



Support women's organisations to change lives!

The **why women?** campaign asks you to support women's voluntary and community organisations. Many people have no idea what women's organisations do or why they are needed. Yet without them, the world would be a much poorer place.

Women's voluntary and community organisations are not-for-profit groups that work with women to provide free, often life saving, services to women and lobby for better laws to end discrimination against women. These organisations include women's refuges, training projects, campaigning groups, counselling services and much more.

But many of these organisations are in danger of being closed down.

We are calling on the government to put gender back on the agenda by:

- Acknowledging the systematic disadvantage women face because of their gender
- Publicly recognising the essential services and expertise the women's voluntary and community sector provides

Stopping discrimination, inequality and violence against women benefits us all. To achieve this, we need strong and resourceful women's organisations that provide effective solutions to complex problems, especially in this challenging economic climate.

Support women's organisations...

...to change lives

Women's organisations work with some of the most forgotten and isolated women in our communities. Very often, these are the women whose needs are not being met by government agencies, or by other charities.

Without women's organisations, these women would not have the same opportunities to change their lives.

"I had a letter from a client who came to see us last year to say thank you. She said she had been sober now for nine months and that she'd become a trustee on a local parents organisation. She's now got a full-time job."

Women's Alcohol Centre

"A woman who had been raped went to one of the larger mainstream organisations where ... a volunteer... told her she just had to 'get on with her life' – this was quite appalling."

Women's organisation

...to stop violence against women

Women's organisations work to challenge the root causes of violence, and support the huge number of women survivors of violence.

Without women's organisations, there would be a lack of appropriate advocacy and support for women survivors of violence.

...to provide women-only spaces

Women's organisations provide safe, women-only spaces, where women feel they can talk openly, be comfortable, be understood, and feel safe.

Without women's organisations, there would be nowhere for women to go to access this kind of service and space.

“Women go from being timid, tearful and undermined and come back confident and emotionally strong ... many, many women who have been through the Women’s Aid system get to that space.”

Barking and Dagenham’s Women’s Aid/Eaves Housing for Women

...to promote equality and human rights

Women's organisations challenge discrimination and improve women's human rights. This can be difficult work, when the mainstream perception is that women have equality now.

Without women's organisations’ campaigning and lobbying, human rights for women in the UK would be far behind.

What can you do to support women’s organisations?

- Show your support for women’s organisations by signing-up in support of the campaign and becoming a member of Women’s Resource Centre
- Help women’s organisations strengthen and thrive by becoming a volunteer or trustee
- Order and distribute the why women? campaign materials
- Get a copy of the why women? DVD and organise a screening for friends or colleagues
- For more information go to www.wrc.org.uk/whywomen or find us on Twitter @whywomen

How can you find out more?

Why not take a look at WRC’s three **why women?** research reports:

- **why women?** This report looks at what women's organisations do, why their work is so necessary and why they need support.
- **why women-only?** This report looks at the importance and benefits of women-only services, as well as the challenges these services are currently facing
- **Not just bread, but roses, too: Funding to the women's voluntary and community sector in England 2004-07** This report maps women’s organisations across all of the English regions looking at the areas organisations work in, the equalities strands focussed on, and tracking income and expenditure data for 2004 to 2007.

These are all available to download for free at www.wrc.org.uk/whywomen

About the Women’s Resource Centre

The Women’s Resource Centre (WRC) is a charity which supports women’s organisations to be more effective and sustainable. www.wrc.org.uk

why women? is a Women’s Resource Centre campaign