficult, the invisible ways to keep safe spaces working, to foster alternative thinking, to grow care and interconnectedness and to hold on to joy and hope”

Claudia Bollwinkel, Senior Program Advisor of Dreilinden





Moving the Resources

– From Survival to Systemic Solutions

Through the virtual and in-person consultations with our communities and advisors, we had rounds of in-depth reflections on the decolonial approach to the geographies and communities the fund could serve. We have crystallized and sharpened our political vision on Where and Who we fund, and we laid out where could the fund expand its work in the future.



Read More About the Dalan Fund's Creation From Human Rights Funders (HRFN) Network's Funding Futures Festivals

- ▶ in Oaxaca, Mexico in November 2022 - [Turning Crisis into Long-term Action: Seeding a Collaborative Fund for Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central and North Asia \(ceecna\) Region](#)
- ▶ in Tbilisi, Georgia in April 2024 [The Dalan Fund Has A Vision for Philanthropy in the Shadow of Authoritarianism](#)



Situating our Communities: Where and Who We Fund

Central and Eastern Europe

Belarus | Hungary | Moldova | Poland
Romania | Slovakia | Ukraine

South Caucasus

Armenia | Azerbaijan | Georgia

Central Asia

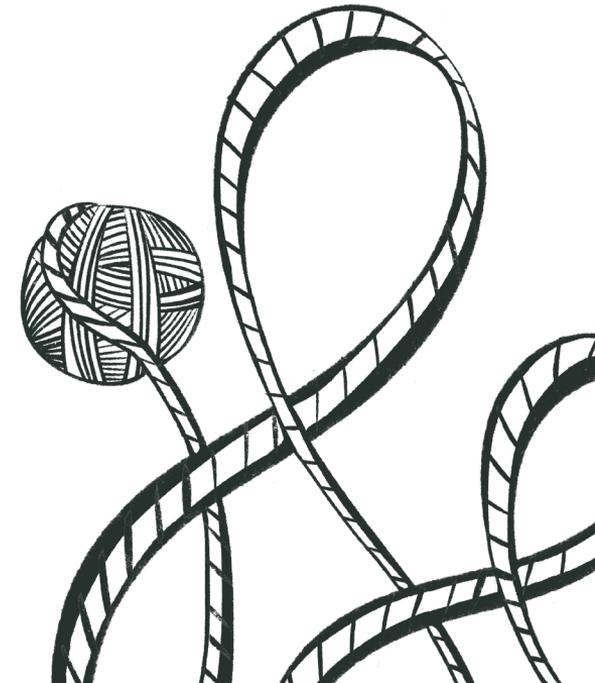
Kazakhstan | Kyrgyzstan | Tajikistan
Turkmenistan | Uzbekistan

*In the Russian Federation, we aim to fund organizing within and by indigenous peoples movements from the North Caucasus and North Asia.

Acknowledging the historical and ongoing complexities of forcible exile, displacements, and dislocations of peoples from within the regions, **the fund supports political organizing led by multi-regional migrant and diasporic activists working for social justice in the CEECCNA regions.**

We distribute resources to intersectional movements, registered organizations, unregistered collectives, and networks led by historically and currently excluded communities. We prioritize organizing primarily led by, working for, and with women, trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people at the intersection of the following movements:

In the spirit of decolonizing and unlearning the approach to Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central and North Asia (CEECCNA), we refer to the region(s) in the plural to acknowledge deep connections and shared past among 16 countries we work in, as well as to reflect on vast diversity among sub-regions.





-
- ▶ Feminist, women's rights, and gender justice
 - ▶ LGBTQIA + rights
 - ▶ Disability rights and justice
 - ▶ Ethnic and racial justice
 - ▶ Romani rights
 - ▶ Digital rights
 - ▶ Decolonization

-
- ▶ Peacebuilding and demilitarization
 - ▶ Economic justice
 - ▶ Rights of people living with HIV
 - ▶ Rights of people who use drugs
 - ▶ Climate and environmental justice
 - ▶ Land rights
 - ▶ Sex workers rights

-
- ▶ Narrative change and independent media organizing
 - ▶ Harm reduction movement
 - ▶ Labor and workers' rights
 - ▶ Indigenous peoples and minorities rights
 - ▶ Rights of people living in rural areas
 - ▶ Migrant, refugee, and forcibly displaced people's rights
 - ▶ Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SHR) and bodily autonomy





Expanding Definitions of Crisis - Our Approach to Crisis Dimensions

Our practice of crisis work is informed by our belief that crises are contextual and situated, and communities with lived experiences and movements at the frontline response are best placed to define them. The framework is our offering to philanthropic and humanitarian sectors to redefine how intertwined humanitarian and human rights crises are understood and to rethink and remodel how frontline responders should be funded more strategically. It encompasses deeply rooted and unrecognized forms of oppression and poly-crises, and we acknowledge that social justice movements are key actors in every one of the following dimensions:





Crisis Prevention

- ▶ Local activists and community organizers are the first to signal that a crisis is on the horizon, assess risks, and develop strategies and tactics to prevent escalation. Dalan Fund intends to listen to these signals and move resources to strengthen movement-led crisis prevention work;

Crisis Preparedness

- ▶ To address emerging crises across the regions timely and effectively, the fund aims to resource strategic and proactive infrastructure and coordination efforts. This will support movements-led frontline responses so that organizers can strategize and address crises as they see fit;

Crisis Response

- ▶ To address the complexity of multiple on-going and interconnected humanitarian and human rights crises in the regions, the fund resources emergency, mid and long-term movement-led strategies, and responses.

Crisis Recovery

- ▶ Coming out of the state of emergency and moving toward stabilization and full recovery is crucial, especially with the movement-led vision and tactics at its very core. The Fund enables the creation of movement-led crisis recovery strategies and supports re-thinking and re-building, as well as generating vital resources for continuing activism.



Building Blueprints - From Strategic Thinking to Strategic Doing

As an activist-led multi-regional fund, we are committed to democratizing resource distribution practices and putting analysis of regional intersectional grassroots organizers at the center of the decision-making on where funding goes. In this spirit, we have established [The Participatory Decision-making Committee](#) (PDMC) and Crisis Response Resource Mobilization Committee, both of which play a key role in co-designing the Dalan Fund's resource distribution mechanisms and hold decision-making power in selecting the Fund's movement partners.

The 17 members of both committees connect and weave together local expertise and analysis, guiding the sub-regional funding priorities and the Fund's Resource Distribution practice. They bring **knowledge, networks,** and **political guidance** from regional intersectional movements.

Participatory Decision-making Committee



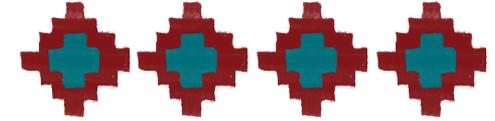


Participatory Crisis Response to the Regressive Laws in Georgia

In 2024 the Georgian Government took a severe authoritarian turn, compromising the country's democratic development, sovereignty, and freedom and leading to a drastic democracy decline, including brutal human rights violations, unlawful arrests, and complete closure of civic space. In May 2024, the Georgian parliament adopted the [Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence](#) carrying an [underlying anti-rights agenda](#) strikingly similar to the "foreign agents" law in Russia that has served as an instrument for governments to create a hostile environment for media and civil society, increase mass surveillance, and harass social justice organizers.

Moreover, in September 2024, the parliament also adopted a homophobic [legislative package](#) that will affect education, art and culture, healthcare such as gender-affirming care or access to lifesaving services, and more, media as it outlaws narratives and content related to the LGBTQI community, business, and public gatherings, and prohibiting several human rights, including labor rights, that are unavailable to queer people in Georgia.

The impact of these legislative changes is wider than a single country issue as it directly impacts Georgian



civil society and independent media and the activists and organizations from Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central and North Asia that had sought safe refuge in Georgia while fleeing regressive and authoritarian regimes (e.g. Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia, Kyrgyzstan) and the ongoing war in Ukraine.

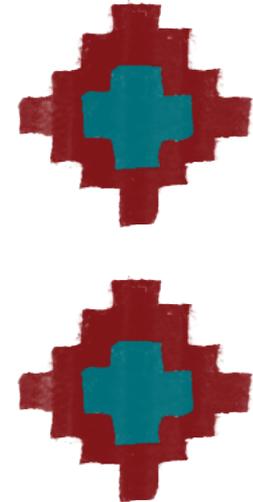
In response to the rapidly unfolding human rights crisis, we launched a participatory crisis response for Georgian and regional civil society. In less than a week, the Dalan Fund team set up a regional **Participatory Crisis Response Decision-Making Committee** consisting of Georgian and regional activists, co-designed the response programming, and made collective decisions on groups and organizations to fund.

We offered **core, flexible, safe, and faster funding** to 22 regional and Georgian civil society organizations and independent media, both registered and unregistered. Within three months, we have distributed USD 210, 000 to strategies and tactics directed to the crisis response to the ongoing democratic backsliding, as well as anticipatory preparedness for the long-term impact of the legislative changes. A vast array of strategies includes:



- ▶ **Building Alternative Infrastructure** and sustainable alternatives to strengthen the resilience of organizing (e.g. registering outside of Georgia and providing fiscal hosting for peer organizations);
- ▶ **Strategic communications and Narrative Change** to combat disinformation and de-platform anti-rights actors. Robust media campaigns were launched to raise awareness about legal implications, and the political climate, and provide an analysis of the 2024 Parliamentary elections;
- ▶ **Mobilizing People's Power and Civic Actions** through pre-election community meetings, public discussions, and movement-led social media campaigns;
- ▶ **Cross-movement Learning and Cross-regional Solidarity** through meetings with regional activists who have successfully opposed or currently live under similar laws, building mutual solidarity actions among regional organizers;
- ▶ **Physical and Digital Security** to proactively prepare for police raids, attacks during protests, and risk mitigation strategies under increased government scrutiny and surveillance;
- ▶ **Legal Assistance** to offer tailored legal aid, counseling, and online webinars to navigate and prepare for legal implications and potential solutions to activists across Georgia;
- ▶ **Psycho-social Support** to ensure the collective well-being, and sustainable resilience of organizers through organizing retreats, securing salaries, and providing psychological support for activists and protesters.
- ▶ **Service Provision** to enable access to life-saving legal, psycho-social, health-care services to communities most impacted by the laws (e.g. people living with HIV, LGBTQAI+ community, people with disabilities, etc)

- 71% of our funding was allocated to Georgian registered organizations and unregistered collectives based in the capital and across the regions of Georgia. 29% of the available funding was moved to primarily registered collectives from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and the North Caucasus;
- We funded 18 human rights organizations and collectives, and 4 independent media outlets.





Spotlight on our Grantee Partners

SOCIAL JUSTICE CENTER - SETTING UP A GO-TO FOR LEGAL AID FOR GEORGIAN AND REGIONAL ACTIVISTS

Working on access to human rights and social justice for communities on the margins, the [Social Justice Center](#) (SJC) builds solidarity and collective power at the intersections of gender, disability, economic, ethnic, and racial justice, labor and workers' rights, peacebuilding and demilitarization, democracy and law enforcement.

As a critical frontline responder to the unfolding human rights crisis in Georgia, with Dalan Fund's support, SJC offered immediate legal aid to local activists, grassroots organizers, and regional activists based in Georgia to respond to and prepare for the impact of the legislative changes. Through online and in-person legal consultations, they worked with over 300 activists, grassroots collectives, and organizations from Georgia and Belarus, as well as Russian,

Ukrainian, and Azerbaijani organizers based in Georgia.

As part of the coalition of local civil society organizations, the Social Justice Center prepared the appeals to the [Constitutional Court of Georgia](#) against the "Foreign Agent Law", and is preparing a case for the European Court of Human Rights to explore all legal avenues to safeguard democracy in Georgia.

Furthermore, given the Georgian government-led political repressions of Azerbaijani and Belarus human rights defenders and journalists in exile, SJC is providing legal support to [Azerbaijani journalist, Afgan Sadigov](#) who may face extradition and persecution in Azerbaijan.





OC MEDIA - BUILDING ALTERNATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT INDEPENDENT MEDIA ORGANIZING IN THE CAUCASUS

Open Caucasus Media ([OC Media](#)) brings news, commentary, multimedia, and investigations from the North and South Caucasus, with in-depth analysis of the issues, movements, conflicts, and people shaping the region. Committed to ethical journalism, OC Media strives to be independent, unbiased, accurate, and honest while covering a wide range of social, political, cultural, economic, and environmental issues concerning the local communities living in the Caucasus region.

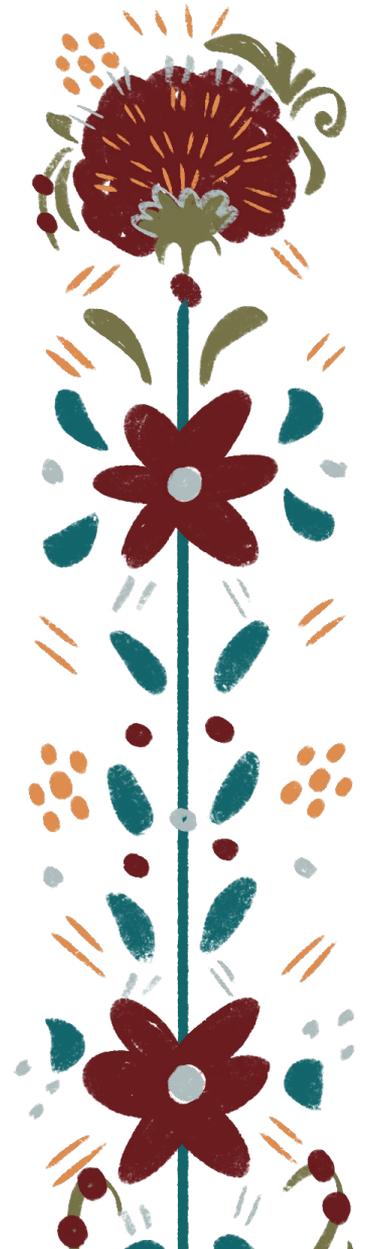
Amidst the current crisis in Georgia, OC Media is building an alternative infrastructure for the independent media organizations, collectives, and initiatives of the Caucasus region to continue their operations within restrictive civic spaces.

With our support, OC Media has launched the strategic coverage of the 2024 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia. Through a [weekly newsletter](#), they cover the election processes across the country, ensuring

thorough documentation and reporting of the developments in the context of rapid democratic backsliding in Georgia. Moreover, they will cover the Georgian parliamentary elections nationwide for the first time by deploying journalists to the regions across the country. Since 2017, OC Media's Azerbaijani and Armenian journalists have been reporting in their respective countries despite very limited funding. With Dalan Fund's support, OC Media will also sustain a regional newsroom for its regional team members.

ANONYMOUS GROUP - SUSTAINING THE RESILIENCE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SURVIVORS FROM NORTH CAUCASUS

Crisis response group founded in 2020 to support survivors of domestic violence, forced marriages, and honor killings in the North Caucasus. It consists of members from Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Ossetia, united with a vision to eliminate these harmful practices, systemic oppression, and violence against women and girls. The group provides essential psychological counseling, legal assistance, and evacuation in life-threatening situations.





Due to the hostile political environment in the Russian Federation, and the absence of legal mechanisms to prevent violence against women, the entire team relocated to Georgia. Given that Russia adopted the Foreign Agent's Law in 2012, the heightened surveillance, detentions, and persecution of human rights activists have forced the group members to seek safer refuge in Georgia.

The Foreign Agents Law in Georgia has put the work of the group, and communities they serve in a precarious situation. With the crisis response grant from the Dalan Fund, they strengthened their digital security, data protection, and collective care infrastructure and sustained the team's operations while the laws directly impacted the financial sustainability of the collective.

HETA OKEY - ENABLING CONTINUITY OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR BELARUS LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY IN DISPLACEMENT

[Heta Okey](#) is a Belarusian media working to reduce discrimination and stigmatization of LGBTQ people through educational and so-

cial campaigns. As their media campaigns challenge harmful narratives, the initiative aims to raise awareness and promote allyship through collaborations with Belarusian media and influencers.

2024 has marked a renewed wave of aggressive hate propaganda targeting LGBTQI+ people in and from Belarus. Instances of arbitrary detention, bullying, forced outings, and degrading treatment by law enforcement have intensified, with reports of torture becoming more frequent.

Heta Okey runs crowdfunding efforts to support LGBTQ individuals in Belarus. In response to the ongoing political repression, with many fleeing to Georgia, Heta Okey supports the Belarusian diaspora in Georgia by organizing community-building activities, discussion forums, film clubs, psychological support groups, and exhibitions, providing essential resources and a sense of solidarity for those in exile. With the support of Dalan funds, the group could further strengthen its digital security capacity and expand psycho-social support for Belarus community members based in Tbilisi.





TEMIDA - SUSTAINING SERVICE PROVISION OF TRANS COMMUNITY IN GEORGIA

[Queer Association - Temida](#) is a trans-led community-based organization, fighting for a safe, equal, and just political, legal, and social environment for trans people living in Georgia. They lead research-based participatory advocacy, and service provision, create critical knowledge to transform the public discourse about queer and trans people, and build solidarity among local and international movements.

Since the adoption of the ‘Anti-LGBT propaganda’ law in Georgia, with the support of the Dalan Fund, Temida ensured the sustainability of providing essential services such as gender affirmation care, temporary housing, and psycho-social support for the LGBTQIA community and HIV key populations.

Temida organized informational sessions for regional migrant and diasporic queer and trans community members, addressing legal changes and the impact of the ‘Anti-LGBT Propaganda’ law. Both on local and international fronts, Temida is advocating for safe services for the trans community, developing tailored recommendations to sustain service provision in this hostile legal environment.

IRIDA - RESILIENCE AGAINST THE REPRESSIVE LAWS IN MULTIPLE COUNTRIES

Irida (formerly known as Kyrgyz Indigo) is a queer feminist collective which aims to strengthen the resilience of LGBTQI activists in Kyrgyzstan by supporting community-driven efforts, creating safer environments, and developing long-term strategies for thriving in challenging contexts. Following the adoption of a series of Russian-style oppressive laws [restricting freedom](#) of expression and access to information about LGBTQI+ people, identities, rights, and lives adopted in August 2023, and the [Foreign Agent Law](#) in April 2024 severely restricted the work of Kyrgyz organizations. Many, like Irida, had to flee the country.

After relocating to Georgia, Kyrgyzstan’s Foreign Agents Law in April was followed by the initiation of a similar law in Georgia in May. With the Dalan Fund’s crisis response funding, the team re-routed strategies, and developed alternative infrastructure to increase the resilience and sustainability of the organization in the rapidly shrinking space for social justice organizing in the region. As part of their crisis response work, Irida collaborated with peer organizations from Kyrgyzstan to produce alternative reports to the [UN Committee against Torture](#) and [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) focused on the lack of access to the rights and lived realities of LGBTQI people under state oppression.



Putting CEECCNA Regions on Funder's Map - **Advocacy Highlights**

Transforming the Funding Ecosystem is one of the key strategic directions of the Dalan Fund, aiming to put CEECCNA on the map of funders and debunk the current (mis)understanding of the regions. We have advanced through funder advocacy and strategic communications as we leveraged our networks, alliances, and platforms to amplify the political agendas, visions, and propositions of regional intersectional organizers.





ADVOCACY AND FUNDERS COMMUNITY SPACES

For the Seeding period, we set a goal for the Dalan Fund to be positioned within the philanthropic ecosystem. Since late 2022, we have connected with numerous actors by participating in spaces such as:

- ▶ *Human Rights Funders Network's (HRFN) festivals in Oaxaca in 2022 and Tbilisi in 2024*
- ▶ *Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67 and CSW68)*
- ▶ *Ariadne Annual Meetings*
- ▶ *Edge Funders Alliance Conference*
- ▶ *Philea Forum and KoneKtor*
- ▶ *Global Philanthropy Forum*
- ▶ *Women Moving Millions*
- ▶ *Wilton Park Conference: Women's Rights Organisations in Crises: Pathways for Progress, and more.*

Our advocacy efforts contributed to Ariadne and HRFN hosting its conference in Tbilisi, Georgia, which coincided with the peaceful protests against Foreign Agents' Law. Meetings of these two networks provided remarkable exposure to the CEECCNA regions for the attendees, highlighting the struggles of activists who continuously fight against rising authoritarianism and maintain their resilience in the face of poly-crises, uncertainties, and human rights violations.

CALLS FOR SOLIDARITY

Since its creation, the Dalan Fund has actively responded to ongoing human rights and humanitarian crises in the CEECCNA regions. We actively [documented and lifted](#) the unfolding crises through [calls for solidarity](#), and encouraged donor mobilization and dialogue between activists and donor communities:

- ▶ Since the introduction of the Foreign Agent Law in Georgia in 2023 and its adoption in May 2024, we issued statements in collaboration with the Women's Fund in Georgia to garner philanthropic mobilization and support. Our response enhanced philanthropic giving, and improved the understanding of the national and regional impact of such a law in Georgia;
- ▶ Simultaneously, Kyrgyzstan passed a similar law, and we actively connected the dots between the regional unfolding of repressive laws;
- ▶ Our advocacy efforts also extended to addressing the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. In September 2023, the Azerbaijani Government launched a large-scale offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh, resulting in the forced displacement of over 100,000 ethnic Armenians. In response, we partnered with the Women's Fund Armenia to raise awareness and mobilize resources to support these local groups and organizations.



Our Communities

Building and Growing an activist-led participatory fund is a collective effort that requires the political commitment and dedication of dozens of activists. Throughout the fund's seeding journey, our communities have shown up for the Dalan Fund in various modalities be it advisory roles or contributions to consultations. We are deeply grateful for the collective mind hive and the spirit of gentle unlearning, deconstructing, and innovation that we witnessed.



Staff and Consultants during the Seeding Period

Core Team

- ▶ Nino Ugrekhelidze
- ▶ Angelika Arutyunova
- ▶ Saadat Baigazieva
- ▶ Lida Minasyan
- ▶ Nurjan Estebes
- ▶ Ekaterine Danelia
- ▶ Sasha Yuri

Consultants

- ▶ Nukri Tabidze
- ▶ Aizada Arystanbek
- ▶ Nino Gamisonia
- ▶ Jovana Djordjevic

Founding Advisory Group

- ▶ Boglarka Fedorko
- ▶ Ganna Dovbakh
- ▶ Inna Michaeli
- ▶ Janette Akhilgova
- ▶ Kanykei Kyzy
- ▶ Maria Khankhunova
- ▶ Mariam Gagoshashvili
- ▶ Milena Abrahamyan
- ▶ Natalia Karbowska
- ▶ Veronica Teleuca
- ▶ Zhanar Sekerbaeva

Participatory Decision-Making Committee Members

- ▶ Magda Fabianczyk
- ▶ Olha Boiko
- ▶ Tony Lashden
- ▶ Marina Csikós
- ▶ Esset Samatova
- ▶ Luiza Vardanyan
- ▶ Sevinj Samadzade
- ▶ Tamta Mikeladze
- ▶ Zemfira Gogui
- ▶ Anisa Abibulloeva
- ▶ Aleksandra
- ▶ Nadira Masiumova
- ▶ Alla Parunova
- ▶ Anonymous activists from Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Slovakia





Financial Summary

Throughout the first 18 months of the Fund's creation, we successfully raised \$1,462,617 for the years 2023-2024 and spent \$706,426 up until June 2024.

We extend our deep gratitude to the funders who believed in our vision and supported us at such an early stage of the Fund's development. These funders not only provided financial support but also offered encouragement, and acted as allies for the CEECCNA regions and Dalan Fund.





Our Supporters





Dalan Fund

Looking Back, Weaving Forward:

Seeding of a Participatory Fund in
Polycrisis for Central and Eastern Europe,
the Caucasus, Central and North Asia.

