



HUAIROU COMMISSION
Women, Homes & Community

Huairou Commission Annual Report

January 1 - December 31, 2023



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As part of the 'Nurturing Leadership of Grassroots Women's Organizations
in Scaling Community Resilience in Uncertain Times' Program

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Executive Summary

In the second year of Huairou Commission's multi-year partnership with SIDA from January 2023-December 2024, we continue to implement our program on "Nurturing Leadership of Grassroots Women's Organizations in Scaling Community Resilience in Uncertain Times" This program is aligned with Huairou's 5 Five-Year Strategy (2022-2026) which ultimately aims to increase gender-just, resilient community development and women's empowerment, driven by grassroots women's leadership in transforming their economic and social well-being, with the support of local, national governments and other strategic partners.

Our five-year strategy and our 2023 workplan are both organised on two levels: Member level efforts are undertaken by Huairou members to effect change in their local contexts; while Movement Level work is undertaken by Huairou members working collectively at global and regional scales in collaboration with partners.

1. Highlights of Activities and Achievements at Member-Level

Delivery of Community Resilience Funds (CRF): In 2023, 24 Huairou members in 17 countries were selected to implement Community Resilience Funds (CRF) through a competitive process guided by criteria established by members. Their work plans spanned the 18 month period of 1 May 2023 - 31 December 2024. Most groups received funds in June-July and the present report describes progress made over the past six months.

CRF investments financed more than 50 leadership development initiatives through the Community Resilience Fund (CRF), training more than 600 community resilience organisers and advocates for gender equality. More than 1000 grassroots women leaders benefited from training activities in the past year. Member groups expanded their constituencies by mobilising grassroots women to form new groups in new geographies. More than 25 new local women's groups were organised in the past year.

Upgraded leadership skills for effective grassroots action and organisational sustainability: Member organisations expanded leadership capacities by developing cadres of trainers and second-generation women and youth leaders, familiarising them with HC tools, advocacy and negotiation skills.

Learning from peer exchanges: Twenty peer exchanges were organised by members both in and across countries, allowing them to share resilience practices and organisational strengthening initiatives. Members documented 13 (of targeted 40) grassroots resilience practices, training manuals, policy briefs and reports, of targeted 40. In addition to written documentation and manuals, members used video, photographs to disseminate their practices. Social media was widely used by members to share practices.

Community risk mapping and resilience building practices: In 2023, 78 communities prepared or updated community risk maps, exceeding the targeted 60 communities. More than 3200 grassroots women were trained in a range of resilience building practices. Several members scaled up or strengthened resilience practices by establishing learning centres or field sites to publicly test and transfer practices in their communities.

Partnerships with government and academic institutions: Grassroots-led local advocacy resulted in collaborative arrangements with stakeholders such as local authorities, government training institutions and banks. Convening mechanisms, including grassroots academies and national workshops, allowed members to share learning and widen the constituency base of informed grassroots actors. Eight member groups convened Community Practitioners Platforms to build stakeholder support for grassroots resilience priorities. Members strengthened alliances and partnerships with other CSOs, networks and stakeholders, such as the Women’s Ministry in Costa Rica or the River and Lakes Alliance in the Philippines, using these to press for government action in response to grassroots priorities.

Grassroots women’s engagement with local, national and regional power holders: Stakeholder map, applying an inclusion, gender and power lens supported members to convene at least 33 dialogues with the local and national level govt and stakeholders. These dialogues and workshops allowed grassroots women leaders to advocate for grassroots priorities, demonstrate solutions and innovative practices and deepen partnerships. Members collaborated with governments on the implementation of national and global policy frameworks, such as the Sendai Framework on DRR and the SDGs. Institutional recognition of grassroots women’s practices was evident in the invitations from local government and academic institutions requesting grassroots leaders to address meetings, provide trainings and share inputs to public plans

2. Highlights of Activities and Achievements at Movement-Level

Communities of Practice: To enable members to develop and analyse strategies on context specific practice and priorities, surveys of our Communities of Practice were aggregated to frame a Huairou’s position in each thematic area. These surveys are important learning tools and knowledge products generating grassroots knowledge for aggregation at movement level. Sixty percent of Huairou members actively contributed to developing work plans and advocacy agendas in the five Communities of Practices convened in 2023. In the 28 convenings across the five Communities of Practice - Climate and Disaster Resilience, Resilient Food Systems, Community Caregiving, Securing Women’s Land Tenure Security and Local Governance in Urban and Rural Settlements, members were debriefed on policy debates and opportunities for learning and influencing institutional actors and supported to develop collective agendas for action.

Building collective leadership and organisational systems: Huairou’s MEAL system was strengthened through training, inputs on targets and indicators provided by members and engaging the secretariat team in reflective learning conversations. Governing Council members were capacitated to plan priorities and assess opportunities embedded in the Strategic Plan. A membership review was initiated by a member-led committee, to assess members and the membership process. The Regional Committees and the members from each region were supported to identify their respective agendas for action. Members were supported to drive change from the ground up in key development arenas through the Governing Council, regional member meetings and Communities of Practices. Members upgraded their organisational and financial management systems, guided by the Secretariat.

Planning and advancing collaborative strategies for localising climate resilience: We worked with consortiums and coalitions to co-design strategies for accelerating women-led, community-driven resilience. Three consortia were prioritised for sustained planning throughout the year and lead to funding realised in 2024 - the Locally Led Adaptation Consortium, Asian Development Bank’s Community Resilience Partnership Program implementing partners and World Bank Global Program for Social Accountability’s Green Accountability – our role in these consortia set important precedents for flowing

climate finance from multilateral development banks and international research institutions to grassroots movements.

Advancing leadership on DRR in global fora: Our credibility and long-term relationships in the DRR policy arena led to several invitations to bring a pro-poor women's perspective to policy discussions at the Sendai Mid Term Review. As part of the UNDRR Expert Group on the Gender Action Plan we pressed for the inclusion of grassroots women in DRR governance. Our presentations to the G20 Working Group on DRR influenced the outcome document. We provided inputs to knowledge products prepared by bilateral and multilateral agencies. Our action-research on Loss and Damage reinforced the International Institute for Environment and Development's (IIED) efforts to draw attention to the invisible, non-economic losses that local communities suffer in the face of climate change.

Integrating grassroots women's perspectives in policy approaches: Huairou participated in 29 policy convenings, going beyond its targeted 15, and negotiated 50 speaking engagements for its representatives. Huairou brought a strong grassroots constituency base to the Global Caregivers Summit. Our Call for Action re-framed caregiving and carved out a unique place for grassroots caregivers within the Global Caregivers Alliance. In the UN Habitat convened Global Land Tools Alliance we pressed for integrating climate change, food security and caregiving as critical issues connected to women's land rights. We also joined coalitions such as the International Land Coalition to campaign for a proposed Grassroots Land Fund, linking women's land rights with other priorities like food security and caregiving etc and advocating for these priorities through the 67th UN Commission on the Status of Women and Stand for her Land Campaign.

Representing grassroots' interests on climate policy and finance: Grassroots leaders demonstrated their increasing confidence by presenting grassroots women's innovations in public fora (such as UNFCCC COP). These policy venues were also opportunities to learn and present grassroots perspectives in the presence of national and global policymakers, philanthropic institutions, civil society and technical experts. Leaders highlighted their roles as innovators, managers of climate finance and drivers of climate action. Side meetings with climate finance institutions - USAID, Global Alliance for the Future of Food, Green Climate Fund – educated our delegation on the donor landscape and barriers to grassroots funding.

Framing advocacy agendas: Twenty advocacy agendas defined expected changes, several of which were embedded in policy documents and decisions as a result of our collective advocacy. Our Caregivers Call to Action was shared in multiple policy fora. Policy documents we influenced include UNDRR Gender Action Plan draft, the Land EGMs, two policies on UN Habitat's future strategy, UNDP BCPR's guidance note for staff and policymakers on Community Based Resilience, and the G20 DRR Working Group outcome. Nine knowledge products featured the work of our members.

While locally-led adaptation, disaster risk reduction and community resilience have gained significant attention in global processes, our main learning is that the international partners (technical research institutions, bilateral donors and multilateral development banks) have yet to appreciate how small organisations manage the unpaid work required to deliver outcomes and manage risk. Raising awareness of these issues and advocating for appropriately valuing the financial and human resources required to deliver impact, manage risk and govern a global grassroots movement are increasingly critical for building enabling environments in which vibrant grassroots movements can thrive.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

In 2023 Huairou Commission continued to implement its program **"Nurturing Leadership of Grassroots Women's Organizations in Scaling Community Resilience in Uncertain Times"** with funding from SIDA (January 2023 - December 2024). This program is aligned with Huairou's Five-Year Strategy (2022-2026), which ultimately aims to increase gender-just, resilient community development and women's empowerment driven by grassroots women's leadership in transforming their economic and social well-being, with the support of local, national governments and other strategic partners.

Our unwavering focus on empowering grassroots women to address multiple challenges is set amidst their continuing efforts to restore their livelihoods after the Covid-29 crisis, increased exposure to disasters, climate change and pandemics and extreme risk of economic and political disruption. Women living in impoverished communities experienced these shocks and stresses in the form of material losses, food and livelihood insecurity, extreme caregiving burdens and deepening social and economic inequalities.

In the face of these challenges, grassroots women have:

- **Enhanced their leadership skills, capacities and knowledge** to interface with institutional actors, policy makers and national governments from local to global levels, to seek action on grassroots resilience priorities
- **Strengthened internal learning and communications systems** to aggregate grassroots lessons and insights emerging from their resilience building practices and experiences for policy upstreaming
- **Improved relationships with partners and allies**, joining forces with like-minded networks and coalitions to engage in collective advocacy and call for a grassroots women's approach to agenda such as Caregiving, Land Governance, Food Systems etc.
- **Created robust internal governance systems** for strategic decision making, collective planning and monitoring of grassroots priorities and goals amidst increasing climate and disaster risks

The Huairou Commission's investments over the past year were guided by an approved work plan ([see Annex II](#)). A total of **24 member organisations in 17 countries**, working in **171 communities**, were funded in 2023 ([see Annex I](#)) and participated in over **50 collective learning and advocacy actions** at the regional and global level.

1.2 Huairou Commission's Approach

The Huairou Commission is a global movement focused on the empowerment of grassroots women. Networks, NGOs, grassroots groups, institutions and individual partners share a commitment to strategically support grassroots women's groups to expand their participation and leadership in community development, human settlements and public decision making in order to achieve gender equitable, pro-poor policies and investments.

Our approach and actions are informed by three main building blocks:

- **Theory of Change** represented by our Resilience Diamond which presents four mutually reinforcing elements (four diamond areas) required for grassroots women to advance climate resilience while building their collective power.
- **Community Resilience Fund** - a flexible finance mechanism field tested by Huairou to support activities aligned with the Resilience Diamond.
- A **collaborative learning process** through mechanisms such as peer exchanges, grassroots academies, the Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience for collective analysis and reflection to generate insights which can be applied to partnership building at multiple levels.

Huairou's membership, located in more than 40 countries worldwide, comprises organisations with diverse structures and scales. Our membership has both community based organisations and facilitating NGOs. The shared goal of members has been to advance grassroots women's leadership in resilience building, and gaining institutional recognition and resources through collective learning, strategizing and partnering with institutional actors. A grassroots-led Governing Council serves as the prime decision-making body and Huairou's members are supported by a small professional Secretariat.

Our members' strategies to combat the adverse effects of climate change draw on more than twenty years of experiences across Asia, Africa and Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regions, in which our global movement's grassroots women's groups from disaster-prone geographies are mobilising communities and collaborating with local governments to undertake disaster response, recovery, reconstruction and risk reduction initiatives to build more resilient, sustainable, gender-just communities.

1.3 Climate and Disaster Context and Post Covid-19 Recovery

The year 2023 displaced 2016 as the hottest year on record as climate change impacts continued to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and inequalities in poor urban settlements and rural communities. Women were disproportionately affected, experiencing loss of livelihoods, food insecurity, and gender-based violence.

In **Asia**, climate change manifested through prolonged droughts, floods, hurricanes, cyclones, and El Niño events, impacting countries like Indonesia, and disrupted agricultural livelihoods, leading to reduced yields, crop failure, and increased household expenses for water in rural areas; as well as loss of infrastructure, poor drainage systems, increase in diseases in informal settlements. **Africa** faced challenges from long dry spells causing drought and famine, as well as flash floods and erratic rainfall patterns affecting countries like Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. These events resulted in crop failure, reduced food supply, livestock deaths, and degraded land, disproportionately impacting vulnerable groups, particularly women in informal settlements. **Latin America** experienced climate change impacts such as high temperatures, water scarcity, prolonged droughts, tropical storms, heavy rains causing landslides, and environmental contamination. These affected food production systems, degraded ecosystems, and compromised livelihood activities, leading to increased migration due to loss of land and livelihoods.

These crises occurred even as grassroots organisations are still reeling from the havoc wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these numerous challenges, grassroots leaders and their organisations were able to sustain, innovate, accelerate and scale up their efforts to drive change by collectively testing and scaling up

practical solutions, strengthening the movement and influencing public policies and plans through partnerships. Member-led strategies built on past accomplishments and lessons learned with an aim to scale their resilience building initiatives both at the local and national levels.

1.4 Purpose and Scope of the report

The report aims to foster learning and communicate key achievements in contribution to our strategic aims and in fulfilment of work plans agreed with SIDA.

While the activities and achievements described may be specific to this year, the shifts in relationships between grassroots women leaders and their organisations and networks tend to be the result of cumulative efforts over time. For example, changes in grassroots-government relationships reported here are the results of several years of negotiation, collaboration and partnership building.

Information presented in this report is sourced from 24 member level work plans and 24 annual reports 2023. The **methodology** involved desk reviews of these reports, including identification of trends, clarifying issues with groups, and aggregation of evidence to develop a coherent narrative. In addition to member reports, supplementary data were gathered through various means such as 20+ interviews with members' and staff, and review of other reports, meeting notes and briefs prepared in 2023.

The vast quantity of information generated through our reporting processes requires far more time for adequate learning and synthesis than the time frames afforded by donor reporting cycles. Material introduced in the following pages represents an initial rendering that will serve as input to internal reflections as members prepare for the 2024 Global Grassroots Women's Congress and the final report of this SIDA funded program.

2. Key Activities and Achievements at the Member Level

In 2023, the Huairou Commission flowed **400,392.57 USD** to **24 member organisations** in Asia, Africa and Latin America to implement agreed work plans aligned to Huairou Commission's five-year Strategy and Results Framework. This section highlights member level activities and initiatives. Changes within their organisations and in their relationships with governments and partners (from local to national level) are indicated.

2.1 Strengthening Grassroots Women's Leadership and Organising

Member organisations expanded leadership capacities by **creating cadres of trainers and second generation women and youth leaders**, familiarising them with HC tools, advocacy, negotiation and policies. Local champions - grassroots mentors or practice leaders - were trained to train and mentor grassroots women on a range of themes including, food and nutrition, and value chain development in rural communities. Grassroots women were also sensitised on important issues such as human rights, gender and climate change and familiarised with key regional and global policy mechanisms. Several member organisations also expanded their organisations to strengthen and scale up collective resilience building efforts.

Groups **upgraded their organisational systems by strengthening governance and financial systems**. An array of strategies from introducing new technologies to community feedback mechanisms were introduced to enhance accountability. These mechanisms function to increase transparent decision making within groups, by integrating technology and creating community feedback mechanisms, including grievance redressal, conflict resolution and self-monitoring and learning mechanisms. In some cases, members also supported local grassroots groups to **register as legal entities - giving them their own legal identity and government accreditation** which allows them to access government resources.

These activities led to a number of achievements, aligned with our work plan. The achievements are summarised below, and further details with examples are provided in Annex IV.

Achievement 1: Improved skills, knowledge and capacities on HC tools for collective planning, organising and advocacy

Grassroots women were oriented on Huairou's tools and strategic plans, and staff and leaders of member organisations were oriented on the Theory of Change. In 2023, seven organisations in Asia, Africa and LAC organised training sessions for their Board members, staff and/or grassroots women leaders to familiarise them with Huairou's signature tools. This enhanced grassroots women leaders' skills on topics such as leadership development, gender differences and women's empowerment, mobilising, organising and conflict resolution, and advocacy, communications, proposal writing. More than **1000 grassroots women leaders** benefited from these capacity building activities in the past year.

In **Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children's Association (ZPHCA)** organised leadership and advocacy training workshops for 200 grassroots women leaders, familiarising them on Huairou's Resilience Diamond and the Grassroots Women's Community Empowerment Toolkit. These grassroots women went on to organise their own advocacy initiatives targeting traditional and community leaders and government authorities to demand access to land and water.

Achievement 2: Strengthened institutional capacities and systems - financial, monitoring, evaluation and learning

In 2023, **12 members** upgraded their internal learning, monitoring, financial or internal governance systems. This included conducting capacity building for their Board and Staff, building organisational management capacities and enhanced community ownership and decision making.

Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children Welfare (UCOBAC) upgraded financial management and accountability systems. This included increasing the use of digital banking to replace cash transactions, increasing staff capacity to manage finances, ensuring compliance with financial management and procurement guidelines. UCOBAC also began working with grassroots women leaders and their staff team on developing an organisation-level learning, evaluation and monitoring system with the support of a technical staff.

CO-Multiversity, Philippines guided member groups like ULAP and APOAMF on organisational strengthening through mechanisms such as formal registration and compliance with regulatory frameworks of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Local Government, and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), all of which make organisations eligible to access resources from government programs. Members were also supported to systematise their banking processes and create standing committees.

Achievement 3: Mobilised and expanded constituencies to strengthen grassroots organisations

Member groups expanded their constituencies by mobilising grassroots women to form new groups in new geographies. More than **25 new local women's groups** were organised in the past year.

Lumanti Support Group for Shelter (Lumanti), Nepal expanded its operations to a new municipality - Devdaha Municipality in Rupandehi district - where four new grassroots women's groups were mobilised and are currently being mentored and trained by senior grassroots leaders with more than 30 years of experience.

Achievement 4: Created cadres of community leaders, facilitators and trainers (ToTs) on resilience building and public advocacy

In 2023, over **600 grassroots women were trained** as organisers, trainers, mentors who promote and advocate for grassroots resilience priorities practices. Members frequently partnered with local government officials to provide technical training. This new cadre of skilled grassroots women leaders is now conversant with concepts and practices on DRR, climate change and resilience building practices and advocacy priorities.

In **Zimbabwe, ZPHCA** trained 240 grassroots women from 20 communities on Disaster Risk Reduction in partnership with the Department of Civil Protection. These grassroots women became trainers and leaders skilled in disseminating early warning information, setting up local disaster management committees, organising safe evacuations, conducting DRR awareness, mobilising emergency assistance, administering first aid, and mapping disaster risks and vulnerabilities. Following their training sessions, grassroots trainers conducted community feedback meetings, disseminated DRR information and organised door-to-door campaigns raising awareness of over 2600 community members.

2.2 Investing in Grassroots-led Resilience Building Practices

2.2.1 Building capacities to map risks and improve emergency response

Grassroots women-led climate resilience building practices were informed by community risk mapping and risk informed planning. Besides raising community awareness and organising campaigns on climate change, disasters and women's right to access natural resources, member organisations trained grassroots women leaders to carry out community risk mapping and vulnerability assessments and supported grassroots groups to develop local adaptation plans. Plans generally featured three components - understanding climate risk, identifying resilience-building actions and strengthening emergency preparedness.

Achievement 5: Developed community risk maps to prioritise actions and collaborate with government

Member groups conducted **community risk mapping and updated existing risk maps**, often in partnership with other local stakeholders. Grassroots women's groups then used these maps to develop action plans and advocate with local governments to include their priorities in formal plans and budgets. In the last year, members across Asia, Africa and LAC have developed **78 new community risk maps**, surpassing the targeted 60 community risk maps.

In **Ghana, Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation (GSF)** trained 30 community members to map climate risks, vulnerabilities as well as resources and livelihood opportunities. They were also trained to analyse and validate findings from such exercises. Women actively identified risk areas and buffer zones in anticipation of disasters, organised themselves into committees and demanded that local authority pass by-laws to take action by creating a Community Resilience Plan in collaboration with communities and other interested stakeholders. As a result of sustained advocacy, the local government representative agreed to propose the creation of fire buffer zones to the District Assembly and the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO). Further, local village Chiefs in the region called for more stringent laws taking punitive action against the felling of shea trees, an issue prioritised by grassroots women whose livelihoods depend on shea butter production.

Achievement 6: Improved skills and capacities in DRR and Early Warning Systems

Grassroots women's groups improved their skills and capacities in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Early Warning Systems (EWS) through orientation and training in these areas. Often members partnered with local government officials and/or technical staff to build up these skills and coordinate local DRR actions. In 2023, **15 members** organised training on DRR and EWS within their communities.

In **Kenya, Winam Grassroots** trained community leaders, including grassroots women, on Disaster Risk Reduction and Response and interpreting Early Warning Systems (EWS) using tools such as field based participatory mapping, classroom learning, art and theatre. Through this process community response groups were established in 10 communities. These groups comprise trained community responders who collaborate with ward and village administrators to facilitate a coordinated response at multiple levels, using all available information platforms. These teams and platforms form an integrated information ecosystem that has been critical in cascading information down to the local level. Furthermore, grassroots women leaders from Winam are pressing local authorities to allocate local budgets to upgrade homes and rescue centres used to shelter communities. Winam is also partnering with the Internal Displacement

Monitoring Centre (IDMC)¹ to continuously collect and analyse risk and vulnerability data for improved decision making at community level.

2.2.2 Building Climate Resilience

In 2023, over **3200 grassroots women** were trained on resilience building practices, entrepreneurship development and environmental protection to reduce the impact of climate change and natural hazards

These practices can be broadly clustered into four groups:

- **Resilient food and farming systems:** groups trained women in climate resilient farming practices, regenerative agricultural techniques, and supported them to build community gardens, plant medicinal trees and implement other soil and water conservation strategies.
- **Women's economic empowerment** enhanced everyday quality of life in the face of climate related shocks and stresses by advancing entrepreneurial skills and practices that fostered **livelihood diversification, marketing and value addition** by training women in cooperative marketing, promoting agriculture and livestock value-chains, market linkages and collective marketing of their produce.
- Grassroots women were trained and oriented on **land rights and land governance** and supported grassroots women to negotiate for ownership and control of land and other resources through development of land mapping and tracking tools.
- Member groups also trained women in **environmental protection measures** including soil and water conservation and rejuvenation of degraded land through regenerative practices and waste management practices and the use of clean energy.

In addition, groups expanded **demonstration sites where they could test, teach and improve** their resilience practices, by setting up learning centres, setting up organic gardens, strengthening demonstration sites, establishing/expanding and sustaining urban/backyard gardening, rain catchment areas etc. They also established partnerships with institutions and universities for technical training and certification and scaling up of women-led practices, etc. Members **documented and disseminated grassroots-led actions and practices** through video, audio and written documentation, media engagement, and developed training and IEC materials during this period.

Achievement 7: Improved food and nutrition security through resilient farming practices

Members developed and strengthened the implementation of innovative climate-resilient agriculture practices that improved household and community food and nutrition security. Often groups partnered with local government authorities and extension officers to access technical inputs and schemes. In 2023, over **800 grassroots women** implemented some form of climate-resilient practice to improve food and nutrition security.

Mujeres, Democracia y Ciudadanía, A.C. (MUDECI), Mexico led different initiatives to improve food security, strengthen the local economy, promote urban agriculture and agroecology and empower women.

¹ IDMC monitors internal displacement triggered by conflict and disasters globally, compiling data through a network of partners and innovative tools. (<https://www.internal-displacement.org/>)

These practices include promoting community kitchens to provide nutritious meals to vulnerable groups during crises, establishing backyard gardens through distribution of vegetables seedlings, setting up a school garden, as well as the marketing of local products through women's networks. In 2023, they trained over 220 women and youth on agroecological practices, and rabbit and poultry farming in partnership with the Autonomous University of Querétaro.

In **Zambia, Zambia Homeless and Poor People's Federation (ZHPPF)** promoted sack gardening in urban informal settlements. Sixty-five individual sack gardens were established by women, involving growing plants in sacks or other vertical containers, often filled with soil, compost, and other organic materials. Sack gardens, also known as vertical gardens, are a practical and cost-effective way to build the resilience of slum poor households in slums as they are less susceptible to climate shocks such as flooding and drought, making them a more resilient source of food and have additional benefits (space saving, income and environmental benefits, etc.)

Achievement 8: Improved livelihoods and income

Grassroots women invested in making their livelihoods more resilient. This was achieved through diversification of crops in farming, diversifying activities and income sources and upgrading technology used in farming. In many cases, members created convergence and complementarity across multiple government programs and facilitated formal registration of grassroots women-led enterprises. Members also negotiated and partnered with the government and private sector to provide technical training to grassroots women, and opened new avenues for storage, marketing and sale of products. In 2023, over **600 grassroots women** implemented income generation activities on an individual and collective basis.

In **El Salvador, ASAPROMU** supported women's groups to diversify their livelihoods and scale up economic activities through skill building and linkages to the local government. In 2023, grassroots women from two communities began collective businesses rearing poultry, printing handmade cloth, sewing and embroidering, and making organic candles and shampoo. Women's groups also marketed their products at government fairs and local markets. The women's groups intend to reinvest a small part of their profits into the Community Resilience Fund to support new groups and sustain their initiatives to ensure both food and income security during disasters.

Achievement 9: Secured ownership and control over productive land

Members groups created awareness, carried out advocacy and negotiated for grassroots women's access to land rights and redistribution of resources with local authorities. Community-led tools resulted in tracking and facilitating women's land rights by formal authorities.

In **Kenya, Shibuye** partnered with other stakeholders to develop the Community Land Lease Guidelines and the Haki Ardhi Tool, both mechanisms that enhance grassroots women's access and control over land. Sustained advocacy led to sensitisation and greater uptake of these tools by the community. **In 2023, the Haki Ardhi tool enabled 84 grassroots women to track land rights cases, and was being used by the local judiciary in administering justice regarding women's land rights.**

Achievement 10: Protected natural resources and the environment

Grassroots women's groups protected natural resources and the environment by implementing practices such as water harvesting and conservation, soil regeneration, reforestation, incorporating clean energy

alternatives, waste management and human-animal conflict mitigation. Grassroots women from **10 members** across Asia, Africa and LAC implemented such practices in the last year.

Alianza de Mujeres Costarricense, supported two grassroots women's groups in protecting red mangroves in the coastal regions of **Costa Rica**, including planting trees where the mangroves were degraded. The organisation also linked with partners at fairs and festivals and organised guided walks to tourists along these rejuvenated mangroves to promote mangrove conservation.

In **Cambodia**, **Urban Poor Women Development (UPWD)** worked with local communities in urban informal settlements to create awareness on waste management and sanitation. Organised women's groups also persuaded local authorities and waste collection companies to include waste management in the Commune Investment Plan. This led to improved garbage collection in most communities. UPWD also organised tree planting and cleanliness drives in communities in partnership with youth groups to organise tree planting and cleanliness drives.

Achievement 11: Demonstrated and scaled up resilience practices

Several members scaled up or strengthened the implementation of resilient practices in their communities. Member groups also established learning centres to demonstrate and transfer innovations and practices in their community. Frequently, these centres were developed on communal land, accessed by women's groups through advocacy and lobbying with local authorities for their land rights. In the past year, **18 members** established or strengthened their learning centres.

In the dry region of **Guatemala**, severely affected by food insecurity, **Fundación Guatemala** strengthened its demonstration and learning centres in the Municipality of Livingston and Escuintla by scaling up climate-resilient agriculture initiatives. From the resulting harvest, inputs like seeds and organic fertilisers were distributed to three grassroots women's groups in Chiquimula, so that they could start implementing sustainable vegetable cultivation to promote food and nutrition security at the household and community level.

In 2023, **DAMPA-SOFP** scaled up their Community Savings and Loan Associations (CSLA) from 12 to 17 communities in the **Philippines**, training 150 grassroots women on savings and lendings, financial management, and investing for livelihoods diversification and income generation. The groups developed action plans for investing community savings in food or rice banks, which can be a source of sustenance in crises

Achievement 12: Increased awareness and willingness of other actors to advance grassroots resilience building practices

Stakeholders beyond the policy, planning and financial institutions showed greater knowledge and willingness to promote grassroots women's innovative practices by pledging resources and other forms of support.

Women leaders from **Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation, Ghana** formed cooperatives and engaged with local banks like the Agricultural Development Bank, Bonzali Rural Bank and Sinapi Aba to access funds for agriculture and collective income generation activities. As a result, the Agricultural Development Bank of Ghana pledged to support registered women's cooperatives during the upcoming farming and picking season with access to finance for the purchase of farm inputs and machinery.

2.3 Establishing Coalitions and Networks at Local and National Levels

As part of expanding grassroots constituencies, and building coalitions, members used a variety of convening mechanisms, coalitions and platforms. Knowledge sharing and practice transfers occurred through **peer to peer learning exchanges and community reflection sessions** to demonstrate, learn and transfer tools and strategies (in-person and virtual). Some members convened multiple stakeholders (including non-Huairou members) in the name of the **Community Practitioners' Platform for Resilience (CPPR)** to build a shared agenda. Others organised **Grassroots Women-Led Government Field days** enabling peer learning among grassroots women farmers and dialogues with government officials on climate change adaptation practices, **farmers exchanges and market research and setting up community markets** to showcase and sell agricultural produce and increase visibility of their work and foster partnerships. Members also developed and published a host of practical knowledge products and policy briefs to communicate their resilience priorities and partnership building strategies while some of these were also developed and published by allies and partners.

Several members convened learning and knowledge-sharing forums such as **national level workshops, grassroots women's summits and grassroots academies**, where grassroots women shared strategic insights while strengthening relationships with their peers and with government officials. Furthermore these convenings were used to promote collaborative initiatives to advance accountability and responsiveness from the government, and scale community resilience practices. Groups also **convened national level leadership schools and organised meetings of leaders to review their leadership process and strengthened tools**, conducted national and regional exchanges on organisational strengthening and resilience building practices. Several members convened the Community Practitioners' Platform for Resilience (CPPR) at national level with community based organisations, universities and national entities to discuss climate finance and convened grassroots, CSO networks, researchers etc for building coalitions for learning and advocacy.

Achievement 13: Established Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience (CPPR) for joint learning and advocacy

Members established or strengthened existing CPPR platforms at the national level. They came together to learn, reflect and advocate for their priorities in building community resilience. In 2023, **eight member groups convened and activated CPPR platforms in their country.**

In 2023, **Fundación Guatemala** strengthened the CPPR platform in Guatemala, by inducting three grassroots women's groups into the platform. Fundación Guatemala also supported grassroots women leaders from the CPPR in capacity building, to strengthen the platform as a whole. In the last year, 35 women leaders from the CPPR were formally certified by the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC) for completing the 'Regional School of Women for Food Systems as a Right to the City'.

Achievement 14: Strengthened alliances at national and regional levels for driving action and advocacy

Members strengthened alliances and established partnerships with other CSOs, networks and stakeholders for information sharing, advocating for grassroots women's role in climate change adaptation, demanding actions from governments and other actors, and linking grassroots women with government programs and policies.

In 2023, **Alianza De Mujeres Costarricenses (AMC)** participated in the development and launch of the 'National Action Plan on Gender Equality in Climate Action', **Costa Rica**, in collaboration with other CSOs, the National Women's Institute (INAMU), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE), and the Ministry of the Status of Women of Costa Rica. As a result of active lobbying by AMC and other community-based organisations, the resulting Plan included mechanisms for monitoring and accountability from government implementing agencies, and greater recognition of grassroots women's roles in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In March, 2023, **Violet Shivutse**, grassroots woman leader and Chair of Huairou's Governing Council, was **nominated as the Vice-Chair of the Kenya Land Alliance**, an umbrella network of Civil Society Organisations and individuals committed to effective advocacy for the reform of policies and laws governing land in Kenya. Through her position as Vice Chair, Violet is amplifying the voice of grassroots women, advocating for solutions that promote women's rights, and lobbying for greater participation and representation of grassroots women in national platforms and decision-making spaces.

Achievement 15: Shared practices through peer learning

A key strategy for collaborative learning and agenda-setting across Huairou members is Peer Learning Exchanges. Members used learning tools and knowledge products as well as communication strategies for engagement with diverse stakeholders. Overall, the year 2023 saw several collaborative processes to advance our peer learning approach to advance grassroots women's leadership, share technical expertise, and strengthen organisational systems.

In 2023, members organised and attended a total of **20 peer exchanges** within their countries to transfer learnings on scaling best practices and build relationships with other actors. In Latin America, grassroots women's groups (three members) collaborated with academic institutions for agenda-setting in Brazil, Guatemala and Mexico. Community level peer exchanges were organised by members in Asia. In Africa, peer learning exchanges were organised at country level for members to share and transfer knowledge and practices among one another in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, **grassroots women leaders from ZPHCA** participated in a 'Resilient Livelihoods Building' peer exchange, visiting Huairou member, **Seke Rural Home-Based Care (SRHBC)**, Zimbabwe. Grassroots women from ZPHCA and Seke Home Based Care shared the innovative resilience initiatives they were implementing and visited resilience building gardens and water harvesting initiatives constructed by women from Seke. After the Peer Exchange, grassroots women from ZPHCA replicated some of the gardening and water harvesting best practices that they learnt from their counterparts.

Achievement 16: Developed knowledge products on grassroots women-led resilient practices

Members identified and documented best practices that built community resilience. They used this documentation to create community awareness, train grassroots women leaders, build an evidence base and advocate with the government for policy change. Members' work also featured in publications and newspaper articles released by partners and allies, increasing the visibility of their work.

In 2023, members identified resilient practices and published **13 knowledge products** that included training manuals, policy briefs, reports, newsletters, awareness raising pamphlets etc. Further, members' work featured in **9 publications** developed and published by Huairou's partners and allies in the last year (see Annex V for details).

In **Kenya, Rural Women Network** identified five resilient technologies, innovations and management practices (TIMPs) - locally adapted Africa Leafy Vegetables (ALVs), highly nutritious fast growing local beans' varieties, local poultry, drying vegetables using sun-driers, spiral and vertical gardens, that were suitable for the drought-prone Kajiado County. Two of these practices were documented in training manuals and shared with grassroots women leaders and trainers. In Kisumu County, **Winam Grassroots'** work was recognised by the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) and featured in their publication titled 'Making Displacement Safer Cookbook²' - a resource on addressing DRR challenges faced by displaced communities in urban areas.

Empowering Voices for Change: Huairou Commission Members Lead Local Adaptation

Rede Pintadas, Brazil and **LUCOHECO, Uganda** were featured in a publication by the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) and the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) titled "Locally Led Adaptation: Voices from the Ground", unveiled at COP28.

Lourivania Soares, from Rede Pintadas, who attended the launch of the publication said, "Our inclusion in this publication recognizes the work carried out by the Rede Pintadas and the national and international partnerships that have contributed to strengthening local actions, especially the role of women in climate adaptation, building resilience and sustainable development in the semi-arid region of Bahia. With our work being counted among the best practices in the world, it gives us more responsibility, but also encourages us to continue the fight for a fairer and more inclusive world".

2.4 Influencing Public Decision Making

As a means for analysing power holders and mechanisms for improving their accountability to grassroots women, members mapped stakeholders and applied the Gender Inclusion, Power and Politics (GIPP) analysis tool to support grassroots women to analyse the level of inclusion in public decision-making. Groups also organised dialogues and workshops with local, national and regional power holders/government officials, microfinance and social protection institutions and grassroots women leaders to demonstrate and share grassroots priorities and resilience building practices, understand government programs and schemes and discuss ways of working together³.

Members trained grassroots women and **created community watch dogs and monitoring groups** to monitor government policies and track government budgets and expenditures. Women were also trained on how to write petitions to the Government around accountability on resources allocated on Climate Change, development of conflict management mechanisms and plans to manage natural resources, developing collaborative management plans for shared responsibilities and community monitoring plans, etc.

Implementation of the series of activities during the reporting period have led to significant achievements highlighted in the following section.

²<https://www.gndr.org/resource/forced-displacement/kenya-advocacy-promotes-access-to-displacement-risk-reduction-information-and-tools/>

³ This includes developing key messages on policy gaps; series of negotiation and presentation of DRR contingency plan to government for adaptation; conducting series of dialogue and negotiations for accessing government programs and climate funds; holding quarterly policy dialogue and advocacy meetings with the government grassroots women's certification and accreditation in Disaster Risk Reduction Management; and educating government officials at city, municipal, sub-county and district level on global frameworks such as the SDGs, SFDRR, NUA etc as well as training officials on integrating gender in government policies and programs

Achievement 17: Increased grassroots and government awareness of progress towards local, national, and global frameworks, policies and commitments

Increased grassroots awareness of local/national policies resulted in grassroots women's ability to localise and monitor these policies and frameworks, enhance collaboration with the government through awareness raising trainings, as well as hold their local authorities accountable and demand responsive actions based on their resilience priorities. Increased awareness of the government in these policies resulted in greater understanding of grassroots needs, advancing commitments and partnerships.

AWARE organised training for government officials at the sub county and district level in Kaabong District of **Uganda** on DRR related national and local policies, after consultations with District officials. These trainings were attended by over 100 local government officials, who were sensitised about the existing disaster management framework in Uganda and the role that grassroots women's groups can play in the Disaster Management Committees at the local and district level. This entire process resulted in the commitment from the government officials to revamp the Disaster Management Committees and increase the DRR budget at the district level.

YEU, Indonesia built grassroots women's knowledge on international frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR). Localising the SFDRR, 32 grassroots women's groups conducted community risk mapping to better understand risks at the local level, and shared this information with the local authorities.

Achievement 18: Enhanced government recognition of grassroots women's expertise

Governments and other stakeholders recognised the capacity, skill and value of grassroots women's work in building community resilience. As a result, many grassroots women leaders were invited by local government officials to address meetings, give training and provide inputs in decision-making processes. In some cases, academic institutions and government bodies also recognised and certified grassroots women leaders as experts in building climate resilience, food security and DRR.

In **Nicaragua, Las Brumas** organised two advocacy dialogues, attended by 30 grassroots women leaders, three mayors and other local stakeholders, to make authorities aware of priorities that emerged from the risk mapping process, and discuss how these issues could be addressed by including grassroots women in the decision-making process. As a result, grassroots women were inducted into the local Committee for Disaster Prevention and Control (COLOPRED) in their villages.

Achievement 19: Strengthened institutional partnerships and collaboration between grassroots and government

Members strengthened partnerships between grassroots women and government authorities and successfully lobbied for grassroots women's priorities at the local and state/provincial level. There were primarily three ways in which grassroots-government partnership were strengthened:

1. Grassroots women received training, inputs, technical info and advisory services from the government through linkage with various departments
2. Grassroots women were included/invited to attend local planning and budgeting meetings.
3. Grassroots women's leadership was recognised and formalised by the government

As a result of continued collaboration over the years, **GROOTS Peru** signed a formal collaboration agreement with the Municipality of Jayanca in 2023, within the framework of which actions are being

coordinated to promote community resilience and the strengthening of women's organisations. As part of this agreement, GROOTS Peru partnered with the Municipalities of Lambayeque and Jaycana and other stakeholders to organise a learning exchange between grassroots women's groups from Ecuador and Peru, and also co-organised an agroecological fair where grassroots women groups could demonstrate their work and market their products.

Achievement 20: Integrated grassroots women's priorities in local planning and governance for enhanced accountability to grassroots women

Through negotiations led by community watchdog groups and citizen's engagement, grassroots women are making the government responsive to women's needs. This was achieved through budget allocation for grassroots-led initiatives, including a gender lens in local governance, setting up accountability systems to provide and receive community feedback and creating referral pathways by the government.

In 2023, member groups created or strengthened the capacities of **21 watchdog groups**.

In **Zimbabwe, Ntengwe** trained representatives of 22 government departments and traditional leaders on inclusive and gender-sensitive programming using tools and approaches such as GESI, GIPP and Safeguarding to protect the rights and dignity of poor and displaced women, and to identify and integrate their priorities and concerns in the formal planning processes and receive appropriate support from the authorities. As a result, the Ministry of Women's Affairs created a 'Climate Change and GBV' help desk at their office in Lupane to assist communities. In the last year, 55% of the communities surveyed visited the help desk and were supported with referrals to the concerned government departments for access to services, technical support and information. The Ministry of Women's Affairs also created a structured system where communities submit monthly complaint and recommendation forms. This helped identify the gaps in services by government service providers and to address the needs of the community.

As a result of continuous and sustained advocacy by grassroots women's groups from **HIMAWANTI, Nepal**, the **Municipal authorities increased their allocation of the Gender Based Violence budget by 50 percent**, due to which more victims of GBV were able to access farm inputs to enhance their livelihoods.

Achievement 21: Promoted joint initiatives with government and key stakeholders through dialogues, training and collaborative actions

Members organised dialogues, meetings and advocacy campaigns through which they built partnerships and negotiated for priorities with authorities. In 2023, members organised **33 local and national dialogues** with their governments. Agreements to conduct joint training with local government emerged from members' sustained negotiations and initiatives to share grassroots women's expertise with local government.

Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES) organised a **local-to-local dialogue**, attended by 12 grassroots women leaders with representatives of the Lalitpur Municipality to discuss grassroots women's priorities emerging from the community risk mapping process. NMES also organised a structured campaign in partnership with grassroots women's groups and local leaders from Lalitpur, demanding access to land rights by targeting the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation and the National Land Commission of Nepal.

In **Cambodia, Urban Poor Women Development (UPWD)** organised two **joint trainings** with local community leaders and the commune authorities to build their capacity on Community Based Disaster

Risk Reduction and Management through familiarisation with national to sub-national disaster management mechanisms. Through these training, UPWD's leaders oriented commune authorities on their role and responsibilities in disaster management, preparation of emergency response plans and advocated for the creation of stronger community-led structures for emergency response.

3. Key Activities and Achievements at Movement level

This section highlights our achievements at the movement level, with examples and descriptions across the four diamond areas aligned with HC's strategic plan and the Results Framework.

At the movement level, Huairou built its collective leadership by: strengthening internal systems, evolving its leadership in the policy arenas by convening Communities of Practices to consolidate priorities from the bottom up. Regional and global decision making capacities were built through Governing Council and Regional member meetings. Regional and global peer exchanges alongside surveys and reflections were used to consolidate evidence of members' collective aspirations.

Our joint advocacy in resilience-centred development arenas and ongoing negotiations with institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, positioned the Huairou Commission to influence the flow of climate finance. Through mechanisms such as the UNFCCC COP, members presented grassroots resilience approaches through the lens of social accountability, climate finance, risk analysis, leadership and food systems. At the Sendai Mid-term Review grassroots leaders called for strengthening grassroots-government partnerships to localise the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

At the Global Caregivers Summit, Huairou collaboratively developed a Call to Action, synthesising grassroots expertise in community caregiving, calling for recognition and compensation for caregivers. Through the Stand for her Land Campaign, we advocated for integrating loss and damage into women's land rights, resilience, and housing policies. At the 2nd UN-Habitat Assembly, Huairou influenced resolutions on Accelerating Transformation of Informal Settlements and Slums by 2030, and Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, which set the course for future UN Habitat programs.

3.1 Building collective leadership capacities and strengthening systems at the global level

In 2023, we focused on building leadership skills that strengthen and sustain our movement building at the regional and global levels. These included:

- Evolving member's leadership to drive change in key development arenas through Communities of Practice;
- Facilitating a member-led bottom-up approach to planning and decision taking through the Governing Council and Regional member meetings; and,
- Reinforcing internal systems to support organisational functioning and sustainability.

Achievement 22: Communities of Practice aggregated members experiences to set collective agendas for action

In 2023, the Huairou Commission convened Communities of Practice (CoPs) in five development arenas to build member capacities through shared learning, generate and reflect on evidence, formulate and guide partnership advocacy efforts and prioritise positions and messages to be communicated in public

fora. There were 28 member convenings across five development areas - Resilient Food Systems, Community Caregiving, Securing Women's Land Tenure Security, Local Governance in Urban and Rural Settlements and Climate and DRR. **About 60% of HC's membership actively contributed to the Communities of Practice.** The structure and emphasis of each Community of Practice varied based on agreed priorities and plans. In addition to the work on Climate and Disaster Resilience Community of Practice which is well represented throughout this report, brief descriptions of what was accomplished by these communities are as follows:

Community Caregiving: Members convened over several months to collectively develop a grassroots women's caregiving agenda to be conveyed at the Global Grassroots Caregivers Summit 2023 Mexico. Members mapped partners participating in the Summit, assessing their potential roles in advancing a common agenda. Evidence generated through a survey led to expanding the scope and definition of caregiving as understood by other actors. Key messages calling for recognition and remuneration for grassroots caregivers were agreed upon. These efforts resulted in a Call to Action that has since mobilised funding from the Ford Foundation for members in Africa to conduct a caregiving survey and advocacy campaigns at national level.

Securing Women's Land Tenure Security: CoP members reviewed their priorities and reflected on the interconnectedness of climate resilience and caregiving with women's land rights. Internal convenings focused on strengthening Huairou's advocacy within the GLTN to integrate climate change analyses into existing land tools to be piloted in 2024. Grassroots leaders also shaped the agenda on women's land rights and to be advanced through the Stand for Her Land Campaign in association with other stakeholders and coalition partners. The Community agreed to leverage the strength of Women's Land Link Africa to advance grassroots women's perspectives and strategized on its collaboration with International Land Coalition Multi Stakeholder Platform. The Community agreed to join the call for the establishment of a proposed Grassroots Land Fund that would compensate for climate change induced losses and damages and women's caregiving roles.

Resilient food systems: Food security and sovereignty has been steadily evolving as a prominent theme of Huairou's work, with increasing amounts of CRF investments by grassroots women's groups in strengthening and sustaining access to nutritious food production and consumption. Our work on food systems and value chains has surfaced important lessons and innovations from a select group of countries, and there is a clear emerging demand to do more at a larger scale across the Movement for building a collective learning and a political agenda. Members agreed to leverage their collaboration with the consortium led by Oxfam-Novib funded by the Netherlands to map and document successful practices and innovations. This exercise is seen as the basis of developing a robust climate-resilient food systems agenda and collaborating with like-minded organisations to advance grassroots women's collective interests.

Achievement 23: Bottom up planning and decision taking facilitated as part of strengthening collective leadership

Huairou Commission's initiatives to strengthen its internal governance in 2023 included:

- Strengthening Governing Council's planning and decision making capacities to review and implement our five year Strategic Plan
- Bringing eight new leaders into the Governing Council and orienting them to their roles and functions

- Assessing and advancing memberships through a review process led by the Membership Committee and
- Facilitating regionally led planning

Each of these processes served to realise HC's core operating values and agreements, members priorities and its strategic plan. Regions demonstrated their leadership in regional learning and planning forums convened by regional committees.

Strengthened Governing Council capacities: In December 2022, Huairou held its first election since the inaugural 2018 election, resulting in eight new members entering the Governing Council. The orientation of eight new board members included orienting the board to its core roles, and fostering cohort groups based on unique responsibilities associated with designations, such as representation of regions, grassroots constituencies or facilitating NGO's. Themes debated included the composition and roles of committees of the Governing Council, responsibilities attached to movement building, member collaboration, risk management and legal oversight and a shared notion of how to represent the breadth of HC's membership internally and externally.

The five regional representatives on HC's Governing Council oversaw and were the decision takers in the design and implementation of the 2023-2024 SIDA Partnerships Grant Call for Proposals: *Nurturing Leadership of Grassroots Women's Organizations in Scaling Community Resilience in Uncertain Times*. GC members' roles included outlining the call for proposals scope, funding windows, eligibility and ranking criteria, deliberating on funding decision principles, scenarios and implications, and identifying possible capacity-building options for unsuccessful applications. Regional Representatives were supported by the Secretariat to communicate with the membership at large in order to ensure transparency throughout all phases including circulation of list of implementing partners for the two year grant 2023-24.

The **2023 Annual Meeting** of members convened by the Governing Council and chaired by Violet Shivutse covered several topics and provided space for discussion and priority setting related to 2024 in person congress agenda and outcomes, key preparatory processes and entry points for inputs, Congress planning committee composition and roles and the membership review design and implementation. Reports were shared by the treasurer including an analysis of the financial position of the organisation and the secretariat on the overview of 2024 budget. Consolidated feedback from members on the annual meeting was distributed after the meeting and pointed to follow up required by the Governing Council and committees of the board.

Enhanced collective decision-making capacities of leaders: The Membership Committee initiated new members on the GC and agreed on priorities for the membership assessment process to be implemented in 2024. Based on observed trends, members expressed priorities and efforts to realise the membership standards outlined in HC's 2018 governance transition (the 4Cs: Commitment, Constituency, Communications and Contributions). The Membership Committee agreed to develop a membership assessment tool and process aimed at strengthening Huairou's leadership by evaluating the capacity building needs of members and implementing a sustainable process for member growth and advancement. By the end of the year, a consultant was secured to support the technical aspects of the review.

The Leadership Development Program team of mentors and mentees completed production of the illustrated toolkit in May 2023 and led a virtual member-wide launch of the [Grassroots Women's Community Empowerment Toolkit](#) on July 19, 2023 which included a demonstration of mentees pilot applications in their local contexts. The Grassroots Women's Community Empowerment Toolkit includes six core tools and methods – Leadership Support Process, Community Mapping, Local-to-Local Dialogues, Monitoring Groups, Peer Exchanges, and Grassroots Academies. These tools have grown out of the values and vision of grassroots women, who are using them to build strong, connected leaders, partnerships, and movements which are able to tackle the challenges that families, communities and regions face every day. The tool kit is available to the public in English and Spanish on HC's website.

Facilitated decision making at regional level: Regionally-led processes served as opportunities for members to reflect, capture gains and challenges, assess and shift strategies, and share policy advocacy and resource mobilisation opportunities. The regions prioritised developing regional Work Plans, and collated inputs for global governance led initiatives. Significant shifts in decision-making roles moved program agenda setting for learning, advocacy and fundraising to members.

Africa: The **African region** appointed a Steering Committee to define priorities and lead the preparation of a work plan. The Regional Committee took stock of their successes and challenges at the Caregivers Summit and agreed on follow-up strategies, and reviewed learnings from the Summit report for the Ford Foundation. A Program Planning Committee was constituted by members to guide the region on strategic opportunities. Members also decided to revitalise the Women's Land Link Africa (WLLA) coalition as a mechanism with potential to expand learning and amplify grassroots advocacy on women's access and control over land.

Asia: Members identified key agenda for the regional planning meeting based on the Strategy Plan, specific capacities required by grassroots leaders for collaborations on regional challenges on adaptation, climate change, and raising funds for regional programs. The regional meeting was delayed and would be held in January 2024 in Kathmandu with 14 leaders of advanced members from the region. The members have prioritised partnerships with regional institutions, and awareness-raising among key government and institutional stakeholders.

Latin America: The Regional Meeting was held amidst the changing political context of the region in October in Panama City with 27 regional representatives. The members shared their analysis of their operating environment with regional experts. A key outcome of the regional meeting was shared deeper understanding about the Theory of Change, the Strategic Plan, and the decentralised governance structure of the movement. Women leaders shared experiences of mentoring younger leaders, and plans for expanding grassroots leadership in each country. The members collectively identified program work streams for strengthening community and indigenous leadership, as well as cross-cutting concerns on upgrading technology for access to information and communication; impact of migration on grassroots women facing multiple crises; and the need to leverage more resources for the region.

Achievement 24: Reinforced internal systems to support organisational functioning and sustainability

To sustain and expand grassroots resilience building efforts demands strong organisations. In 2023 Huairou built organisational and leadership capacities aimed at safeguarding against wrong-doing and monitoring for program impact.

Safeguarding against wrong doing: We updated our policies around internal control and safeguarding, prevention of sexual harassment, abuse, risk and conflict management. These were introduced to the Governing Council in a session on risk management led by the Director of Programs and Huairou safeguarding focal point in July 2023 in Mexico City. The orientation also addressed the topic of conflict of interest, organisational risk management and an overview of the findings and recommendations made by E&Y as part of the 2022 ISK. Huairou's updated Operations Manual was endorsed and submitted to SIDA in June 2023. This updated version incorporated recommendations of points and policies areas identified and recommended in the ISK assessment. It has been circulated to Secretariat Staff and immediately used as guidance for the operation of activities. The Huairou Commission has also added required policies on its website⁴. All safeguarding against wrong doing policies are also included as a standard in the Huairou Commission Memorandum of Agreement with all its grantees, consultants and vendors. In 2023 we also updated our internal systems to strengthen financial oversight and risk management at the member and the secretariat level to keep pace with increasingly stringent international standards, this included maintaining the services of an account to work with members in Latin America to review expenditures and supporting documentation in detail and advise on measures to further strengthen their systems. This pilot will be expanded to cover other regions in 2024.

Evolved monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning systems (MEAL): HC developed a more robust MEAL framework which has evolved in the last one year to accommodate relevant targets and indicators at the member and the movement level for tracking and aggregating progress. Our Secretariat staff and members built their capacities in learning new monitoring tools/skills such as the Outcome Harvesting method in partnership with Oxfam-Novib. At the movement level, we organised collective reflections and analyses, implemented monitoring and learning tools such as surveys, conducted action research, and simplified reporting processes for our members without compromising the quality of reporting and accountability.

3.2 Demonstrating Resilience

At movement level, grassroots led practices and innovations contributed to aggregating the multiplicity of member experiences and innovations. First, peer exchanges which drew on member's practices and second, surveys were a tool to aggregate members' practical experiences as a route to building a movement level perspective on specific themes.

The peer exchanges were opportunities to convene member groups and facilitate learning processes that allowed members to learn from one another's practices. In doing so, members were offered a range of practices to choose from. The regional level peer exchanges were also used to test the intergenerational dialogue methodology and new practices on promoting women's safety in collaboration with government institutions.

Achievement 25: Organised peer learning exchanges at regional levels for transferring knowledge and scaling practices

Peer learning is one of our signature strategies as it promotes both solidarity and transfer of practical knowledge key to movement building. At the regional level, peer learning events were organised in South Asia (5 members), South-East Asia (6 members) and Latin America (3 members). A few examples of regional level knowledge sharing and network building peer exchanges are provided below:

⁴ <https://huairou.org/safeguarding-and-related-policies/>

Regional Peer Exchanges and Scaling up of Resilience Building Practices

The South Asia peer exchange (June 2023) convened members from 28 Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) from Bangladesh, Nepal, and India. Himawanti, Community Women's Forum (CWF), Lumanti Support Group for Shelter and Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj (NMES) participated from Nepal while Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) and Participatory Development Action Program (PDAP) joined from India and Bangladesh, respectively.(representing 7 members in South Asia)

The exchange, hosted by **Best Practices Foundation (BPF), India** used a combination of classroom learning and field visits to share leadership models and livelihood practices. BPF and its network exposed participants to an intergenerational dialogue methodology, new business strategies, including market oriented livelihoods and digital skills for asset-poor groups. PDAP's nutritious food production through preservation and cultivation of quality seeds, preparation of seed plots and waste management, CWF's livelihood restoration, and SSP's women's entrepreneurship programmes demonstrated the range of resilient livelihood practices in the region and the interest in building economies of scale through aggregation and market access. Participants also strategized to amplify their voices and messages in the Action Coalition on Economic Rights and Justice (Generation Equality Program), co-led by HC. Proposals included convening dialogues with UN Women in India and Nepal and leveraging grassroots partnerships to expand coalitions across Asia and mobilising funds for grassroots economic priorities and movement building.

The Southeast Asia peer exchange (May-June, 2023) in Manila, Philippines had 16 participants from UPWD (Cambodia), DAMPA SOFP, ULAP, COM, Lihok Pilipina (Philippines) and YEU (Indonesia). resilient livelihoods practices shared included waste management and GBV with a cross-cutting focus on engaging local authorities and other stakeholders. Four of the six organisations agreed to test new practices on promoting women's safety in collaboration with government institutions. **YEU** expressed an interest in addressing GBV in partnership with the Ministry on Women's Affairs and other relevant actors. **ULAP/COM** committed to addressing Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces alongside their economic empowerment program. **DAMPA-SOFP** decided to promote community savings through waste management; and to scale up its response to GBV by setting up barangay hotlines and community watchdog groups.

Latin American Learning Exchange: Eighteen grassroots women leaders from **AMC, Costa Rica; ASAPROMU, El Salvador; and Fundacion Guatemala** participated in a learning exchange with staff from the UNICI University in Tapachula, Mexico, representatives from CEPREDENAC and local authorities from the Municipality of Tapachula. Through this exchange, the participating researchers and students were better able to understand the work of women's groups in building climate resilience, with the team from the University of Tapachula expressing interest in incorporating grassroots women's experiences as local DRR experts into the formal university curriculum.

Achievement 26: Documented and aggregated of grassroots contributions to resilience building based on evidence

Members operate in a complex and dynamic environment across regions, thus distilling the collective analysis of learnings from their diverse experiences enables the Movement to advance to the next stage of resilience building. The program priorities are based on the Strategy Plan, and form the basis of

evidence building that informs the global agenda of the Huairou Commission as an effective stakeholder in policy platforms. During 2023, the aggregation of grassroots experience and insights has expanded our work on interconnected issues of loss and damage, food security, care economy, and gender based violence. Across regions, members were involved in grassroots level surveys. The surveys represent action-research tools that support internal agenda setting while building evidence for advocacy; and ultimately support the aggregation of local experiences to frame a movement-wide approach to specific themes.

Framed the global Care Agenda from a grassroots women’s perspective: Following the Covid-19 crisis, Huairou evolved a framework for care work as a cross cutting issue that encompasses food security, elderly care, disabled care; and access to medical supplies, transport, government services and social security. As part of evidence building, the Huairou Commission conducted a **Caregivers Contributions Survey** among members in 30 countries on their understanding and involvement in the care economy. The survey covered several topics, including shifts in grassroots caregiving roles related to health, food, safety, care, community mobilisation and data gathering. The analysis then informed Huairou’s advocacy at the Global Grassroots Caregivers Summit.

Entered the Loss & Damage Policy Space: Despite the Secretariat’s hesitation to enter a politically contentious, technical policy arena, high interest from members compelled Huairou to enter the Loss and Damage space in 2023. It was evident from our involvement in conferences such as the 3rd Gobeshona Conference on Loss and Damage that grassroots women’s experiences were invisible in global policy.

A small grant from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) supported 20 member organisations in Asia and Africa regions to convene local level discussions to understand how communities experience losses and damages in the face of prolonged and multiple climate and disaster crises. A total of 20 grassroots member organisations from 12 countries across Asia (5) and Africa (7) regions organised local dialogues in the form of Focus Group Discussion in communities affected by disasters and climate change.

We tested a new peer learning methodology, in which we recorded online interviews with grassroots leaders, and screened the video clips for other grassroots leaders. This interactive process catalysed other leaders to affirm or contradict views of their peers. Grassroots leaders brought their own experience of losses, including wellbeing losses such as - the loss of safety, sexual exploitation and mental health problems. These losses tend to stay invisible and are difficult to monetize and are therefore unacknowledged in climate policy negotiations. Nevertheless such insights are likely to become more relevant to our advocacy as the Loss and Damage debate unfolds and the Loss and Damage Fund is operationalized.

Mapped Resilient Food Systems: Since the Pandemic, members' interest in advancing resilient food systems has substantially increased. Huairou’s engagement in the Fair For All consortium, in which four member countries are funded by the Netherlands (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to make agricultural value-chains climate resilient, provides a strong foundation from which to build a larger movement-wide initiative. In 2023, we conducted a preliminary survey with 33 members to develop an inventory of grassroots-led strategies to secure food for their families and communities.

3.3 Building Coalitions and Consortium

The Communities of Practice were used to build a bottom up agenda reflecting members’ strategic priorities in various thematic areas. These priorities then had to be re-framed inside multi-stakeholder

coalitions through which we worked to advance Huairou's interests. Despite a shared commitment among coalition members in driving resources to grassroots organisations, HC representatives were required to put substantial time into framing issues and educating partners on Huairou's approach. In most cases HC representatives - whether secretariat staff or members - joined regular coalition meetings to build a shared agenda within the coalition. This meant building relationships, creating a common vocabulary and understanding one another's aspirations and expectations, in order to integrate priorities of grassroots movements, unfamiliar to coalition members or contradictory to their approaches.

Achievement 27: Sustained policy advocacy and issue reframing activities with development actors to drive community financing for LLA, DRR and resilient cities and villages

Some of the major coalitions where we actively shifted and strengthened collective priorities and plans in response to grassroots needs include the following:

The **ADB CRPP Consortium**, in which we have a common vision with specific roles expressed in co-designed work plans, reflects the need for grassroots women's organisations to access flexible funds to make risk informed decisions on local priorities and practices. In the **World Bank's Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) Green Accountability consortium**, we carved out resources to mobilise regional and global Communities of Practice to exchange and transfer grassroots accountability tools. In the **LLA Community of Practice** - which has subsequently been funded as a 10 member consortium - Huairou, SDI and CADPI are part of a sub-group of grassroots led movements collectively strategizing to find ways to deliver financial resources to grassroots organisations.

UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism continually provided speaking opportunities to grassroots leaders of Huairou in multiple policy venues, including the Mid-Term Review (MTR), COP28, Regional Platforms on DRR, and the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), where HC is part of the advisory steering group on SDG 11. HC worked closely with coalition and policy partners to ensure that grassroots priorities and actions were acknowledged in these spaces.

Global Alliance for Care is established by UN Women and the government of Mexico with civil society organisations, grassroots groups, funders and governments. HC's advocacy priority was to get recognition and compensation for individuals, groups and their communities in the aftermath of the Pandemic; and to ensure that the Alliance becomes a space for transformative impact. Huairou's Chair Violet Shivutse - represents HC on the Management Committee of the Alliance.

Under the **Fair4All Consortium** with Oxfam-Novib, TWN and SOMO, HC's expertise in promoting grassroots women's leadership in advancing climate resilience and localisation of global and national climate policies was highly appreciated by consortium members who expressed interest in learning more about grassroots-led local practices and resilient business models. **Shibuye, Kenya** and **Rede Pintadas, Brazil** were sampled as part of the Mid-term Review process aimed at stocktaking of progress and capturing lessons learned from the program's implementation. At the Asia Inclusive Responsible Business Forum held in Bangkok in February, 2023, **SSP India** was invited to present their women-led alternative business model to Oxfam country partners, civil society members and the private sector actors.

The Consortium provided multiple opportunities to the Secretariat and the members movement to interface with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands, and share our insights on grassroots driven priorities, thereby positioning HC as a learning organisation anchored in grassroots knowledge and movement building.

Generation Equality Forum (GEF) Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights - As part of the Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights, the Huairou Commission participated in the Economic Justice and Rights (EJR) Action Coalition Leaders Retreat organised by UN Women and the government of South Africa. **Among the civil society organisations, the Huairou Commission members were the only grassroots group to influence governments' policies to incorporate the pro-poor approach.** A Mid-Term Review was conducted during the meeting in South Africa, to shape the emerging blueprint for justice and rights targets globally through organisation and mobilisation. The members called for supporting localisation through dedicated resources to strengthen local structures to advance gender equality at the local level.

Global Land Tools Network (GLTN) - Having served as co-chair in 2022, Huairou continued its leading role in The Global Land Tool Network. GLTN is an international alliance of rural and urban civil society organisations, research and training institutions, bilateral and multilateral organisations, and international professional bodies committed to increasing access to land and tenure security, particularly for the poor, women and youth. A campaign was initiated in 2023 that integrated issues of compensation for loss and damage and for women's land rights, resilience and housing in the context of climate change, drawing upon HC's extensive work on land.

We also joined coalitions such as the **International Land Coalition** to campaign for a proposed Grassroots Land Fund, linking women's land rights with other priorities like food security and caregiving etc and advocating for these priorities through the CSW 67 and Stand for her Land Campaign.

The Huairou Commission worked with **Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC)**, through the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) Rural Cluster work plan, on linking land and climate change and land and food security. This resulted in an agreement to review existing land tools, particularly the **Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM)** to reflect the climate change issues, like loss and damage with land. In addition, there is an opportunity to protect communal customary land within the digitization process, particularly for members working on communal lands - an important community asset contributing to grassroots women's resilience.

In the **International Land Coalition Multi Stakeholder Platform**, HC collaborated with other grassroots women's groups at national and regional levels to advocate for women's land rights and governance. For example, HC members like UCOBAC in Uganda and Lumanti in Nepal are actively engaged in advocating for women's land rights issues in their respective regions. African members were keen to rejuvenate **Women's Land Link Africa (WLLA)** as a mechanism for collective learning and advocacy

3.4 Influencing Policies

In 2023, the Communities of Practice set the agenda for our regional and global advocacy in four major development arenas - Disaster and Climate Resilience, Community Caregiving, En-gendering Local Governance in Urban and Rural Settlements and Securing Women's Land Tenure. These agendas informed Huairou's participation in 29 policy convenings - surpassing the targeted 15 - and 50 formal speaking engagements negotiated for our representatives in the past year.

In DRR our long term involvement in the Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism for the Sendai Framework gave us several opportunities to promote the leadership of grassroots women's organisations, as critical for accelerating local implementation of the Sendai Framework. In the climate finance sphere we collaborated with coalition allies to secure climate finance for grassroots women from three influential

institutions - the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Netherlands Government. Across policy domains, grassroots leaders' presence democratised policy engagements by ensuring that organised women from poor communities could speak directly to policymakers. Grassroots leaders demonstrated their leadership by clearly re-framing policy agendas from grassroots perspectives; and by conveying the need for institutional recognition in the form of decision making roles and resources for grassroots women's organisations who are collectively building resilient communities.

In the DRR arena, we were invited by several institutions to offer pro-poor women's empowerment perspectives in policy debates and documents. First ongoing negotiations with two multilateral development banks and bilateral donors with coalition partners in three funding agreements. In the global caregiving agenda, we successfully incorporated a grassroots women's perspective, reframed the agenda and called for compensating caregivers for their contributions. On Women's land rights, we drew attention to the need to integrate the land rights discussion to other critical issues affecting grassroots women - climate change, loss and damage, food systems and caregiving. At UN Habitat we influenced two major policies on slum upgrading and SDGs localisation.

Achievement 28: Strengthened grassroots leadership in promoting public recognition and policy change

Advocacy for formal recognition of the role of grassroots women's organisations in accelerating Sendai implementation

Our sustained advocacy focused on calling for the formal recognition and resourcing of grassroots women's involvement in DRR policy formulation, implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework. The withholding of formal recognition makes grassroots women's contributions invisible, thereby reproducing grassroots women's marginalisation and vulnerability. These principles anchored our inputs on the Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework in 2023. As a long term stakeholder in the UNDRR system, with a strong track record for bringing grassroots voices and priorities to policy venues, Huairou was invited by several institutional actors to offer a pro-poor women's perspective to accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

During the Mid-Term Review of the SFDRR (2015-30) Huairou was actively involved in a series of actions connecting grassroots women and their insights to policymakers. A team of five leaders met with key policymakers at the Sendai MTR at the UN Headquarters in New York in May 2023.

Violet Shivutse shared with national governments insights garnered from the Covid-19 Pandemic at the invitation-only Leaders Roundtable on One Health and Pandemic Preparedness. Sobina Lama's (Lumanti, Nepal) remarks on 'Scaling up resilience and reducing disaster risk in LLDCs' was highly appreciated by the Swiss and South African Government representatives for highlighting the importance of convening local governments to strategize on accelerating the local implementation of SFDRR. Relinda Sosa (GROOTS Peru) impressed civil society and policymakers alike with the size and scale of CONAMOVIDI's 13,000+ grassroots-run community kitchens and its formalised partnership with the government at a session on localising Sendai implementation.

Sandy Schilen, Executive Director of Huairou was interviewed by UNDRR for strategic insights on implementation of the SFDRR.

"When linked through global and regional networks, these grassroots groups (including indigenous)

oftentimes educate and support their government officials to learn up and use the Sendai framework, the SDGs and other global mandates to accelerate resilient development processes through collaboration with high-risk communities and other key stakeholders...Locally-led action (needs) to be put at the centre of the implementation of international agendas: Need to organise a much more thoughtful and ambitious review of the effectiveness of current development approaches to support locally led action and shift to a new model where local actors have greater decision making power and direct access to resources..."

- Sandy Schilen

Theresa Makwara (ZPHCA, Zimbabwe) delivered a statement summarising grassroots women's roles and priorities for the political declaration on the Sendai Framework.

"We hope the Political Declaration will give attention to localization of DRR, including through financing and formal recognition for grassroots organisations and their contributions to building local resilience through food and livelihood security, caregiving, and social protection; (we call for the) recognition and investment in women's leadership, including through the development of norms and guidance on women's leadership and resilience that reflects the needs and contributions of women from impoverished, highly-exposed and marginalised communities."

- Theresa Makwara

Dialogues with policymakers at the margins of the conference opened up collaborative opportunities. Ronald Jackson, head of UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) followed up on a dialogue initiated at the LA Regional Platform to explore a long term collaboration with Huairou. BCPR subsequently reached out to Huairou to provide a pro-poor, empowerment lens to UNDP's global knowledge product for staff and governments: 'Community Based Resilience Building: A UNDP Guidance Note'. GIZ requested Huairou for a grassroots women's perspective on its resilient health infrastructure manual for policymakers. The Huairou delegation met with Sida staff and familiarised her with Huairou's strategies for connecting global policy debates to local grassroots processes.

Huairou was invited to join the UNDRR Expert Group for the Gender Action Plan (GAP). The following are Huairou's proposals that have been integrated into the first draft of the Plan:

- Formalise participation of local grassroots and/or indigenous organisations in community level DRR governance
- Promote consultation and engagement with women and girls in mapping of disaster risks
- Compensate caregivers for lost earnings and for providing meals at camps and shelters
- Jointly plan with local women's organisations for economic recovery and livelihoods
- Invest in resilience building practices and "streamlined procedures" for local women's organisations to access small grants & loans

The G20 Working Group on DRR

Huairou was among a small number of civil society organisations invited to address the G20 Working Group on DRR initiated by the Indian Presidency, organised by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and UN Women. In a panel on Resilient Infrastructure we highlighted grassroots women's role as builders, designers and financiers of community infrastructure. On social protection, we presented the critical role of grassroots groups in creating community safety nets and effectively delivering government social protection programs to the most vulnerable. We argued therefore, that

putting money in the hands of grassroots women to publicly demonstrate solutions can catalyse access to government resources and partners. The outcome document of the G20 reaffirms several of Huairou's priorities including the leadership of communities and women; the importance of integrating poverty reduction in DRR; and the need for decentralised financing for DRR.

Regional DRR Platforms

Huairou actively engaged at regional level. In Asia, **Debora Dian Utami**, from YAKKUM Emergency Unit, Indonesia, delivered a statement virtually at the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on DRR where She called for increased investment in grassroots women's organisations, as a crucial ingredient for scaling up Sendai implementation. It was however, in Latin America that members negotiated scholarships to attend the Regional Platform for DRR where members had a larger impact.

At the 8th Regional Platform for DRR in the Americas, Huairou's regional members and staff co-organised two sessions in collaboration with CEPREDENAC. The sessions focused on the role of the CRF in financing, and the role of government certification in training and endorsing grassroots women to advance local implementation of SFDRR. These events were opportunities to analyse lessons from the recently concluded 3+ year certification program in central America co-funded by COSUDE (Swiss Development Cooperation). The participation of the Deputy Director of COSUDE, the Executive Secretary of CEPREDENAC, reaffirmed the importance of grassroots-national government partnerships and formal certification endorsing grassroots women as resilience experts. In side meetings, the World Bank agreed to explore opportunities to develop a coordinated approach to DRR in the region and the Civic Protection Agency of El Salvador offered to facilitate a course for community women of ASAPROMU for certification in community organisation for disaster risk management and expressed willingness to sign a formal agreement to continue the partnership with Huairou Commission.

Climate Resilience

In the climate change arena, Huairou has relied on a coalition and consortium based approach to navigate the UNFCCC COPs, amplify messages, deepen influence, and access resources. Our advocacy is anchored in our conviction that making climate finance more Paris (agreement) compliant essentially means improving both the quality and quantity of finance flowing to grassroots organisations. Over the past several years, Huairou staff has invested substantial time in advocating with the coalition and consortium members and donors to co-design programs responsive to capacities and priorities of grassroots organisations. These negotiations with climate finance actors culminated in the formalisation of three agreements to fund locally led adaptation through multi-stakeholder consortiums.

Climate Finance for Scaling Up Grassroots Women Led Adaptation and Accountability

Donor	Program and Partnership Goal	Consortium Partners
Government of Netherlands	Generating ambition for LLA: Strengthening local actors' capacities to deliver LLA and access climate finance directly	International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) and 9 others including HC
World Bank	Global Partnership for Social Accountability: Testing tools and strategies for climate finance accountability	World Resources Institute (WRI) and South South North (SSN) and HC-
Asian Development Bank, Nordic	Implementing the Community Resilience Partnership Program: Building capacities and	Asian Development Bank, IIED and HC

Development Fund, UK FCDO, AFD	knowledge to influence large scale public investments in community adaptation	
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The grants represent critical milestones in the Huairou Commission’s journey to shift the climate finance landscape and set important precedents for financing grassroots women’s organisations in ways that respond to the priorities of grassroots organisations.

By enabling Huairou to set aside resources for flexible ‘community grants that generate policy lessons’ for the CRPP, ADB recognized the value of financing grassroots women’s innovative strategies for combating the worst impacts on grassroots communities; and for generating insights for policymakers. Huairou’s collaborative relationships with ADB and IIED enable us to draw on our own Results Framework to co-design methodologies for capturing progress.

The 14 million dollar, five-year program on ‘Raising Ambition for Locally Led Adaptation’, acknowledges the longer timeframes needed to consult within grassroots movements to identify priorities and plans. Accordingly, an inception grant resourced grassroots leaders to join reflective planning processes.

The World Bank Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) grant on Green Accountability provided an opportunity for Huairou to negotiate for inclusive consultative mechanisms and collaborations among stakeholders, responsive to the needs and constraints of grassroots communities. The co-designed program allows us to challenge the World Bank’s notion of accountability around the Paris Agreement by leveraging grassroots leadership to transform power imbalances between grassroots communities and decision makers.

UNFCCC COP 28: In 2023, HC returned to the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in UAE with a six-member delegation (three of whom were attending the COP for the first time). The team of 6 had 12 speaking engagements, thanks to our coalition partners - UNDRR SEM, ADB, GAFF, UN Women, IIED and CJRF. This challenging venue became an opportunity for members and leaders to locate Huairou amidst a sea of other climate activists; and to present grassroots women’s practices and partnerships in ways that strive to shift policy approaches and resources in response to grassroots women’s concerns.

In most settings, the Huairou team observed that grassroots movements and their contributions were not understood. Theresa Makwara from ZPHCA, Zimbabwe, funded by CJRF, was a panellist at the UNDRR SEM High-Level Event titled ‘From Silos to Synergy: A Dialogue on Universal Access to Risk and Resilience Insight and Tools’. It was evident from her remarks that grassroots women’s networks are key actors in information ecosystems for anticipatory action, but are not publicly recognized as such; and therefore their leadership tends to remain invisible and un-funded.

At events organized by ADB titled ‘Scaling Up Local Investments in Adaptation That Leaves No One Behind’ and ‘Pushing the Limits to Adaptation to Minimise Loss and Damage’, our Asian delegates analysed important policy insights from CRF community grants, including the benefits of ‘flexible funding’; and how grassroots women have demonstrated innovations using small sums of money from the CRF to re-negotiate their relationship with local government

The Global Alliance for the Future of Food (GAFF), which shares our commitment to bring grassroots activists to policy venues, supported grassroots leader Pauline Kariuki from Rural Women Network, Kenya to speak in a high level panel convened by the Feminist Action and Climate Justice Action Coalition of UN Women titled ‘Gender Just Climate Transitions: Global Perspectives on the Implications for Land Rights and the Care Economy’. She pointed to challenges faced by women to retain control of

land, explained how grassroots women collaborate with men to protect their land rights. At the 'Green Accountability' launch Pauline presented grassroots partnership mechanisms that represent grassroots accountability mechanisms.

"We must localise, promote peer learning and document grassroots women's initiatives... We work with male champions to help women secure land. We form watchdog groups to support women's access and control of land. ...Our kitchen gardens demonstrate how we can produce food for our families, communities and countries."

-Pauline Kariuki

Lourivania Soarez from Rede Pintadas, Brazil, accredited by the Brazilian Government, used her presence at COP to interact with her national government and civil society. Among others, she interacted with the Governor of Bahia, the Secretary of Environment, and the Secretary Economic Development of Bahia. On finding that there was inadequate attention to Brazil's semi-arid areas, she plans to create a campaign to raise awareness of the challenges faced by communities in the Semi Arid region at COP30.

A side meeting with Global Alliance for the Future of Food (GAFF) representative Vivienne Madukeh familiarised her with the Huairou movement and vice versa. The discussion clarified that GAFF was a platform to interact with funders and familiarise them with HC's grassroots driven approach and achievements

Side meetings with high level representatives of USAID, Green Climate fund affirmed their interest in grassroots movements, but also conveyed to Huairou that funding modalities are not suited to partnering with grassroots movements. Following COP 28, USAID invited HC's member Theresa Makwara from ZHPFC to a briefing on grants for the Southern African region.

Community Caregiving

The year 2023 was a landmark year for the Huairou Commission's Care Agenda and partnerships. Huairou proposed, co-designed and co-convened and participated in the Global Caregivers Summit in México City in June in partnership with UN Women, the National Institute of Women of the Government of Mexico (INMUJERES). Huairou demonstrated its expertise in bringing to the forefront, grassroots leaders of large constituencies of women most impacted by crises and injustice, to directly present their interests to policymakers. While amplifying voices and celebrating the contributions of grassroots women community caregivers, the Summit was a pivotal moment for collective mobilisation of grassroots caregivers.

Among the most significant outcomes of the Summit was the collaboratively developed Call to Action shared with policymakers and partners. This document synthesised the knowledge, experiences, concerns, and proposals of women caregivers and domestic workers from diverse backgrounds. Notably, it emphasized the urgent need for all stakeholders - governments, international organisations, philanthropic entities, civil societies, and the private sector - to take concrete steps to recognize, and reward caregivers organisations and networks. The Call to Action has since become the core of HC's Care agenda and has subsequently been drawn upon to advocate at the UNGA, CSW67, UN Inaugural Day of Care and Support and other UN Expert Group Meetings.

The Caregivers Summit yielded several financial and advocacy commitments by partners in attendance, notably a two year collaboration with the **Ford Foundation** which included support for the participating in the Summit, follow up advocacy and developing a movement building campaign. In addition to advocacy

the campaign includes: **demonstrating** strategies in Africa, gathering evidence and enumerating grassroots contributions to the Care Economy, leaders' efforts to secure investments, and partner support to scale economically and socially just care systems.

The Huairou Commission emphasised community-based caregivers' aspirations at the **High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**⁵ side-event titled 'Care Systems for People and Planet: A Transformative Lever Towards Gender Equality and A Sustainable, Resilient & Inclusive Future' in July 2023, convened by UN Women, the Global Alliance for Care, and several UN missions. The coalitions underscored women caregivers' crucial role during crises like the Covid-19 pandemic, urging their inclusion in policy discussions for better care frameworks.

The **UN Deputy Secretary-General's Roundtable on Care Work** in February 2023, with participation from Violet Shivutse through invitation, explored policy levers to enhance the care economy, addressing challenges like financing. Violet Shivutse's involvement helped position grassroots women's role and leadership in the UN Future Summit's outcome document, aligning with the push for transformative care systems worldwide.

Securing Women's Land Tenure

In 2023, the Huairou Commission's work on advancing women's land rights and governance saw achievements in three main areas:

- Discussing the importance of including climate change dimension in GLTN tools such as the STDN, based on recommendations arising from multiple dialogues within GLTN
- Linking women's land rights with other priorities like food security and caregiving etc and advocating for these priorities through the CSW
- Campaigning for land rights through national, regional, and international forums/coalitions

In the GLTN, HC played a pivotal role in identifying ways to align the land rights debate with climate change-related themes. This was reflected in the Dhaka Declaration - a basis for the Expert Group meeting led by Huairou Commission, ANGOC and University of East London, bringing GLTN partners together to discuss Women's Land Rights and Climate change. The tool resulting from the meeting was called 'The Quezon City Framework for Developing a Women-Led New Social Contract to Enhance Land Rights and Climate Justice', highlighting shared rights and responsibilities among governments and citizens in the context of land rights.

HC recognized the intersectionality of women's land rights with other priorities such as food security, caregiving, and social protection. These rights are recognized and embedded in SDGs 1.4.2 on land security, 5.1 on agricultural land on women's access, and SDG 11 on housing. However, the national level Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) do not report adequately on land or ownership of women. HC actively participated in various forums and coalitions to campaign for women's land rights. and the establishment of the Grassroots Land Fund. We continued to serve as a member of the Steering committee of the Stand for Her Land Campaign during 2023, a global advocacy initiative led by Landesa, aimed at bridging implementation gaps in gender responsive frameworks and policies. This year, the campaign integrated

⁵ This event was convened by UN Women, the Global Alliance for Care, and the Chile, Argentina, Egypt, Kenya, Mexico and Spain Permanent Missions to the UN in New York. The event brought together members of the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights, along with the Global Alliance for Care and other initiatives.

issues of compensation for loss and damage and for women's land rights, resilience and housing in the context of the changing climate, as a result of HC's extensive work on land.

En-gendering Local Governance

UN Habitat has consistently recognized and partnered with Huairou for [several years](#). At the Second UN Habitat Assembly in June 2023, the Huairou delegation brought grassroots perspectives to the pre-event stakeholder engagement forum. This provided opportunities to influence member state negotiations. The delegation called for the formal recognition of grassroots women's leadership in implementing the New Urban Agenda and SDG11. We provided language for two resolutions that will guide UN Habitat's future strategy: *Accelerating Transformation of Informal Settlements and Slums by 2030* and *Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Grassroots leaders used the pre-assembly convenings to advocate for their priorities which include resourcing community-led localisation activities, recognising women's leadership, decision making process and gender-responsive policies in upgrading informal settlements and slums. The Huairou Commission was also invited to join a member of the Technical Group on the resolution on Transformation of Slums led by the South Africa government.

Huairou continues its partnership with **United Cities and Local Government (UCLG)**. In 2023, grassroots leaders were invited as panellists and speakers in UCLG's organised events at the UN Women Commission on the Status of Women meeting (CSW 67), and at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). We advocated to en-gender the Pact for the Future, agreed upon at the 2022 UCLG World Summit.

Our recent engagements in the **Asia Pacific Urban Forum (APUF)** are increasingly building credibility with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (UN ESCAP) for bringing to the UN a strong grassroots constituency base with lessons to offer policymakers. At the APUF-8, led by UNESCAP the Huairou Commission was invited to lead the Women's Assembly and partner with the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights to lead the Grassroots Assembly. The Assemblies are spaces for stakeholders to formulate recommendations for implementing SDG Goal 11. Huairou members called for grassroots women's involvement in shaping policies, programmes, resource allocations, and for the integration of data and tools produced by grassroots organisations. Grassroots roles in building partnerships to advance inclusive, sustainable cities was recognized in the Declaration of the Forum.

4. Insights: Adaptability of our Movement

This year's reflections focus on insights emerging from the growing strength and maturation of our Movement and our need to respond to evolving priorities of members operating in a crisis-ridden environment where global resources for grassroots movements are shrinking

Balancing internal priorities with external demands

The Secretariat and the leadership are continually working to **balance internal demands of strengthening collective leadership and learning with demands of external institutional actors**. For example, Huairou's slimly staffed secretariat is frequently challenged to fundraise, coordinate and facilitate grassroots leaders' engagement in policy venues. In supporting and preparing individual leaders to analyse and articulate their experiences, and present their insights to policymakers, we often miss opportunities to disseminate grassroots innovation and learning across our movement. Accountability to external actors, formalised through contractual obligations, tend to override internal priorities that remain informal. External obligations tend to pull staff into spending a disproportionate amount of time on external requirements, missing opportunities to facilitate more rigorous reflection and learning among grassroots women that would inspire action and catalyse learning among their peers. This learning however has the potential to ultimately create more robust sustained processes and operating systems for greater impact of the Movement.

Learning to respond to grassroots priorities as the Movement evolves

In terms of movement building this was a year in which HC demonstrated its ability as a global movement to design and develop programs on themes in response to grassroots women's priorities. While each of these themes - Loss and Damage, Food systems and Caregiving - are at different stages in their evolution, they each represent efforts on the part of the members and secretariat to collectively work on opening up opportunities to collectively reflect, increase exposure, gather evidence, aggregate experiences to frame a position and formulate advocacy asks.

Challenges in Funding Grassroots Movements

While donors are keen to engage grassroots organisations and movements and value them for advancing local implementation of national and global policies, institutional arrangements for flowing finances to grassroots organisations and movements are increasingly complicated and protracted. Negotiating with funders to adapt their systems in response to grassroots capacities and needs took up substantial time and effort on the part of HC's team. MEL systems are emerging as a major site for surfacing contradictory viewpoints within consortiums and with donors. These processes, crucial to grassroots partnerships, essentially require numerous hours of unremunerated coordination, document reviews and negotiations which the Movement is compelled to absorb.

Annex I: List of SIDA Implementing Partners

Number of Implementing Partners:

- Africa - 9
- Asia - 8
- Latin America - 7

No	Organisation Name	Country	Region
1	Shibuye Community Health Workers	Kenya	Africa
2	Winam Grassroots	Kenya	Africa
3	Rural Women Network	Kenya	Africa
4	AWARE	Uganda	Africa
5	UCOBAC	Uganda	Africa
6	Zambia Homeless and Poor People's Federation	Zambia	Africa
7	Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation	Ghana	Africa
8	Ntengwe Community Development	Zimbabwe	Africa
9	Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children's Association	Zimbabwe	Africa
10	DAMPA-SOFP	Philippines	Asia
11	CO-Multiversity	Philippines	Asia
12	HIMAWANTI	Nepal	Asia
13	Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj	Nepal	Asia
14	Lumanti Support Group for Shelter	Nepal	Asia
15	UPWD	Cambodia	Asia
16	Swayam Shikshan Prayog	India	Asia
17	Yakkum Emergency Unit	Indonesia	Asia

18	AMC	Costa Rica	Latin America
19	Las Brumas	Nicaragua	Latin America
20	GROOTS Peru	Peru	Latin America
21	MUDECI	Mexico	Latin America
22	Rede Pintadas	Brazil	Latin America
23	ASAPROMU	El Salvador	Latin America
24	Fundación Guatemala	Guatemala	Latin America

Annex II: Aggregation of member and movement level indicators, targets and achievements as per Work Plan

Member level

Immediate Outcomes	Output indicators	2023 Targets	2023 Achievements
Diamond 1: Strengthening Grassroots Women's Leadership and Organising			
Leaders provide next-stage training to grassroots on HC Tools and power and influence mapping	# trainings organised with CRF funding	30 - 60 training events	50+
	# women being trained as organisers and advocates for community resilience and gender equality	above times 10	600+
Diamond 2: Investing in Grassroots-led Resilience Building Practices			
Member led Community Risk Mapping and Plan Updating	# of Community Risk Maps developed by members and their communities	0	78
CRF implementers establish annual plan for transferring and learning impactful resilience practices	% of communities where members are working that have developed their Risk Maps/Plans	40-60 communities	45.6%
Documentation and demonstration of practices to other actors	# of resilience practices documented/systematised	40	13
Diamond 3: Establishing Networks and Coalitions at Local and National Levels			
Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience (CPPR) updated to reflect new partnership priorities in pandemic/climate crisis	# of "allies mapping" exercises	24	Work in Progress

Immediate Outcomes	Output indicators	2023 Targets	2023 Achievements
recovery			
Diamond 4: Influencing Public Decision Making and Policies			
Grassroots-led monitoring of local progress/setbacks in implementation of global frameworks	# communities in which local implementation of global frameworks (SDG/Sendai/related) is being tracked		
Dialogues, trainings and collaborative activities are led to foster joint initiatives with key power holders (government, financial institutions)	# of local-to-local dialogues convened	48	33
Grassroots priorities and agenda are mainstreamed in national/local policy and programming deliberations	# of national/local events and dialogues with external actors in which grassroots priorities and agenda were addressed		
Actor and policy mapping for defining advocacy agendas and strategies at the local and national level - progress marker on influencing	# of actor and policy mapping generated by members	0	NA
	# advocacy agendas developed by members defining the expected changes and actors to influence	0	NA
	# advocacy initiatives/influencing efforts implemented by members	0	NA

Movement level

Immediate Outcomes	Output indicators	2023 Targets	2023 Achievements
Diamond 1: Strengthening Grassroots Women's Leadership and Organising			
HC Communities of Practice developing/implementing learning and advocacy strategies	% of Community of Practice(s) that have established a work plan (capacity building, piloting, collective advocacy agenda, partnership building plan, engage in global/regional fora)	4	5 (Resilient Food Systems, Community Caregiving, Securing Women's Land Tenure Security, Local Governance in Urban and Rural Settlements and Localising and en-gendering climate resilience)
	# members actively contributing to HC COP's	60% of membership	60%
Peer learning/mentoring to increase capacity to apply Leadership Tools	# of women participating as mentors in the Leadership Development Program	15	11
Member-led decision taking in (Governing council/ Congress)	# of decision taken in support of collective action in implementation of HC 5 year strategy	0	5
Implementation of systems and processes for institutional strengthening (including financial management, organisational development, M&E)	# of members receiving ongoing accompaniment and mentoring by the Secretariat on financial management and accountability for the initiatives funded by the HC	24	24 (all SIDA-funded members)

Immediate Outcomes	Output indicators	2023 Targets	2023 Achievements
Diamond 2: Investing in Grassroots-led Resilience Building Practices			
Peer exchanges (regional and global level)	# of peer exchanges in resilience building	8	4 (S.Asia, SE Asia, Nepal, Latin America)
Documentation and aggregation of grassroots contributions to resilience building	# of knowledge products developed to emphasise grassroots leaders perspectives on Covid Recovery and increasingly crisis-prone planet	2	4 (Loss and Damage findings report, Community caregiving survey, membership survey and food systems)
Diamond 3: Establishing Networks and Coalitions at Local and National Levels			
Sustained policy advocacy and issue reframing activities with development actors who share HCs intention to drive community financing for locally led adaptation, risk reduction and resilient cities and villages	# of initiatives/engagements led or attended by the HC for building coalitions and networks with other actors	7	10 (ADB-CRPP, GPSA, LLA, UNDRR-SEM, Gobeshona, GEF, GLTN, UN-Habitat, Caregivers alliance)
Diamond 4: Influencing Public Decision Making and Policies			
Grassroots leadership in promoting public recognition and policy change key to advancing inclusive, adaptive sustainable development (and democratising stakeholder engagement)	# of global/regional fora and events with external actors in which grassroots priorities and agenda were discussed/presented	15	29 (29 Policy Forums with 50+ speaking engagements)

Immediate Outcomes	Output indicators	2023 Targets	2023 Achievements
	# advocacy agendas developed by the HC defining the expected changes and actors to influence	4	20 (UNDRR GAP, Sendai-MTR, UNFCCC-COP28, Loss and Damage, G20 DRR Working Group, GIZ- Health infrastructure, UNDP Community Based Resilience Building, etc)