



ASTRAEA LESBIAN FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

**EVALUATION AND NEEDS
ASSESSMENT OF THE
INTERSEX HUMAN
RIGHTS FUND
FINAL REPORT**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“A big, big thank you to them, to say to them, keep up the right work, doing good for a lot of people, keep up this very righteous work that they do. All these things are very valuable for us and our lives. As the funders give the money, they are not really in touch with the persons and the individuals. If they could do that, they would understand how... valuable this funding is.”

– Study informant

The consultants would like to thank the intersex activists and other informants of this study who generously contributed their time and perspectives. We are also grateful to the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and especially to the Intersex Human Rights Fund staff, Ruth, Loé, and Julius, for placing this project in our trust. We hope that we have contributed in a small way to the future of this important movement.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
FG	Focus Group
FoE	Freedom of Expression
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
HS	Holistic Security
IHRF	Intersex Human Rights Fund
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and other SOGIESC identities ²
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
SOGIE	Sexual orientation and gender identity and expression
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

²This report occasionally uses the term "LGBTQ+" without the "I" when informants are referring to the movement in a way that they perceive excludes intersex activism within that umbrella.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (Astraea) is a feminist, public foundation that has been supporting feminist and LGBTIQ+ justice organizations for more than 40 years. While intersex activists have made great strides in the past few decades, funding for activism has not matched the progress activists and allies hold in the LGBTIQ+ space. Intersex funding globally is of urgent need for those leading human rights struggles, with only a few funders substantially supporting intersex movements.

In response, Astraea launched the Intersex Human Rights Fund (IHRF) in 2015 to address and help close “ the significant gap in funding for intersex issues by resourcing intersex-led activism, building the capacity of intersex groups, raising visibility, and driving resources to the intersex movement”.

Since its creation, the IHRF has successfully connected intersex organizations with donors, provided funding to grantee partners, facilitated regional and international spaces, and promoted the advancement of the human rights and demands of intersex people globally. The fund has significantly evolved since 2015, reflected through:

- Annual increases in the funding resources, from \$187,000 USD (2015) to \$507,000 USD (2021) for a total of \$3 million USD in the 2015-2021 period.
- An annual increase in number of grantees: from 29 intersex-led groups and projects in 2015 to 53 intersex-led groups and projects in 2021. From 2015 to 2021, the IHRF provided a total of 283 grants.
- Geographical expansion to a total of 54 countries, or about one-quarter of the world’s countries.
- A focus on funding renewals (including a total of 93 organizations between 2017-2021) with most receiving renewed support after their first year of funding.
- Expansion of the grantmaking length, including in 2021 when IHRF was able to make its first 2-year-grants to six organizations in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Given this context, Astraea engaged the consulting team of Marissa Billowitz, Jorge Davila, and Erick Monterrosas to conduct an evaluation and needs assessment of the IHRF. The evaluation seeks to garner an understanding of the IHRF’s contribution to global intersex rights, including laws and policies, institutional support, enabling environment, and social and cultural change.

It also aims to identify ways to strengthen the IHRF’s infrastructure and strategic approaches, informed by an understanding of the current state and needs of the movement, including but not limited to Astraea’s grantee partners.

³ Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice, Intersex Human Rights Fund 2015 docket.

KEY FINDINGS

When discussing the needs and priorities of the global intersex movement with the current state of the Intersex Human Rights Fund, four areas of key findings emerged:

BUILD GRANTMAKING INFRASTRUCTURE

There is interest in strengthening IHRF's grantmaking infrastructure to grow long-term, flexible funding for movements. The research concluded that IHRF should continue to prioritize a feminist, long-term, and flexible approach to grantmaking by providing core funding for underfunded intersex organizations and groups worldwide. IHRF could further develop the infrastructure to increase the size and allocate more multi-year grants, especially to new underfunded groups in the Global South. The report finds that there is a need to create rapid response or emergency funds and provide more flexibility on the application and disbursement process to make them as agile and participatory as possible.

BOLSTER EVALUATION PROCESSES

To build collective power, IHRF should seek ways to bolster their monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes. The report found a need to fill in gaps related to documenting outcomes and monitoring progress of grantees, particularly with a high-need for prioritizing collective knowledge sharing and learning strategies. This could, for example, involve developing new mechanisms for assuring that decision making positions and power within funded organizations are held by intersex persons.

CONNECT TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Given that funding is limited, there is a need to identify grantees or partners that can provide South-South technical assistance on critical topics such as advocacy, litigation, leadership, and communications. The Fund currently would be unable to respond to these needs with its staff alone, however, it can act as a broker who connects the need with the technical assistance provider.

FORM NEW ALLIANCES

To strengthen the power of movements, deepen alliances with other human rights and social movements, including indigenous, disability, youth, children and patients' rights, women's rights, and other LGBTQ+ movements. Donors could also collaborate on advocacy more and make introductions to other funders whose funding intersects with intersex rights, such as feminist, disability rights, LGBTIQ+, children's rights, and patient's rights funds.

PRIORITIZE LIVED EXPERIENCES

Astraea and the IHRF should continue to promote the importance of listening to and addressing the experiences of intersex people, as well as to focus on the importance of funding organizations that work for visibility, which helps build a solid foundation for structural and political changes for intersex people.

CHAPTER 1: METHODOLOGY

This Evaluation and Needs Assessment was designed to be carried out through six phases of implementation with two main objectives:

1. To garner an understanding of the IHRF's contribution to intersex rights, including laws and policies, institutional support, and social and cultural change;
2. To develop recommendations to strengthen the IHRF's infrastructure and strategic approaches, informed by an understanding of the current state and needs of the movement, including but not limited to Astraea's grantee partners.

This section describes the methodologies employed to meet these objectives through the different stages of the study.

(1.1.) PHASE 1. INCEPTION

The consultant team met in the first months of 2022 with Astraea's IHRF staff to define initial steps, share documents for desk review, and define profiles of informants and the mechanisms to compensate activist informants for their participation in interviews and focus groups.⁴ The consultants and IHRF team also discussed the priorities for the methodology, tentative areas to be covered by case studies, and the proposed timeline for subsequent phases of the consultancy.

Furthermore, during the inception, the strategic areas of inquiry guiding the Evaluation and Needs Assessment were defined as follows: a) Effectiveness of IHRF as a funding mechanism; b) movement building; c) advocacy; d) visibility and social/cultural change; e) enabling environment; and e) capacity building and organizational strengthening (See Annex A). The strategic areas of inquiry and the respective questions are intended to align with Astraea's goals to: "reclaim the value of learning and evaluation as a means to remain accountable across our relationships, draw as much learning as possible from our work, and help our grantee partners, peers, and funders approach learning and evaluation with a deeper sense of relevance and meaning."⁵

During Phase 1, the consultant team designed guidelines for ethical considerations and a consent form for participants providing inputs. The designed guidelines highlighted the principles of voluntary, non-extractive participation, including anti-racist and decolonial human rights frameworks, and intersectional feminist approaches to guide the participatory process through all of its phases. The guidelines also considered basic, holistic security and anonymization standards for participants (See Annex B). At the end of the inception phase,

⁴Astraea agreed to provide a US\$150 compensation for each participant of the intersex activist cohort (not to staff of donor or international NGO partner organizations) for their time and contribution. By no means was the economic compensation intended to enforce a bias on the information provided. On the contrary, participants were encouraged to provide their own critical viewpoints and analysis to enrich the research. The compensation mechanisms for the participants sharing knowledge and information for this endeavor were designed, communicated to participants and implemented administratively by Astraea.

⁵Cfr. Astaea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Learning and Evaluation Framework, p. 5

the consultant team produced an agreed-upon Inception Report, which included the feedback from Astraea's IHRF staff.

(1.2.) PHASE 2. DESK REVIEW

In this phase, the consultant team became familiar with the IHRF portfolio through a review of relevant documents such as grant proposals, dockets (2015-2021), and available reports. In addition, the team reviewed Astraea's Feminist Funding Principles, monitoring, learning, and evaluation frameworks, organizational theories of change, and other related internal and public documentation (See References). The consultant team also requested further IHRF programmatic, monitoring, and evaluation documentation to complement the preliminary desk review. The team began this review in parallel to the inception process, extracting key information to inform the design of the data collection instruments for the next phase.

(1.3.) PHASE 3. PARTICIPATORY DATA COLLECTION FOR THE EVALUATION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A participatory consultation process was carried out from March to April 2022 to explore the aforementioned areas of inquiry relevant to the evaluation of the IHRF's contributions, as well as assess perceptions of the state of the intersex movement and its needs in order to inform the Needs Assessment. This participatory consultation included Astrea's IHRF staff, IHRF Advisory Board members, intersex activists, funders and other interested parties⁶ via the following:

1. A confidential online survey completed by 68 participants. This survey was disseminated to all selected stakeholders and grantees, including intersex activists that were not necessarily grantees.⁷

⁶IHRF staff were vital in the dissemination of the survey to the Fund's networks. Communications and follow up for the data collection and subsequent phases was carried out by the consultancy team.

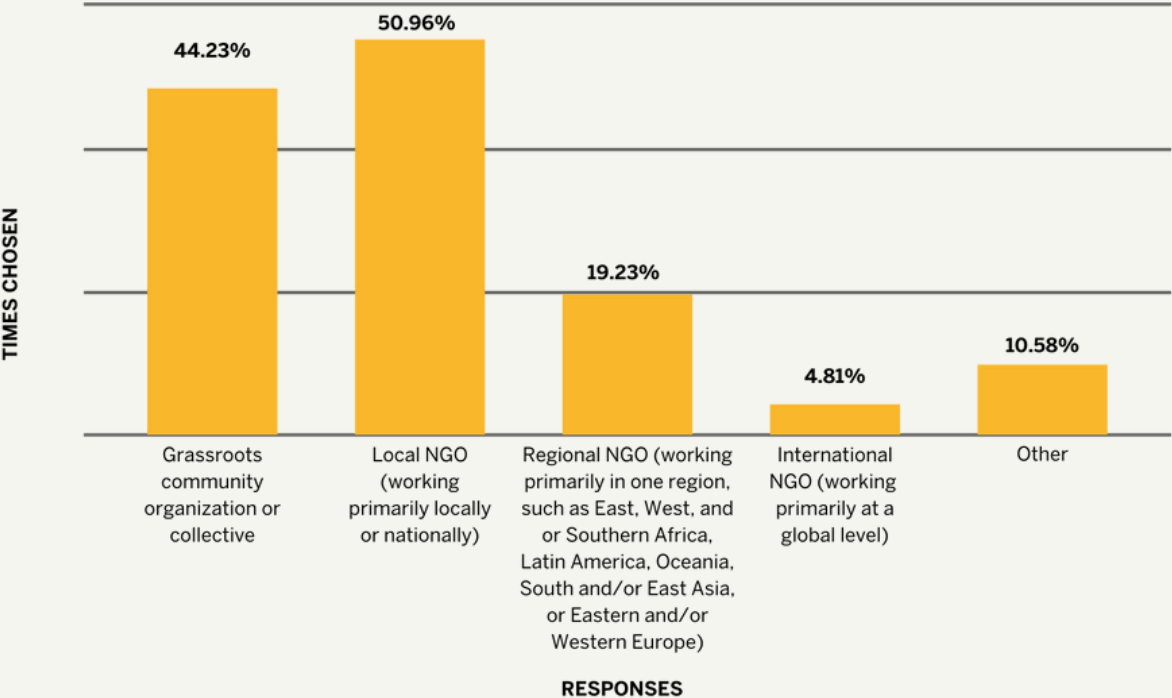
Limitations: Even if informants for this report were intended to be diverse and to be representative of distinct regions and types of organizations the sample is *ad hoc* thus may under-represent other intersex groups who could not access the dissemination networks used to get access to the activists i.e. IHRF, its networks and those of the consultant team. Data was reported by participants without the research team further verifying its veracity or accuracy.

⁷The consulting team also sought to disseminate the survey through interview participants as well as via social networks such as LinkedIn and other activist networks working on intersex related issues. The survey provided the option to skip questions. Several items consisted of non-exclusive choice questions therefore the data presented in the Figures of this section may not correspond with the total number of participants or even exceed it as it was possible to select multiple options for certain questions. A specific set of questions was designed for the Evaluation of the IHRF; those questions were only asked of those participants who reported receiving present or past funding from the IHRF.

The survey was originally designed in English. Automated translation was offered for participants who responded to it in French, Bengali, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Russian, and Spanish versions of the survey. The team has language ability in Portuguese and Spanish and closely reviewed and edited those versions.

The majority of participants (86%) recognized themselves as intersex or having a variation in sex characteristics; while 11% did not define themselves in that category and 3% preferred “not to say”. Approximately half of the participants reported having received funding from the IHRF as a current or former grantee. The respondents reported predominantly working on intersex issues at a local NGO and the second largest cohort reported working at grassroots organizations.

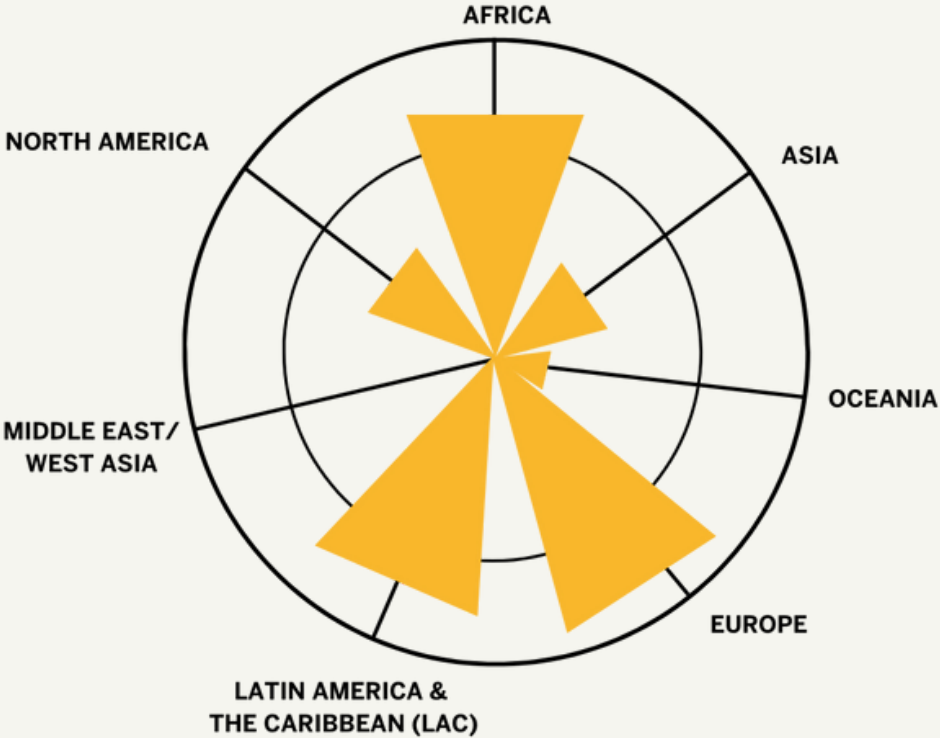
Figure 1: What type of intersex organization do you participate in?



The survey received responses from participants from every region where the IHRF provides funding.⁸ More than half of the respondents reported working on intersex issues in a Global South region.

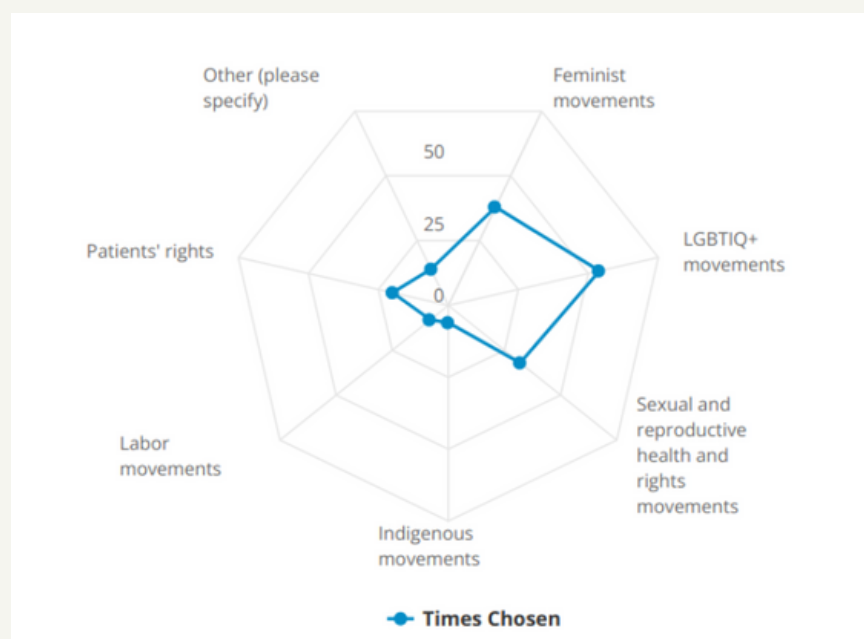
⁸The IHRF does not provide funding in the SouthWest Asia / Middle East. Despite dissemination of the survey to amplify the needs assessment, there were no responses in this region from non-grantees intersex activists.

Figure 2: In which region do you work?



Aside from intersex work, participants could identify other movements to which their activism was related. The LGBTIQ+, feminist, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) movements were the main movements selected. To a lesser extent, other movements such as indigenous rights, patient rights, children’s rights, disability rights, mental health, and others were also selected by participants (See Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: In addition to the intersex movement, with which of the following movements do you identify your activism?



2. In-depth interviews (14) were conducted with a selection of advisors and grantee partners familiar with the IHRF, including advisory board members selected in consultation with Astraea, both for the Evaluation and the Needs Assessment. The final definition of priority participants was generated in consultation with IHRF staff. The selection criteria sought to prioritize participants' diversity and distinct voices within the intersex movement. A total of 16 participants living in 14 countries from the regions of Africa, Latin America, Europe, Asia and Oceania participated in the interviews.⁹

3. Key-Informant Focus Groups (FGs) (4) were conducted for collective dialogue on priority needs regarding selected lines of inquiry¹⁰ divided as follows: a) Two focus groups including seven grantee partners/Advisory Group members/intersex activists addressing issues such as major challenges and achievements of the intersex movement, primary needs in different contexts as well as an ecosystem of collaboration for the future of intersex movement in specific areas (See Annex C); b) A third FG with two donors and partner organizations to discuss lessons for funding the intersex movement and its expansion, as well as opportunities and resources for strengthening donors' strategic approaches¹¹ (See Annex D); and c) A fourth FG with the three IHRF staff members addressing the strategic vision for the future of the IHRF and issues related to IHRF's most significant changes and outcomes, as well as internal capabilities and external collaboration needs (See Annex E).

⁹Interviews of approximately 90 minutes were held remotely by the consultant team in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, in addition one interview took place in Russian with the support of a professional interpreter.

¹⁰For all the FGs, except for the one with donors, aside semi-structured group interviews, alternative methodologies with *Jamboard* collage tools were used to promote a participatory collective visualization. All the FGs were carried on in English, except one held in Spanish with intersex activists from the Latin American Region.

¹¹In addition, another five participants from the donor community and IHRF international partner organizations who had difficulties attending the virtual FG kindly provided written inputs to answer the semi-structured interview guidelines designed for this group. In addition to the seven Advisory Board FG participants, another member who could not attend provided written inputs. All the written inputs received by the consultant team were also integrated into the data analysis.

(1.4.) PHASE 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DRAFT REPORT WRITING

During the first two weeks of May 2022, the aforementioned collected data was analyzed using a mixed methods approach. This included an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to garner relevant aggregated and nuanced findings. The analysis was focused on key learning and insights related to the previously defined areas of inquiry presented in its respective subsections for the evaluation and needs assessment. Moreover, from this refined analysis a series of preliminary recommendations in strategic areas are offered for Astraea to maximize the impact of the IHRF moving forward.

(1.5.) PHASE 5. CASE STUDIES

Appendix H discusses three case studies (2-3 pages each) that focus on specific or overlapping thematic areas included in the final report delivery. The case studies address the role of Astraea's IHRF to support the grantees to advance the goals of the movement, as well as relevant lessons and challenges for collaboration with grantees. The case studies are not intended to be representative of all regions nor applicable to every context.

The case studies in three diverse regions addressing overlapping areas are as follows: 1) South-South technical support for emerging intersex organizations in the African Region, 2) Engagement of parents as a strategy for the advancement of intersex issues by OII Europe and others, and 3) The importance of supporting decolonialist intersex organizations, focusing on Intersex Peru. The case studies are intended to complement the evaluation analysis by providing elements for learning on selected strategies. Hence, the case studies analysis could inform future Astraea strategies or serve as primary material for further research, collective learning with grantees and also for the prospect of creating more elaborate communication materials in the future. The definitive case studies will be designed and included in the final report after further consultations with Astraea.

(1.6.) PHASE 6. VALIDATION, FEEDBACK, AND FINAL REPORT DELIVERY

As part of a proposed validation process, the draft report was provided to the IHRF team, which in turn shared it with the Advisory Group members. This process aimed to garner feedback and validate the draft analysis. As a result, the comments have been integrated into the final report.

CHAPTER 2: EVALUATION OF THE IHRF

(2.1) MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This section examines the IHRF's effectiveness as a funding mechanism and its contribution to furthering intersex rights, including laws and policies, institutional support, and social and cultural change. The IHRF, in its function from 2015 to 2022, has made a significant contribution to the funding of global intersex movements, with one of its most important achievements being its existence as the first fund of its kind to solely focus on resourcing the strategies of intersex activists around the world. In the evaluation section below, this report explores the ways in which the IHRF has effected change since its founding, and opportunities to strengthen the fund in the future. Among its major accomplishments, the IHRF has:

- Funded intersex activists who had never before received grants, seeding and helping to establish new organizations globally, with a focus on the Global South;
- Provided crucial funding for organizations that may not have otherwise survived, in the context of a dearth of funding for intersex organizations.

“The IHRF has been very instrumental in ensuring the survival of many grassroots organizations... such as ours' since not many funders are keen to support intersex work.”

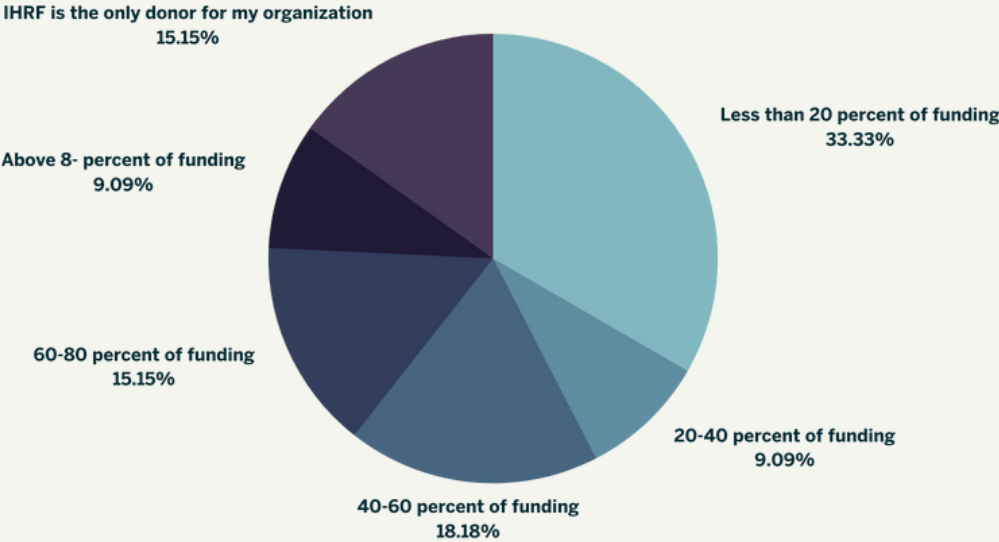
- Survey respondent

“Astraea worked hard on prioritizing intersex rights support in the last years... especially in countries, where there are no other funding and above all no public funding opportunities.”

- Survey respondent

The below graph, showing that more than half of survey respondents receive more than 40% of their funding from IHRF, demonstrates the importance of the Fund for its partners:

Figure 4: Percentage of grantees' funding provided by the IHRF



Consulted donors regard the IHRF as the primary point of reference for intersex philanthropy:

“There are very few intermediary funds that are distributing resources to intersex-led groups and even fewer that are led by and in direct service to intersex movements. For this and many other reasons, supporting the Intersex Human Rights Fund is key”
-Donor/International Partner

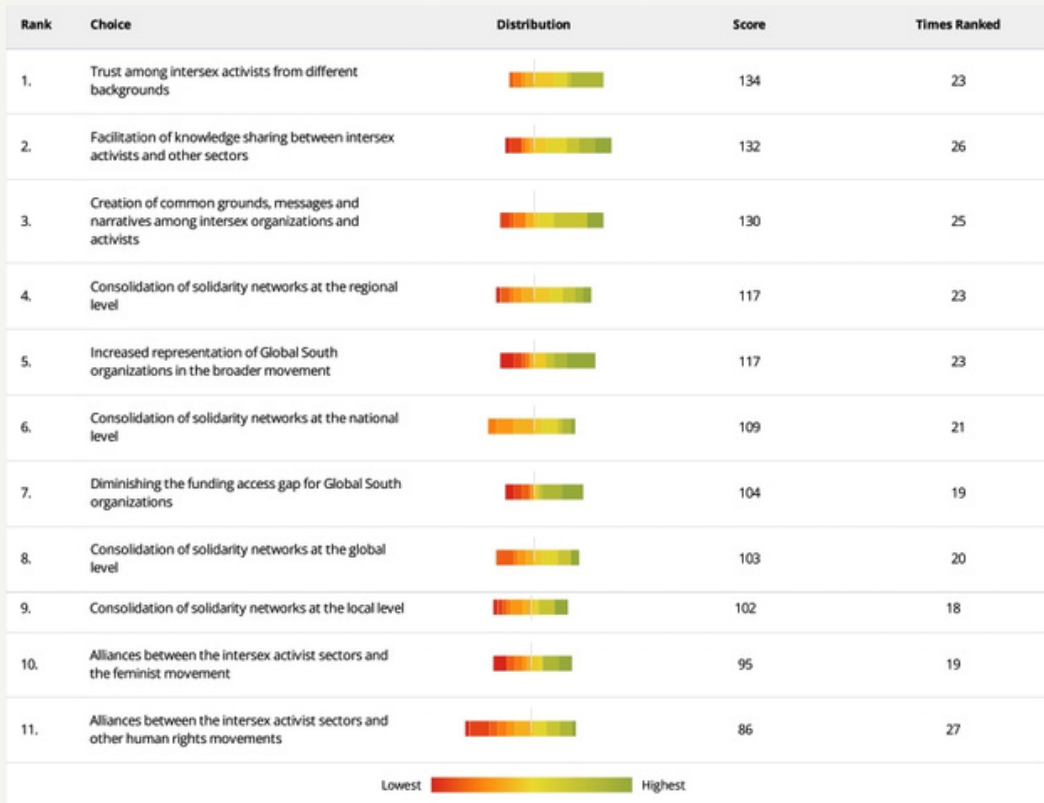
(2.2.) EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUNDING MECHANISM

(2.2.1.) PERSPECTIVES ON IHRF’S EFFECTIVENESS

IHRF is seen as the primary funder for the Intersex movement, as most LGBTQ+ funders globally avoid or do not include intersex grantees in their docket. Furthermore, more than half of the survey respondents considered that the IHRF was “very successful” in furthering intersex rights generally, while one third found it “successful”.

Overall, the IHRF was perceived by grantees/former grantees as a funding mechanism responsible for tangible improvements in specific areas. Among the top: trust building, facilitation of knowledge sharing, creation of common grounds messages and narratives, and consolidation of solidarity networks at the regional level for intersex communities (See Figure below).

Figure 5: Which of the following areas have seen improvements related to IHRF funding?



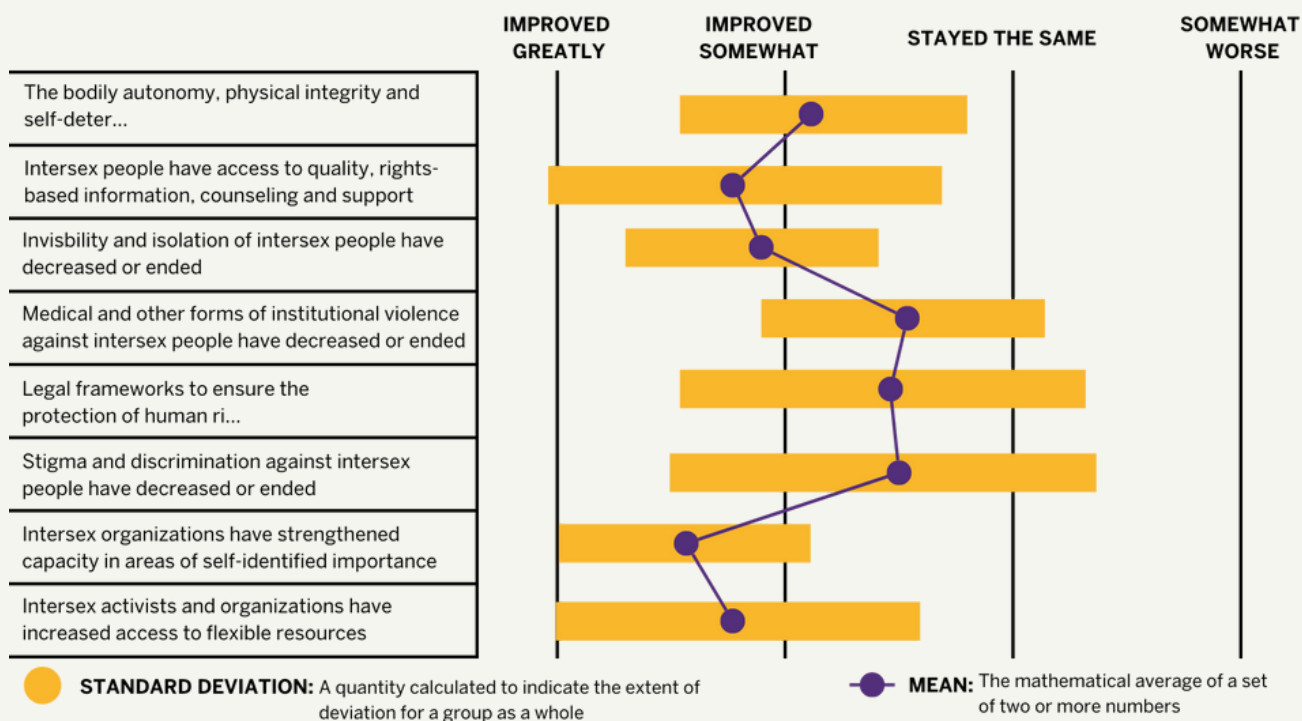
There were specific areas related to the IHRF objectives that were perceived as improving significantly as a result of IHRF’s funding (above the “improved somewhat” threshold), while other areas were perceived as experiencing more moderate improvement.¹² At the aggregate level, there was no significant perception of worsening in any of the areas related to IHRF’s funding. The three areas perceived as having improved the most as a result of IHRF’s funding, as seen in the below graph, are:

- Intersex people have access to quality, rights-based information, counselling, and support;
- Intersex organizations have strengthened capacity in areas of self-identified importance; and
- Intersex activists and organizations have increased access to flexible resources.

¹²By statistical mean of survey data those above the “improved somewhat” included: a) strengthened capacity for intersex organizations in areas of self-defined importance b) Intersex people have access to quality, rights-based information, counselling and support c) access to flexible resources d) Invisibility and isolation of intersex people have decreased or ended.

Other areas perceived with a moderated improvement (i.e with statistical mean above “stayed the same” but under the “improved somewhat threshold were: a) Medical and other forms of institutional violence against intersex people have decreased or ended, b) Legal frameworks to ensure the protection of human rights and reparative justice for intersex people c) Stigma and discrimination against intersex people have decreased or ended d) The bodily autonomy, physical integrity and self-determination of intersex people are realized and respected.

Figure 6: How much have the following areas improved as a result of IHRF's funding?



(2.2.2) FLEXIBILITY

Effectiveness of the IHRF as a funding mechanism is, to a great extent, linked to its flexibility. 94% of survey respondents consider that the IHRF grants are flexible while 6% consider it “somewhat flexible”. Flexibility was associated with the IHRF’s ability to provide core and non-restricted support to grantees. This was deemed crucial to cover core costs and pursue objectives beyond otherwise limited project implementation:

“Since IHRF fund is flexible [to] date it has been helpful to carry out our work smoothly. Being an emerging organization, a flexible fund provides strong support, focus on movement, organizational strengthening and sustainability, expand[ing] working areas, and [making] community need-based decisions.”
- Interviewee

Flexibility allowed support for local determined activities, based on needs and the advancement of intersex human rights. The flexible funding also provided the possibility to roll over funds from the year to next year in order to achieve critical activities when time frames shifted. The flexible funding was also used for organizational strengthening and covering indirect costs, from salaries to other administrative costs for running organizations. Moreover, for the implementation of activities, the IHRF provided flexibility for adaptation to evolving contextual challenges.

“I feel that IHRF has been designed to be as flexible as possible in order to meet and accommodate the ever-changing intersex persons' needs and global environmental needs”

-Interviewee

Importantly, the IHRF was valued for its respect for grantees' autonomy on strategic and operational decision-making. As a Latin American grantee working on indigenous issues and intersex rights put it:

“Astraea’s funds have been flexible for our political autonomy in the territories where we work, this is extremely important for us”

- Survey respondent

The IHRF was also perceived to be helpful in navigating contingencies and emergencies, for example during the COVID-19 pandemic in which the IHRF provided contingency funding in the midst of volatile conditions for organizations.

Overall, the IHRF was also considered flexible in its requirements and reporting mechanisms with references to its simplicity in comparison to other funds.¹³ Simple processes and helpful IHRF staff with good disposition for assistance were particularly valued by grantees, making funding accessible to small and grassroots intersex groups, including for those lacking legal, fiscal or formal registry or for the recently created.

“This is a new field and new funds, and also the movement is kind of new, all are new, new people really need to learn, learn also how to use the fund properly. We will make many mistakes. ...everything has details to follow, Astraea is very flexible, we can focus on initiating and contacting our movement, not focusing on legal documentation issues.”

-Interviewee

“Astraea made the process so easy, because [as] an organization we don't understand the process, and they make different efforts to make the process more easy. You easily contact Loé [IHRF Program Associate]. I don't know any other funder that is very supportive [other] than the IHRF, and I think that matters.”

-Interviewee

The evaluation found a small presence of discrepancies in grant disbursement.. While most of the grantees did not report problems and most found appropriate time lapses for disbursements, some reported slow disbursements in comparison to other funders. This, in turn, was said to constrain the agility of the local implementation of certain activities.

¹³The IHRF has implemented strategies to be accessible (e.g. Applications in several Global South languages, receiving online applications, etc.). However, there was one respondent who had a negative view of the application proposal on-line form, considering it not user-friendly.

(2.2.3) IHRF EXPANSION AND SIZE OF FUNDING

During recent years, the IHRF has expanded its number of grantees, provided grant renewals, and increased funding for individual organizations by up to USD 10,000. This expansion of funding was welcomed by the majority of intersex activists,¹⁴ as it represents new possibilities to sustain intersex activism. The growth of the IHRF was also perceived as the appropriate response to a growing demand for funding, as well as an opportunity to diversify and amplify the plurality of intersex organizations:

"With each cycle new organizations and groups led by intersex people are incorporated and many of these organizations have their headquarters in countries that had not been contemplated before, which guarantees the representativeness, not only of initiatives, but geographically."

- Survey respondent

"Growth diversifies and broadens voices, experiences, differentiates them and sheds light on many points. The growth is due to the work of activism in different territories"

- Survey respondent

What is more, the IHRF's expansion equipped organizations with a convincing argument to attract other donors due to the trust inspired by the IHRF in donors' circles:

"Intersex organizations always need more funding because they don't have access to funding like other organizations; the [IHRF] fund itself always needs more funding so expansion is always a good thing for intersex organizations at country level particularly... You see guys who give us unrestricted funding trust us, so you too can trust us, the expansion is really welcomed in the intersex movement... [The IHRF] is a very trusted fund."

-Interviewee

One of the main concerns for the majority of participants interviewed was the limited size of funding, which was cited as a barrier for meeting broader objectives by the intersex movement. On the one hand, the size of funding was recognized as crucial for seeding and setting up small organizations, especially those with limited capabilities; on the other hand, it was seen as limited for further developing organizations in accordance with their growing needs. The limitations on the funding cap were noted both by Global South activists and activists who work in high-income countries where the operational costs for organizations are proportionate.

"If the grant is 10,000 USD, and the question is what can you do with that amount of money, on the one hand [it] is a lot of money. On the other hand [it] is not that much money so if [you] want an organization to be more professionalized or like to [implement a] bigger kind of project or program this is not enough, but maybe it is good for what it is because again it helps. That seed money to start something growing and also there is big

¹⁴Not all interviewees were aware that the funding overall has expanded, but of those, some were aware that the individual grants to organizations were larger than in the beginning of the IHRF's existence, and that some are now multi-year. An interviewee associated the funding expansion with the good work and results delivered by the grantees. One survey participant from Latin America stressed the fact that even if at the present the IHRF provided funding to more organizations in the region, the amount of funding for certain organizations supported by the IHRF had diminished over time. The only concern mentioned regarding expansion was sustainability, citing both IHRF's capacity to handle the increasing number of grants and the possible creation of dependency of intersex organizations on the fund.

flexibility within that fund so you can spend it a little bit differently than you originally planned ... In that way [it] is a question about what the objective is for the grant, if the grant is also wanting to support the growth of the movement then you know, like, you can't employ somebody with that amount of money."

-Interviewee

There were participants that expressed hope that the IHRF would increase its funding. When asked for an amount of ideal annual funding, the ideal average yearly funding was circa USD 40,000, whereas most of the respondents considered ideal a grant of USD 20,000.¹⁵

The strategy to invest in multiple small groups, while unorthodox, is perceived by some interviewees as appropriate to fill a gap in intersex communities that are underfunded, as expressed by an international donor:

"One of the key lessons from this work is the importance of investing into small-scale groups and individuals who are dedicated to the work benefiting intersex people, and specifically leaders who are intersex themselves. I believe that there is still a lot of fear with any funders to finance groups who operate with extremely small budgets or with no funds at all. This of course requires funders to leave their comfort zone and potentially risky work that may take years to develop."

-Donor/International partner

The perception of the IHRF being limited in its size was also shared in focus groups with Astraea's staff, recognizing that, in comparison to other similar funds, the IHRF disbursements were modest. Although one-third of survey respondents reported that the IHRF funding represents less than 20% of its annual budget, funding limitations can be particularly constrictive for those cohorts that are largely dependent on IHRF support. This is the case at the aggregated level for 15% of respondents who mentioned IHRF as the only donor supporting them in the last two years, and 42% of respondents who reported having less than two donors other than the IHRF in the same period.

The funding landscape also looks thorny when taking into account regional disparities for grassroots and local NGOs: 40% of the African grassroots activists surveyed reported that their last IHRF grant represented 60-80% of their budgets. A similar situation prevails for 75% of the Latin American respondents working at local intersex NGOs, who reported their budget to be at least 80% dependent on IHRF funding.

¹⁵Weighted analysis using the survey statistical mode. Survey responses ranged from USD 8,000 for a Latin American intersex activist to USD 200,000 by an North American respondent. The report *The State of Intersex Organizing, Understanding the Needs and Priorities of a Growing but Under-Resourced Movement*. (Howe, et al 2017) had already found that in 2016 just about one in five intersex groups received USD 10,000 or more in external funding.

(2.2.4.) IHRF'S EFFECTIVENESS IN MEETING ITS OBJECTIVES

The IHRF is robustly consistent with Astraea's theory of change in principle and practice of grantmaking, capacity building, leadership development, and pursuing philanthropic advocacy.¹⁶ What is more, throughout the assessment, there were no negative viewpoints manifested regarding the compatibility of the IHRF with feminist principles in practice.¹⁷ On the contrary, the prevailing opinion on the IHRF among participants was that of a fund rooted in feminist values.

Interviewees agree that the IHRF has, overall, met its objectives. In terms of the understanding of the IHRF objectives by grantees, most interviewees mentioned just one or a few of the objectives in IHRF's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) frameworks.¹⁸ Although grantees' understanding of the IHRF's objectives aligns to a degree with the Fund's defined objectives, the survey identified "Alignment of objectives and priority strategies according to the local needs" as one of the main areas of opportunity to be strengthened by the IHRF (2nd ranked).

The IHRF has also demonstrated congruence in pursuing the specific objectives of its wider programmatic guidelines, e.g. activities undertaken in relation to the Specific Objectives (SO) for the Building our Movement EIDHR¹⁹ project and outputs in accordance with the Global Equality Fund.²⁰

Though the Fund is making admirable strides toward its objectives, internal documents and reports from grantees during the desk review revealed gaps in terms of verification means, the documentation of updated outcomes/outputs and monitoring data to gauge the progress towards the achievement of Specific Objectives. In terms of monitoring and reporting, except for the year 2020, the consultant team did not have access to individual grantees' reports nor to disaggregated monitoring data about local IHRF implementation and outcomes. This may represent an area of opportunity for the IHRF itself to further its learning agenda.

Astraea's Learning and Evaluation Framework acknowledges that: "Learning is critical, but measurement can be tricky."²¹ This is particularly true with the limited MEL and data collection capabilities of small, local intersex groups and grassroots organizations in the Global South as those supported by the IHRF.

¹⁶Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (n/d), Astraea's Theory of Change. See also Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (n/d), Programmatic Work under Astraea's Organizational Pillars (internal powerpoint presentation).

¹⁷ Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (2018), Feminist Funding Principles. See also analysis below on feminism, intersectionality and decoloniality.

¹⁸Interviewees expressed objectives in relation to: a) Increasing the capacities of intersex activists, including to form constituted organizations around the world, b) Advancing intersex human rights, legal frameworks and advocacy, c) Empowering intersex activists, d) Increasing intersex visibility and awareness, e) Supporting financially intersex activists who would not otherwise have access to funding, and f) Providing contacts including for additional sources of funding to intersex activists.

¹⁹Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (2018), Monitoring and Evaluation / Logical Framework (Building our Movement EIDHR internal Programmatic documents).

²⁰Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (n/d), Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (Global Equality Fund internal Programmatic documents).

²¹ Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (n/d) Learning and Evaluation Framework.

Given that trust-based core funding seeks to maintain a low burden on grantees, it is unsurprising and not necessarily a negative finding that the IHRF does not follow traditional MEL strategies.

The IHRF has undertaken “ongoing efforts to bring values and practices into closer alignment”²² while upholding accountability in its relationships and looking for meaningful learning for the advancement of the intersex movement. Interestingly, “Knowledge sharing between Astraea's IHRF and its grantees” was the funded activity most valued by surveyed grantees (See Figure 11), and was also the first ranked priority area of opportunity to strengthen the IHRF.

(2.3.) CONTRIBUTIONS TO MOVEMENT BUILDING

The IHRF has played a very important role in strengthening and growing the intersex movement. In addition to providing targeted and rare funding to intersex organizations, including providing seed grants that allowed activists to establish organizations, the IHRF has forged connections among activists within and across regions, diversifying the global movement and strengthening it through mutual learning. Survey respondents express that the IHRF was instrumental in the creation of organizing platforms within their countries and regions.

IHRF's support was key in sharing knowledge within the intersex movement around best practices, achievements, strategies, and challenges. Informants cited the importance of IHRF's “presence and approachability at The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) and intersex conferences” (survey respondent) as well as the financial support needed to participate in exchanges with other activists in national, regional, and international fora. This support resulted in: the formation of virtual groups, through e-mail and messaging; organizing online and in-person to create advocacy statements (e.g. the San José Declaration); and creation of umbrella organizations that can convoke smaller groups and independent activists. The virtual activities helped, somewhat, ameliorate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which represented a difficult time for activists due to the lack of in-person gathering and the hardships many faced on a personal and community level.

“WITHOUT THE SIGNAL OF THE FIRST-EVER FUNDING OPPORTUNITY AIMED AT INTERSEX HUMAN RIGHTS THE MOVEMENT WOULD NOT BE WHERE IT IS TODAY.”

-SURVEY RESPONDENT

“FROM A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE... THE REGIONAL MEETINGS ALLOWED US TO KNOW [AND TRUST] EACH OTHER... NOW I CAN NAME TEN INTERSEX ORGANIZATIONS IN THE REGION WHEN BEFORE THE IHRF, I ONLY KNEW [A FEW]...IT ALLOWED US TO CONNECT THE DOTS IN THE REGION, BUT ALSO TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND STRATEGIES... THE IHRF ALSO ALLOWED US TO CONNECT ACTIVISTS IN [OUR OWN] COUNTRY.”

-INTERVIEWEE

“WITHOUT THE IHRF, INTERSEX ACTIVISM WOULD NOT HAVE GROWN AS IT HAS IN OUR COUNTRIES; IN THAT SENSE IT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL.”

-SURVEY RESPONDENT

²¹Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (n/d) Learning and Evaluation Framework.

²² *Ibid.*

(2.4) PARTICIPATION OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Though the IHRF increased the visibility and presence of activists from the Global South in the intersex movement, these efforts should continue to be strengthened in the future. The IHRF is commended by its partners for the inclusion of members from the Global South on its Advisory Group and staff, and for the initiative to reach marginalized activists with a survival fund during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the IHRF has supported regional gatherings in addition to international intersex meetings, which are credited for allowing better conditions to discuss divergences in discourse between the regions.

“Astraea used to support the international intersex convenings, these global ones [in the past, and...] Europe was the most dominant voice; African activists would be very quiet so the global narrative would always be very Euro-centric.”

-Interviewee

However, despite this recent progress, informants believe that countries from the Global South continue to be underrepresented in the global intersex movement, with language barriers being cited as one reason (Francophone Africa was provided as an example of an underrepresented region). Another challenge cited was that governments in the Global South are perceived as being less likely than their Global North counterparts to support intersex rights, and therefore, activists in the Global South have more difficulty organizing and gaining support.

In addition to ensuring a greater participation of activists from the Global South, from an intersectional perspective, informants expressed an interest in seeing greater representation from people with disabilities and others that are not currently present, such as indigenous communities. One interviewee described this as a challenge:

“It is a challenge in some contexts that the movement is perceived to be led by queer and trans people rather than indigenous and that some indigenous communities perceive intersex conditions as distinct from SOGIE issues.”

-Interviewee

This echoes another finding from this evaluation, that in some contexts in which homophobia and transphobia are prevalent, intersex activists seek to distance themselves from the LGBTQ+ movement to avoid stigma, or in some cases, the illegality of SOGIE activism. This represents a challenge for a movement both aiming for an intersectional approach and in which some activists identify as LGBTQ in addition to intersex.

(2.5) ADVOCACY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

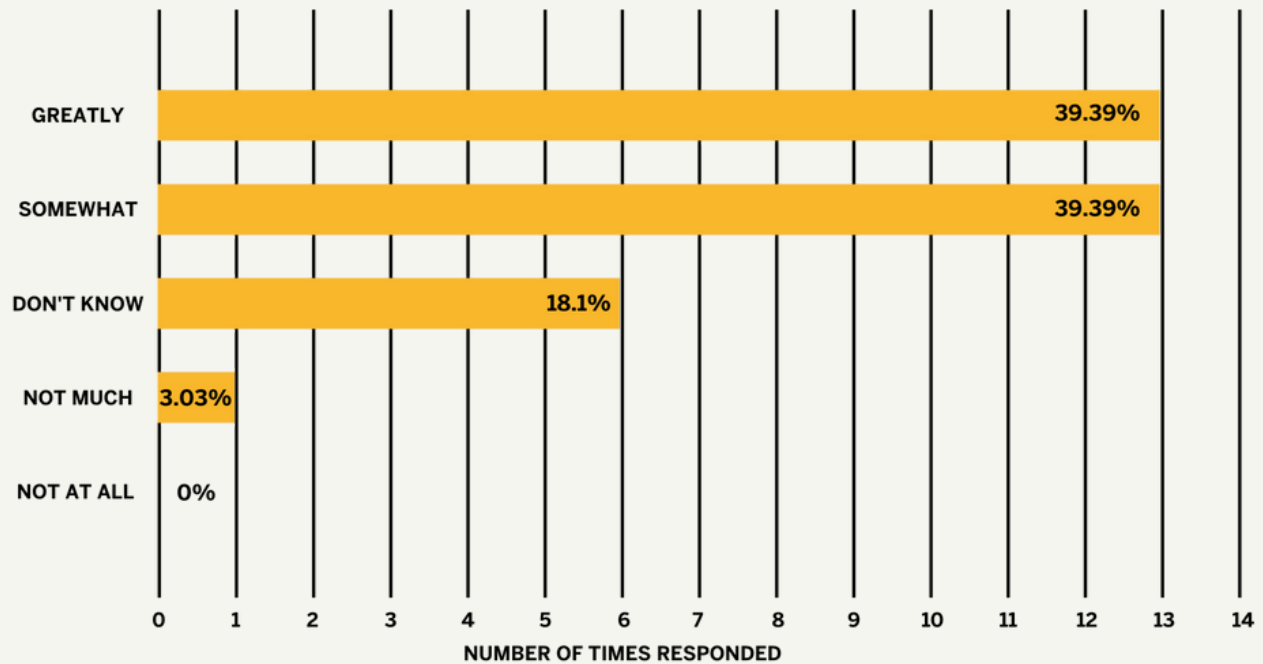
The IHRF has provided resources and accompaniment to intersex-led organizations to advocate for intersex people's human rights. This has resulted in positive changes in legal frameworks and has facilitated the positioning of their demands and rights in local, regional, and international spaces.

The two categories of advocacy accomplishments can be broken down by:

- Legal frameworks: Local, regional, or international initiatives to make changes that guarantee and support the rights of intersex people, whether generating changes in governmental laws and policies, institutional protocols, or norms at the community level.
- Participation and positioning demands: To have the presence of intersex activists in different spaces of activist dialogue, coordination or decision-making at local, national, or international levels, where they can position their demands and share their experiences through the diversity of contexts, oppressions, and intersections with other social movements.

According to our findings, 40% of survey respondents reported that the IHRF contributed “greatly” to laws and policies in favor of intersex rights, and another 40% reported that IHRF contributed “somewhat” (See graph below). Respondents from the Global South responded differently, as nearly half (47.37%) reported that there was a “great” contribution by IHRF to laws and policies versus 28% of respondents from the Global North.

Figure 7: To what extent has the IHRF contributed to laws and policies in favor of intersex rights?



In a focus group, the protection of intersex people by the current US government, as well as the change of legal framework regarding identification in South Africa (see Annex F) were cited as advocacy achievements during IHRF’s existence.

Informants agree that the IHRF has allowed advocacy advances for their demands and rights. Since 2015, the IHRF has promoted regional and international meetings, as well as strengthening and uniting different intersex activists to speak for themselves about their life stories, activism, and territorial contexts. They have built public statements or declarations, and generated networks and strategies for change in favor of their rights.

Regional and international meetings have allowed the intersex movement to position its issues and demands at different levels. This, in turn, has helped position the IHRF as a key partner in advancing the advocacy accomplishments of intersex movements.

“Due to IHRF fund, intersex-led movement and intersex led organisations have been immersed and intersex issues have been raised locally, nationally, and in UN mechanisms more than ever.”
-Survey respondent

Cross-cutting intersex advocacy demands include: bodily autonomy and an end to genital mutilation, medical violence, injuries to the health of intersex people, coerced abortion, and infanticide. These demands are linked to a high-level conception (and the movement’s rejection) of pathologization of intersex bodies, and therefore require work in different spheres of action. It is important to remember that still:

“[There is] limited evidence of legislation and clinical reform to address the most intractable issue... protecting the rights of people with intersex variations in medical settings.”
- Survey respondent

According to the findings, pathologization of intersex bodies and institutional violence, are two issues that will continue to be priorities. Respondents ranked bodily autonomy, physical integrity, and self-determination, as well as medical and other forms of institutional violence against intersex peoples as the highest priority issues for the future:

Figure 8: Which of the following are most priority for the Intersex movement in the future?

Rank	Choice	Distribution	Score	Times Ranked
1.	The bodily autonomy, physical integrity and self-determination of intersex people are realized and respected		301	47
2.	Medical and other forms of institutional violence against intersex people are decreased or ended		293	48
3.	Intersex people have access to quality, rights-based information, counselling and support		248	45
4.	Legal frameworks to ensure the protection of human rights and reparative justice for intersex people are built and enforced		233	45
5.	Stigma and discrimination against intersex people are decreased or ended		217	47
6.	Intersex organizations have strengthened capacity in areas of self-identified importance		169	45
7.	Intersex activists and organizations have increased access to flexible resources		167	43
8.	Invisibility and isolation of intersex people are decreased or ended		162	41
9.	Security, self and collective care		135	44

Lowest Highest

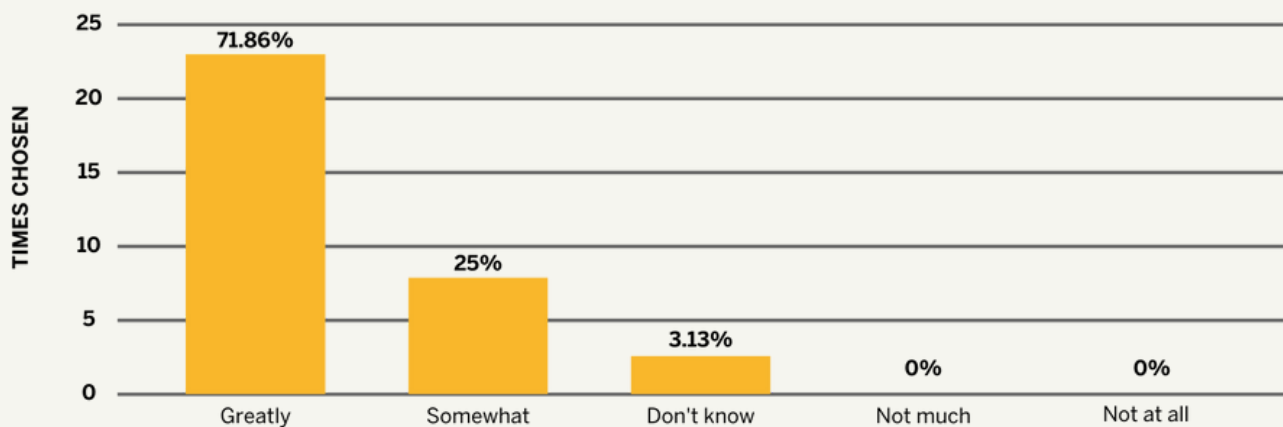
The advocacy accomplishments of the intersex movement are cross-cutting among other social movements and rights, such as disability rights, children’s rights, feminist rights, patients’ rights, LGBTIQ+ rights, and sexual and reproductive health and rights movements, among others.

(2.6.) VISIBILITY AND SOCIAL/CULTURAL CHANGE

Most of the participants agree that it is important to increase the visibility of intersex people and the intersex movement. This needs to be done in conjunction with cultural change, through new narratives and terminologies, community education, and awareness-raising to different social groups.

72% of the people surveyed consider that the IHRF has greatly contributed to the visibility and understanding of intersex people and issues, as we can see in the graph below.

Figure 9: To what extent has the IHRF contributed to the visibility and understanding of intersex people and issues?



It is important to note that none of the respondents considered that IHRF has contributed not much or not at all to the visibility and understanding of people of interest and their issues.

“It contributed hugely, because without this fund there would be no [existence] of our foundation which has done lots of work producing materials, engaging with media and so on... Four years ago there was nothing, nobody in [this country] even mentioned the word intersex... That has changed dramatically... allowing people [with] different mindsets and vocabulary to describe those experiences.”

-Interviewee

The contribution of the IHRF has enabled intersex organizations to carry out different cultural strategies, such as (1) providing physical or digital materials about the intersex community; (2) building alliances with other movements and making the diversity of intersex people visible; (3) workshops, exhibitions, conservatories and conferences on being intersex; (4) interventions in public spaces through murals; and (5) historical review and research for non-colonial representations of being intersex.

All of these strategies increase the visibility of the intersex movement and contribute to the challenge of binary, colonial, and pathologizing narratives and conceptions of gender, body, and being intersex. The results obtained in the surveys confirm that IHRF has contributed to the change of narratives, mainly those related to self-identification, body autonomy, and diversity, and positive media representation of intersex people (See Figure 10 below).

Figure 10: Narratives regarding which areas have changed the most as a result of the IHRF's contributions?



Since 2015, the IHRF has been crucial in strengthening the identity and creation of new narratives for the intersex movement, its actions have supported the amplification of activists' voices to break the representation or lack thereof, that invisibilizes or tokenizes intersex people among funders, feminist, LGBTIQ+, and human rights movements.

(2.7.) CONTRIBUTIONS TO AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The evaluation found diverse perspectives and analysis regarding the current conditions for an enabling environment to advance intersex rights. On one hand, participants expressed a sense of progress associated with the IHRF contributions having positively impacted on the environment; on the other hand, activists have on their radar the setbacks, and new barriers that constrain the environment and pose further challenges to the defense of intersex rights.

In most of the regions, without witnessing massive legislative and policy transformations for intersex rights, (See section on Advocacy Accomplishments) as organizations grew under the umbrella of the IHRF, the public arena for intersex activists saw conditions improve for opening up access to dialogues and debates on intersex issues with diverse kind of actors, some of them traditionally opposing intersex and human rights causes.²³

²³E.g. with religious leaders or with political actors traditionally opposing any intersex issues in the past.

This, along with more access to information led to visibility, awareness-raising, and the advancement of a certain degree of progressive social change (See section on Visibility and Social/ Cultural Change).

“It’s a different world now, intersex don’t have rights restored, but public knowledge has become a little more wide about this issues, and there is a lot going on now, very different, widen the possibilities, events, meetings, help small organizations get registered, everything.”

-Interviewee

“There has been a shift based on the work that has been done, not like before when the religious and cultural dogmas were so accepted, we’ve seen many cultural leaders, politicians, religious leaders, coming on board [...] there has been a shift in the paradigm, the IHRF came at the right time”

-Interviewee

“When the IHRF started, [...] in Africa the main objective was to talk to policy makers on our issues; intersex genital mutilation, access to education, health [...] in that seven years a lot has happened you see organizations in Kenya, in Zimbabwe [...] in South Africa [now] you are already with policy makers in the same table [...] the issue now is turning those conversations into action”

-Interviewee

In some regions, interviewees raised flags about worsening environments for intersex people amid a rise in authoritarianism, human rights violations, and the enforcement of legal and surreptitious barriers for organizations enforced by national governments.

“We have an ‘undesirable organizations’ law, organizations like OSI, Oak Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy - they are banned. They are all declared undesirable”

-Interviewee

In addition, COVID-19 exacerbated precarity, economic exclusion, unemployment, and a lack of access to health services, which were already issues for intersex communities before the pandemic. ²⁴

“We need to address poverty, housing, employment issues, not only advocacy for stopping IGM. They [intersex] don’t have money for surgery or medication...”

-Interviewee

Threats and attacks perpetrated by both State and non-State actors have increased, thus putting intersex human rights defenders at risk during recent years.²⁵ Without being strictly conceived as a specialized funding mechanism for strengthening security, some grantees

²⁴During focus groups with grantees it was mentioned that these contextual conditions had a severe impact on mental health, sometimes even leading to the suicide of intersex individuals.

²⁵For example, a grassroots intersex activist from Latin America stressed the relations between the dispute for territories by extractive industries and the violence targeting intersex bodies in small communities.

saw that the IHRF could resource holistic security strategies to mitigate and prevent risk dynamics.

***“Organizations... require protection and security protocols against risks, attacks and threats, for the defense [of their] body, ... for the defense of the land territory where they live”
-Survey respondent***

There were also perceptions of the advancement of discourses promoting racism, exclusion and discrimination, for example in North America, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, and the consequent responses by IHRF grantees to dismantle its oppressions.

Another prominent factor that worsened the environment was the accumulation of power by the anti-rights groups promoting the so-called “anti-gender ideology” discourses.²⁶ The advancement of these groups has harmed the movement with its huge inception of hate and misinformation among the public opinion:

***“The environment has become a lot worse since the existence of intersex people has become a political football in debates about transgender rights and so-called 'gender critical' feminism.”
-Survey respondent***

A pair of donors also stressed that the traction gained by exclusionary viewpoints in women’s rights and feminist circles, which advocate for the radical marginalization of intersex and trans communities, has affected intersex activists’ abilities to access funding.

***“It’s important to name that some women’s funds and/or women’s rights work is trans and intersex exclusionary which presents a major challenge. In fact, many women’s rights organizations are not feminist and take a very narrow/traditional approach to gender.”
-Donor/International Partner***

In this regard, the IHRF has fostered legitimacy for intersex groups, and struggled to counter their exclusion in philanthropic circles through the advancement of the understanding of intersex landscape.

***“IHRF is currently the only donor which has taken the interest to understand the landscape under which intersex organizing and work is done.”
-Survey respondent***

²⁶An intersex activist also raised the issue of a lack of discursive and conceptual consistency within the intersex movement on concepts such as “third gender” which was mentioned to be used by some activists, for example within the Africa region. In the opinion of an intersex activist from another region, the “third gender” concept seemed to be problematic in its wider applicability to other contexts. The interviewee cautioned about the perils of misleading understandings of these kinds of concepts that given their lack of consistency could also be exploited by the anti-rights and anti-trans movement using the traditional gender ideology narratives.

All in all, the IHRF is seen as having a catalytic role to further break the isolation of the movement to overcome the shrinking civic space. Furthermore, the IHRF is considered a key player, one capable of leveraging the movement to address the complex issues faced by intersex HRDs.

“Since the IHRF started...there’s been a lot [of] progress actually. If you look to the intersex movement, [it] is a very young movement, but if we check how much has been done by intersex led organizations with limited funding, maybe most of them just relying on the IHRF, the kind of work which has been done is tremendously commendable”
-Interviewee

By supporting the movement to consolidate achievements, the IHRF has contributed to positive changes in the environment. Moreover, in the aftermath of its creation, the IHRF has reaffirmed its relevance for the intersex movement to navigate the recent years’ emerging landscape challenges.

(2.8.) CAPACITY BUILDING OF GRANTEE PARTNERS

The IHRF played a role in building the capacity of grantee partners. In the activist survey, the activities that were most valued were: knowledge sharing between IHRF and its grantees; support for collective care and wellbeing; convenings/regional meetings; and alignment of objectives of IHRF and priority strategies according to local needs. Qualitative data supports these findings, with grantees indicating that the IHRF helped foster a strategic vision among activists by providing flexible core funding that permits longer-term planning. In addition, an interviewee suggested that IHRF contributes indirectly to capacity building by supporting umbrella organizations such as ILGA and the Organisation Intersex International Europe (OII Europe) to provide support and knowledge to smaller organizations.

The below graph shows the complete results of the types of capacity building that have been appreciated by grantees:²⁷

²⁷If disaggregated for Grassroots and Local NGOs the “alignment of objectives of IHRF and priority strategies according to local needs” becomes even more valued (2nd ranked).

Figure 11: Which of the following IHRF support activities do you value the most?

Rank	Choice	Distribution	Score	Times Ranked
1.	Knowledge sharing between Astraea's IHRF and its grantees		140	24
2.	Support for collective care and wellbeing		139	21
3.	Convenings/Regional meetings		138	20
4.	Alignment of objectives and priority strategies according to the local needs		134	20
5.	Communication with grantees		105	20
6.	Participatory grantmaking processes		105	18
7.	Access to other donors		99	21
8.	Assistance on management and administration		97	16
9.	Monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms		86	19
10.	Physical and digital safety and security support		86	16
11.	Technical assistance on litigation		66	15
12.	Programmatic feedback for grantees		60	16

Lowest Highest

(2.9.) COLLABORATION WITH OTHER DONORS/RESOURCING THE INTERSEX MOVEMENT

This evaluation found that IHRF contributed to at least some grantee partners receiving funding from new donors. Several interviewees cited IHRF's sharing of funding opportunities, introductions to new donors, and advocacy with donors to encourage them to fund the intersex movement. Interviewees Mama Cash and Open Society Foundations are examples of funders to whom IHRF facilitated access. Others reported that they have not been introduced to other funders or received information about opportunities. One interviewee shared that, while not intentional, other funders assume organizations are well-funded because the IHRF supports them, and therefore, they choose not to fund these groups. In discussion about collaboration with other donors, the challenges of accessing feminist funds, discussed above, was also mentioned. In terms of successfully advocating for new donors to support intersex activists, almost half of survey respondents think that IHRF contributed "greatly" to new funders supporting the intersex movement, and one quarter to "some" extent, with the other quarter indicating that they "Don't know."

"We were able to access funding from another funder because [of] having access to the IHRF...We give credit to the IHRF [for accessing other funding]"
-Interviewee

“Because of the existence of the IHRF, you are seeing more human rights donors including intersex work in their strategies, but I don’t think what they are doing is enough... Lots of donors... [for example] there are feminist organizations...that clearly [claim] to support intersex... but when you find out with intersex organizations literally just 2 or 3 organizations are funded.”

-Interviewee

“Unfortunately, feminist funds have contributed very little to the intersex movement. As mentioned above, the ‘I’ is included as part of the work for many feminist funders but there is very little being done”

-Donor/International Partner

(2.10.) IHRF INTERNAL CAPACITY

IHRF’s own internal capacity is positively viewed and has increased since its beginnings, as evidenced through the growing number of full-time staff (to three) and the expansion of the number of grantees, which has been described above. It should be noted that the IHRF staff themselves are highly valued and appreciated, particularly since the staff include intersex activists. Grantees find them very knowledgeable and responsive to their needs, and survey respondents expressed that the IHRF is trusted in a way that other funders are not.

“IHRF is successful because the people behind it have such in depth understanding of the needs of intersex people as well as nature and state of the movement. This is the key.”

-Survey respondent

“I think Ruth [Associate Director of Programs IHRF] is very effective and very approachable, since 2018 they is pushing me and us to apply for the grants, because we really know the difficulties in finding fund and it is hard to organize a group or community meeting without funds”

-Interviewee

Areas of opportunity that survey respondents identified as those they would like IHRF to strengthen include: knowledge sharing between the IHRF and its grantees; alignment of objectives according to the local needs (seen also as something valued); communications with grantees; and participatory grantmaking processes. Informants suggest that more staff or consultants could be added to have more contact with grantees, connections with funders, and knowledge generation.

The above perceptions expressed by grantee partners are complemented by opinions expressed in the donor and international partner focus group, which indicated that while the IHRF is extremely valued, the staff capacity seems stretched, with examples given of communications gone unanswered. Some funders indicated that they would like to collaborate more with the IHRF on global intersex initiatives, but perceive that the fund prioritizes its work with grantees over such collaborations. Staff cite increasing workloads as contributing to this lack of bandwidth.

CHAPTER 3: IHRF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Though the above section sharing findings from the evaluation of the IHRF hints at suggested opportunities for the IHRF to best meet the needs of the intersex movement in the future, this section explicitly explores how informants envision the future of the fund and the intersex movement itself.

(3.1.) CONTRIBUTING TO A SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT

This needs assessment found that, when asked about what is needed to sustain a vibrant intersex movement, informants reflected upon the following:

Steady, sustained, and increased funding was one of the most mentioned needs in order to sustain the movement (See more below in the “Needs for the Funding Mechanism” section).

In-person knowledge-sharing and strategizing at international, regional, and country levels was emphasized as crucial throughout this study. Informants rely on these spaces for trust-building, forming connections to share key information and strategies, and meeting potential partners and funders. Activists from the Global South expressed a desire to learn in South-South meetings, for example, African activists commented that they may learn more from the Latin American movement than from intersex activists in Europe.

Informants recognize the large gaps that continue to exist within the movement between North and South, more and less privileged:

“The number of people who can meet is still very limited. We have [the] privilege to be able to travel or even meeting online. If you talk about the global intersex community there are people left behind...People are facing survival issues, no cell phones or internet, during the pandemic we understand we have people living in remote areas, they have no access to internet, people in marginalized situations, they don't even have an ID, we have to give them resources, this is something that we are exploring. During the pandemic, we did initiate a fund to support people, so many people doing daily wage jobs, when lockdown comes they just have nothing, nothing to eat. It's very extreme.”

- Interviewee

Informants also suggest organizing regional and international convenings in the Global South and supporting regional-level initiatives, in addition to providing platforms for intersex discourse informed by indigenous understandings, as this survey respondent suggests:

“[We need to] introduce a pluralistic interpretation of the [origin] of ancestral peoples [to achieve] visibility and revitalization of the existence of plural-intersex bodies... that don't necessarily need to be interpreted or acted upon through a Western feminist interpretation.”

- Survey respondent

These feminist perspectives from the Global South, such as vernacular cosmologies which is a worldview of society passed through indigenous languages and ways of communication, are often nurtured by activism in indigenous community settings. These perspectives try to put at the center women human rights defenders' way of experiencing the relations between life, bodily autonomy, and exploited territories in postcolonial settings.

Activists wish to receive support for self-care and well-being initiatives, including medical treatment, support for mental health, and collaboration with health services providers (See also "Enabling Environment" section).

Activists and donors alike perceive an urgent need to deepen alliances with other human rights movements, particularly LGBTQ+, but also other movements with key ties to the intersex movement, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), feminist, children's rights, patient rights, and others. This is viewed as strategic not only to have an intersectional perspective and fortify allyship, but also to access funding from funders of those intersecting movements as well. Informants would like to see IHRF advocating with women's funds, such as Mama Cash and the Global Fund for Women, to connect them to funding around bodily autonomy and the right to health.

***"A feminist approach... creates space for an important discussion around gender, its relationship with identity and sex characteristics, and how sexist oppression targets not only cis endosex women but also people who are trans and or intersex... who may not be women."
- Donor/international partner***

However, it was expressed by both activists and donors that, although many feminists challenge ideas about the gender binary, not all have a good understanding of intersex issues, and the transphobic and intersexphobic (or exclusionary) strains of feminism have made collaboration with the feminist movement and feminist funders difficult in some contexts, as mentioned in the "Evaluation section" on the Enabling Environment.

There is still an enormous need for visibility and to inform the public about who intersex people are. This finding goes hand-in-hand with the observation that laws that originated in the colonial era, do not often support intersex human rights. :

***"I don't think there is a decolonial approach without educating global north and western activists how their own countries contributed to the global state of intersex rights. This conversation cannot happen without re-examining history."
- Donor/international partner***

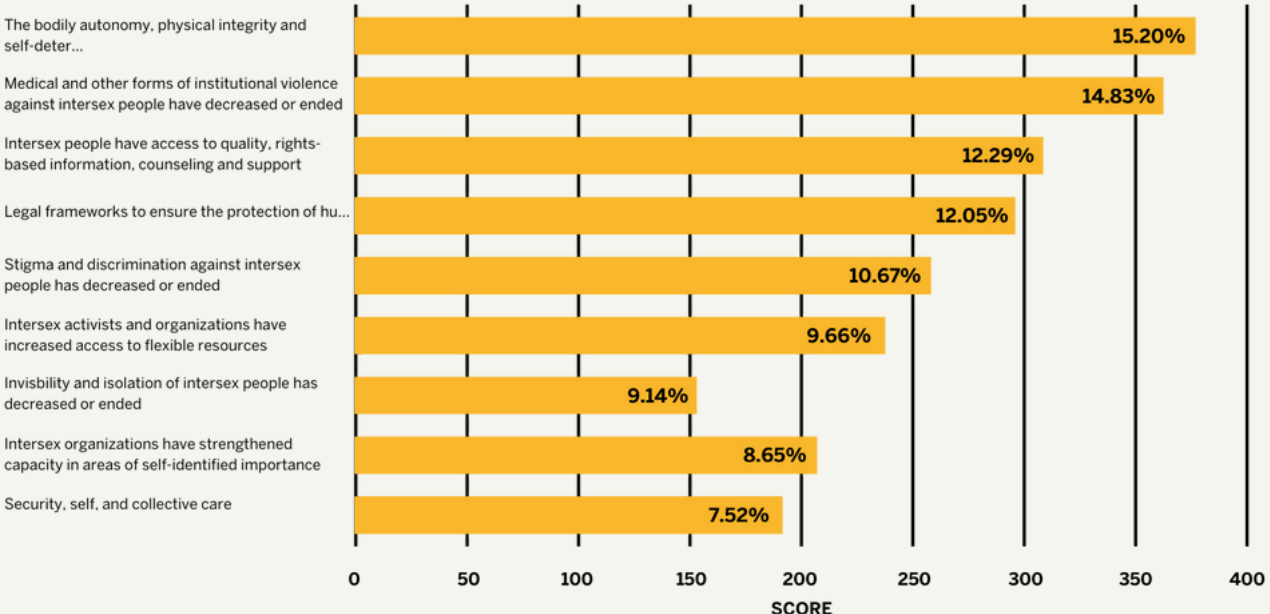
Informants expressed a need to access informational materials in local languages so that the global movement is well-informed with intersectional and scientific perspectives, and a need to support local and regional research that supports intersex human rights.

Finally, activists expressed a need for digital and physical protection, especially where governments are hostile (See also the "Enabling Environment" section).

(3.2.) NEEDS FOR THE FUNDING MECHANISM

After several years of operation, IHRF's objectives remain more strategic than ever to support the needs of the intersex movement. The future priorities mentioned by intersex activists in 2022 still match with the original objectives of the fund, while the support for intersex organizing remains critical, especially for small NGOs and Global South grassroots activists.

Figure 12: Which of the following are most priority for the Intersex movement in the future



Currently, 94% of interviewees consider the grants available to intersex organizations/entities to be insufficient in terms of their needs and the funding that can be absorbed and managed. At this point, the movement is aware of its needs in different regions and recognizes that increased flexible core funding is one of the main tools to address those needs.

Grantees also recognized the top priority areas of opportunity to strengthen the IHRF as follows: knowledge sharing between IHRF's and its grantees, the alignment of priority strategies to local needs, communication and participatory grantmaking processes (See more in Figure below).

Figure 13: Which are the priority areas of opportunity to strengthen the IHRF

Rank	Choice	Distribution	Score	Times Ranked
1.	Knowledge sharing between Astraera's IHRF and its grantees		98	22
2.	Alignment of objectives and priority strategies according to the local needs		93	22
3.	Communication with grantees		80	20
4.	Participatory grantmaking processes		72	21
5.	Programmatic feedback for grantees		62	21
6.	Monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms		53	20
7.	Management and administration		51	18

Lowest Highest

By providing multi-year support for the intersex movement across regions while directing targeted funding, the IHRF has covered a vital need, thus allowing multiple organizations to be above the “survival” line. However, as analyzed in the Evaluation section, the seed funding approach with a cap of USD 10,000 also showed limitations to leveling up the growth of organizations. This situates the IHRF at a strategic crossroads:

“To organizations that did not have funding at all, for organizations that had zero funding when you receive five thousand USD that makes a huge difference ... as you grow you need that your funding match your growth, unfortunately the IHRF does not give you enough to match your growth but gives enough to keep surviving and accessing other funding.”

- Interviewee

“Astraera has been very successful at generating funding ... and re-granting, but does that mean that the donors to Astraera think that the job is done? Because what [the IHRF] is doing is maintaining a very low level of funding for the movement.”

- Interviewee

Currently intersex activists feel ready to absorb increasing amounts of yearly funding, for an average of four times the IHRF’s current funding cap, with most survey respondents considering double the maximum the IHRF is currently providing as ideal funding per grantee (See the “Effectiveness” subsection of the “Funding mechanism” section). At this juncture, it is also important to acknowledge that not all the organizations may be at the same level in terms of management, financial and operational capabilities to absorb such increased funding. Donors suggested that a tiered system could be created to respond to those differences.

In terms of IHRF's strategy, there is an increasing need to explore the viability of either continuing primordially seeding organizations that lack access to funds or also providing scaled funding for the more consolidated organizations. This kind of support was deemed as necessary by organizations with a certain level of growth and related to the success of delivery on behalf of intersex rights at the local. Naturally, the possibility of exploring the viability of shifting funding strategies in such a scaled way would be also dependent on the possibility of the IHRF securing more funding for expanding its portfolio.

Some activists are aware that funding is limited and equity criteria for its strategic distribution around the globe are at the core of the funding allocation decision-making, access to resources, and power distribution.

“[When] we started the first grant we got, it was lower, and as we went the following year our grant increased ... every organization would say we need more funding ... but also looking at how much the IHRF also has and also considering how many intersex led organizations need that kind of support and resource so you find that we need to strike a balance”

- Interviewee

“Sometimes bigger networks speak a lot of intersex issues, but not with intersex groups and not sharing funding”

-Survey respondent

One of the activists also recognized that while the funding cap is limited, lower amounts of funding could be managed in a more adequate way, and also could help to reach more intersex activists worldwide instead of providing more funding to a few. This kind of weighted consideration of funding is likewise germane for a fund having in its DNA the priority to reach underfunded intersex activists in multiple regions of the Global South.

“It's not a big amount, but to keep it in this amount, I feel is a good strategy because the total fund, the top limit for the grantees is the same, it means that this fund can support more groups and more individual activists. Money is very helpful but sometimes if you don't know how to use it money can be trouble for any organization's transparency issues, equality issues. It's a good strategy to keep the scale of the fund in a small amount. The strategy is to increase more groups and activists around the world.”

- Interviewee

Besides, the exploration of strategic grantmaking decisions to increase the current funding cap, IHRF should consider the need for expanding the operational, administrative, and management capabilities of the grantees.(See “Capacity of Grantee Partners and Organizational Strengthening and Recommendations” section). Furthermore, a hypothetical expansion would need to assess the possibilities for revamping the IHRF strategy with a solid focus on accompanying those grantees receiving larger amounts of funding. This, in turn, would demand increased capabilities to support capacity-building, organizational, and programmatic development across regions as well as more sophisticated accountability mechanisms for financial reporting.

Informants mentioned other options that implied a major restructuring, such as transforming the IHRF into an autonomous fund independent of Astraea. One informant cited a transgender fund that experienced a similar evolution. An option like this would require a thorough assessment on the viability of such a strategy, including the advantages and disadvantages as well as the possible ways to cover infrastructure needs which have been so far covered by Astraea, a well-established entity. .

Apart from the aforementioned strategic debates and beyond Astraea, the donors shared that intersex work in the philanthropic sector is at a relatively incipient stage. This brings to the fore the need for the IHRF to advance its influence and capacity to work in the future with diverse funders in a more articulated and transversal manner:

“Foundations (including intermediaries) that are funding intersex work have different frameworks and strategies on how to include intersex grantmaking in their existing portfolios, and there is little coordination among funders at this intersection. For example, some fund intersex issues as part of disability justice, others as part of sexual health and reproductive rights, and others as part of their broader LGBTQI+ agenda ... The donor education work that the Intersex Human Rights Fund leads is incredibly important and yet should not solely be on their shoulders. Convening with funders to dive deeper this topic and to prioritize philanthropic advocacy efforts on intersex movement building feels like an opportunity as well.”

- Donor/International partner

“We need to go beyond small intersex-specific portfolios and include intersex issues in all aspects of the work, all while questioning our existing grantees (especially large organizations) on how they include intersex people in their work, and if they are not, what’s stopping them from it.”

- Donor/International partner

Another salient need for the IHRF is to generate a systematic strategy with other philanthropic actors to incorporate data, mappings, and evidence to advance intersex grantmaking. Concretely, donors participating in FGs mentioned a fertile terrain of opportunities for expanding philanthropic understanding of intersex issues with affinity groups such as the Global Philanthropy Project, Ariadne, Human Rights Funders Networks, etc.

“More data on the goals and achievements so far of intersex movements [is needed], so that donors can see how they can be integrated in existing program strategies.”

- Donor/International partner

“First, there needs to be more investment in research and mappings - resources and tools to inform funders about who and where intersex organizations are, how to support their movements, and shape policy and advocacy development.”

-International Donor

Likewise, ad hoc learning initiatives to enrich the IHRF may be relevant for shifting and gauging the impact of the fund while also supporting its MEL strategies. These efforts could have collective participatory processes as a central feature that avoids rigid monitoring and performance assessment schemes and the consequent burden on the shoulders of its grantees. By doing so, the agility and simplicity of the mechanism that allows intersex activists to focus on their fieldwork would be preserved. Finally, undertaking participatory grantmaking approaches based on that collective learning may lead to forward the inclusive spirit of the IHRF as well as to promote more accountability with its grantees.

(3.3.) ADVOCACY NEEDS

Three areas of opportunity were identified that can guide the improvement of intersex movement advocacy needs: funding for advocacy, allies, and advocacy strengthening.

Different activists pointed out that it is necessary to continue and increase funding to intersex-led organizations to contribute to law and policy changes, as well as to fund research that can be useful for the advancement of intersex people's rights.

It is necessary to consider not only legal frameworks as part of advocacy achievements, but also to consider other forms of governance within a community that affect intersex people.

“While it is true that the fight for human rights has become a priority for the movement, within the communities it is necessary to legislate in a communal manner, because otherwise a national law is not respected because it is interpreted as counterproductive to communal life”.

- Survey respondent

Advocacy requires alliances with different actors, such as: activists and other intersex organizations; other social movements; experts; donors, and governmental or private institutions. Organizations recognize alliances as an important piece for the advancement of advocacy in the intersex movement.

Informants suggest resourcing advocacy tactics with a diverse range of actors from the local to the regional and the global level. These may comprise advocacy for local legislation, litigation in local jurisdictions, or with Regional Human Rights bodies in cases in which those are available (e.g. IACHR, ECHR, African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights). In addition, informant suggest making use of UN bodies such as the UN Human Rights Council, UPRs and UN Special Procedures, UN Special rapporteurs (Arbitrary detention working group, Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary executions, FoE, HRDs, SOGI, Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment).

Activists pointed out that it is necessary to strengthen different capacities and skills in order to achieve advances in advocacy. Knowledge in lobbying, human rights, and capacity for dialogue are required, as well as time and patience.

“Although many Intersex Organizations has academics in their staff, not all do and those who don't if they're not able to navigate the political landscape, may need guidance. If that guidance is not readily available, they may have to hire people who are educated in that area to do lobby-ism or to teach them how to do lobby-ism. In our country laws are often written in a language that can be hard to understand and if this is the case in other countries, there may be a need for guidance in that area as well.”

-Survey respondent

Likewise, collaboration with different professionals such as academics, consultants, lobbyists, policy writing experts, and lawyers is required. It is necessary to be able to assist or provide a network of experts to organizations that require training on these issues.

The ability and the support to actually draft the policies this is where intersex organizations need help, I know what my issues are and I know what the solutions are but I need to draft it in a way that policy makers can understand it [...] these specific legal tools, drafting policies, strategizing litigation are so needed and so important but intersex organizations do not have access to do it [policy change] because they don't know how to do that, they don't have money to do that”

-Interviewee

(3.4.) VISIBILITY AND SOCIAL/CULTURAL CHANGE

For survey participants the top three needs to shift narratives around intersex issues are: Community education on intersex issues; education and awareness of health personnel; and mass communication campaigns.

Figure 14: What is needed to further shift narratives around intersex issues and communities?

Rank	Choice	Distribution	Score	Times Ranked
1.	Education and awareness with health personnel on intersex issues		316	57
2.	Community education on intersex issues		309	53
3.	Massive communication campaigns on intersex issues		276	54
4.	Narratives on behalf of human rights and intersex issues		253	51
5.	Unbiased journalistic information on intersex issues		217	54
6.	Positioning of Global South perspectives and narratives within the broader intersex global movement		184	44
7.	Scientific information on intersex issues		183	48
8.	Social media moderation and measures for countering disinformation, online violence, stigma and discrimination		163	49
9.	Addressing intersections around freedom of expression and intersex issues		159	42

Lowest Highest

There is a need to continue to build awareness about being intersex among health professionals. Intersex organizations have identified the need to continue training health personnel about being intersex, which means to educate on terminology, stop genital mutilation of minors and discrimination in these settings as well as generate awareness in the families of intersex people.

“We need more visibility and awareness within and access to the healthcare system - that also means that the medical community needs to understand the necessity and has to take responsibility for that. That is also why education and peer counseling is crucial in my point of view.”

-Survey respondent

There is also a need to amplify intersex representation and visibility in several spaces such as the media, political and governmental spaces, public events, and academic institutions in order to create synergies to modify and make positive changes in the narratives about intersex people. It was suggested that the IHRF could take on a more public profile to do this.

“A diverse representation challenges the assumption that the movement is white, making it more varied.”

-Focus group

It is important to keep in mind that visibility brings with it exposure, which can lead to physical and digital threats, and other forms of violence, even delegitimizing the movement with anti-gender discourses, so it is important that each organization and activist can decide the channels and the way in which they want to exercise their right to representation and visibility, whether massive or not. That is why it is so important to ensure the safety and protection of activists. As one interviewee stated, “there can be no visibility if they are not safe”.

A key need for visibility and cultural change is education. It is important to consider education not only within institutional spaces but in community spaces as well.

“Intersex people need to become more visible... In our personal experience, although being able to influence politicians has made intersex a subject that at least some politicians know and give their support to, and that has made great changes to the laws, the general public still (generally) don't have a sense of who we are or that we exist. To drive policies and laws further, we have to become more visible in the day to day life, not merely as a discussion on how we may be better at performing in sports, when going up against women and how allowing us to compete would be unfair, but as whole human beings, with dreams and hopes for the future, just like everyone else and who should be able to participate in society as equals.”

- Survey respondent

For that, informants consider it necessary to support the creation of community education materials, support the use of artistic practices, and strengthen their tools for communication and expertise.

“We need people who contribute at high levels to debates requiring expertise in medicine, law, philosophy. We need to be positioned not only as people with lived experience, but expertise.”

- Survey respondent

(3.5.) ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Since the creation of the IHRF, the environment for intersex rights has been rapidly evolving. With authoritarianism on the rise, the need to strengthen networks and develop new alliances beyond the intersex movement has become fundamental.

In most regions, gains in terms of progressive legislation, access to justice, and protection of intersex people remain modest, thus unwavering support for organizations in this realm is necessary in the mid and long-term. Advocacy, campaigning, and intersectional community organizing will still be critical to support policy and legislation transformations that could materialize rights for intersex communities.

A key need for consolidating the social and cultural recognition for intersex communities is the crafting of positive narratives to counter the pervasive misinformation, stigma and hate such as the “anti-gender ideology”, white supremacy, or trans- and intersex- exclusionary discourses.

The prevailing risks for intersex HRDs needs to be addressed in more breadth and depth. Strategizing on Holistic Security (HS) and its different domains of physical, digital and psychosocial wellbeing has become a prominent need for organizations, especially for those operating in repressive regimes that are facing potential retaliation.²⁸

As barriers to healthcare access for intersex communities persist, if the movement is to remain sustainable in the future, funders ought to look to refine strategies for guaranteeing the healthcare access of intersex activists.

Given the prevailing conditions of precarity by intersex communities, human rights and social investment portfolios need to take into account the basic economic needs of activists in order to pave the way for the economic sustainability of intersex organizing in the long run.

²⁸There seems to be differentiated perceptions of risk associated to intersex work between Global North and Global South survey respondents. When disaggregated for Global South respondents, Risk and holistic security is second place in ranking priorities for an enabling environment instead of fourth at the aggregated level (See Figure 15).

Figure 15: Which are the main issues that funding mechanisms should prioritize to foster an enabling environment for intersex organizations and movements?



(3.6.) CAPACITY OF GRANTEE PARTNERS/ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING

“The ideal thing is to increase or enhance capacity of intersex activists. If you don’t increase capacity, you don’t have the opportunity to go to these international spaces, someone doesn’t even know how to write an email, doesn’t have a passport, they can be in a position to acquire... to join the international spaces, take them to school, improve their livelihoods, work on their sexual and reproductive health.”

- Interviewee

The needs assessment found that while a trust-based approach, which allows grantees flexibility and self-determination, is valued, grantee partners recognize a need to increase their capacity and appreciate the IHRF’s technical assistance role in addition to its role in the provision of core economic resources. Informants consider that the IHRF has a role to play, in particular with activists that are forming organizations. In those cases, grantees would like assistance establishing bank accounts, legally establishing their organizations, creating governance structures, policies, strategic planning, fundraising and donor relations, grant management, and other organizational development concerns. Other topic-specific capacity building that is desired includes strategic litigation assistance and holistic security training, including risk assessment and management. While some informants indicated that the IHRF could play a role in this type of technical assistance, others noted that funding for South-South support can also fulfill this need, as has occurred among partners in neighboring African countries. Mentorship was also suggested as a way to meet these capacity needs.

(3.7.) INTERNAL IHRF CAPACITY

As noted in the “Evaluation” section, the IHRF and its staff are highly valued by grantee partners. The needs that were expressed for the future include adding additional advisory group members to include more from the Global South, and adding additional staff or consultants to be able to have more contact with grantees. One informant suggested that there is no international intersex organization in the movement ecosystem, and that the IHRF could fill that role. Others suggested that a fund cannot necessarily serve as a global umbrella organization for intersex activists. Finally, as mentioned earlier, another informant suggested that the IHRF consider becoming independent from Astraea to have greater autonomy.

Informants express their desire that the IHRF continue to question power relationships in funding:

“It is not easy to combat colonial practices, even in other movements as well, it is a process, compared to before it has changed. There is always that feeling of someone being on top and the other person being left behind... If I am a resource partner and getting money from you, to be realistic, it is very hard to be as powerful as the funder. If I make sure that I create ways to make you sustainable we can be on the same page in terms of sharing power, sometimes it is intentional not to be sustainable because then you will cease to exist. I have not had someone complaining about IHRF, and they are good people. They should keep that up.”

- Interviewee

Donors and international partners also expressed concern that the IHRF staff is stretched thin, and would benefit from additional staff resources. International partners want to involve the IHRF in advocacy, visibility, and funding efforts related to the intersex movement, but they cannot always adjust to the IHRF staff availability to do so, and they consider it a bottleneck.

CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

This Evaluation and Needs Assessment revealed many strengths of the IHRF, as well as areas of opportunity that the consultant team considers the Fund highly capable of addressing as it moves into the future. This study, particularly in the “Needs Assessment” section, explores the needs of the global intersex movement within the current landscape, including specific needs in terms of advocacy, visibility, and social/cultural change. However, the recommendations presented here are based on the premises that: 1) one of the IHRF’s greatest strengths is the provision of flexible funding and that it will not provide thematic- or project-based funding in the future; and 2) everything the IHRF undertakes is aimed at building the intersex movement. The intention of the following strategic recommendations, therefore, is to provide clear, actionable guidance for Astraea to maximize the impact of the IHRF moving forward, through reflection on the results presented in this report:

(4.1.) STRENGTHENING THE FUNDING MECHANISM AND ITS GRANTMAKING

- Continue prioritizing a feminist, long-term, and flexible approach to provide core funding for underfunded intersex organizations and groups worldwide, which they may use to respond to the needs they view as most pressing.
- Develop infrastructure and economic viability to allocate more multi-year grants, especially to new underfunded groups in the Global South. This may involve developing a resource mobilization strategy to increase the total Fund size and the staff required.
- Consider increasing the size of grants, potentially through a tiered strategy, for organizations that have grown and scaled up their needs and capabilities for delivering. Analyze the viability of at least doubling it or ideally leveling up the funding cap to USD 40,000.
- Review grant disbursement processes to make them as agile as possible.
- Consider the creation of rapid response or emergency funds that can be made available to current grantees or other intersex activists. Explore with grantees how intersex livelihood needs can be met in a sustainable way by the movement.
- Advance space for leadership from the Global South in participatory grantmaking processes to assess and define the routes for future shifts in grantmaking strategy. This may be through the Advisory Group or other mechanisms.
- Explore how to be more flexible with fiscal sponsorship requirements, particularly in regions in which fiscal law is stringent in allowing fiscal sponsors for small groups.
- Provide alternatives to online application forms for applicants with digital limitations.
- Explore the strategic benefit of remaining within Astraea or potentially becoming independent.

(4.2.) STRENGTHENING IHRF'S MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING PROCESSES

- Review the IHRF MEL Framework in light of this report, including with the Advisory Group and Grantees to align objectives and fill in gaps in terms of verification means, the documentation of updated outcomes/outputs and monitoring data to gauge progress.
- Prioritize collective knowledge sharing and learning strategies within the larger intersex movement and integrate processes and results into IHRF MEL Framework.
- Develop mechanisms for assuring that decision making positions and power within funded organizations are held by intersex persons.

(4.3.) BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF THE INTERSEX MOVEMENT

Because the IHRF is a Fund and not an implementer, we recommend that thematic objectives, such as advocacy, as well as visibility and cultural change work at a local level, be addressed through capacity building efforts with grantees that maintain the flexible, feminist, and decolonial values of the Fund:

- Review this report with grantees, prioritize and segmentize the capacity building needs, for example, organizational development needs (registration, strategic planning, policies, etc.), advocacy skills, strategic litigation, leadership skills, health and well-being, communications strategy development, intersex medical expertise, etc. Identify grantee partners or others that can provide South-South technical assistance on these topics. The Fund currently would be unable to respond to these needs with its staff alone, and can act as a broker who connects the need with the technical assistance provider (and funds that technical assistance in a way that does not take away from core funding).
- Continue to convene and facilitate meetings and information sharing among intersex activists at local, regional, and global levels, prioritizing the participation and leadership of the Global South.
- Develop partnerships with organizations and consultants that facilitate Holistic Security training and tactics for its most vulnerable grantees. This may include digital safety tools, psychosocial wellbeing, risk assessment, threat analysis, and the development of preventive and reactive protocols. In addition, the rapid response funds mentioned above or emergency relocation could also be offered to at-risk intersex HRDs.
- Provide a clearinghouse (or commission a grantee or collective of grantees to create one) with updated specialized evidence-based research, informational, communication and fundraising resources on intersex issues. An accessible bank of resources could also comprise translation of resources to multiple Global South languages.

(4.4.) CONTRIBUTING TO AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- Deepen alliances with other human rights and social movements. Among others, indigenous, disability, youth, children and patients' rights, women's rights, and particularly LGBTQ+ movements could be strengthened.
- Advance donor advocacy work and collaboration with other funders intersecting intersex rights, such as feminist, disability rights, LGBTIQ+, children's rights, and patient's rights funds to deepen articulated and crosscutting funding, visibility, and crosscutting advocacy work among diverse funding portfolios.
- Prioritize sharing other funding opportunities with grantees and making introductions to other donors.
- Seek alliances with other donors addressing varied themes related to civic space, civil and political rights, and intersex salient issues. For example, look for ad hoc joint funding initiatives on topics such as Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Assembly, Right to Protest, Representation and Political participation, attacks and criminalization against HRDs, etc.
- Undertake a thorough and ongoing contextual analysis of the intersex environment for advancing intersex rights with the collective input of grantees before proceeding with future strategic planning. This analysis should be conducted with intentionality and intersectionality in order to connect resources to those that most need them. Based on the trust built with its partners, the IHRF could resource the development of collective participatory contextual analysis at the beginning of each strategic plan or every 3-5 years, also including possible scenarios and trends for intersex activism in the mid and long term. Staff, Advisory Group members, and other grantees may acquire more in-depth knowledge of grantees' local experiences intending to implement missions in loco to better understand the local context of intersex work.
- Commission an exploratory scan of the intersex activism landscape in the Southwest Asia and the Middle East and the viability of expanding the IHRF to this region.
- Generate resources and evidence (For example, by commissioning research or contributing to visibility campaigns) that contribute to a general understanding of intersex issues as well as galvanizing support in the philanthropic ecosystem against gender ideology, hate discourses, racism, and intersexphobia. Aside from feminist circles, it is important to engage with non-feminist philanthropic circles as well as other donors who are not familiar with intersex issues for dissemination and education efforts on these overlapping issues.

- In the spaces it participates, Astraea and the IHRF should continue to promote and emphasize the importance of listening to and addressing the experiences of intersex people, as well as to focus on the importance of funding organizations that work for visibility and cultural/social change, in order to raise awareness and continue to build a solid foundation for structural changes that benefit not only the intersex movement, but also those social movements that are affected by binary, conservative and pathologizing narratives. This includes facilitating the participation of intersex activists in regional and global spaces, such as UN mechanisms for advocacy.

CONCLUSION

This evaluation and needs assessment study were undertaken to understand the role and results of the IHRF in its existence thus far, and where it should move in the future. While this is meant to be a learning rather than a self-congratulatory endeavor, the IHRF can and should celebrate its accomplishments. The Fund has made a significant contribution to funding, strengthening, and growing the intersex movement, while staying true to feminist and anti-colonial values. In part through its funding, intersex activists are more organized and visible, have achieved advocacy results, and made strides toward cultural change.

In terms of meeting the intersex movement's current needs, the IHRF is poised to respond. This study revealed how the environment for funding and activism has changed, and activists themselves have expressed how they wish to be supported moving forward. This report provides thematic recommendations based on the authors' analysis of the data collected. We hope that this report and its recommendations serve as a solid basis for strategic planning for the Fund's future, as it clearly still has an important role to play.

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