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Greetings partners, allies and friends,

What a pleasure it is for me to share this report – a sweeping view of VidaAfrolatina’s journey to date! VidaAfrolatina was just an idea in 2018. Five years later, we have an exciting story to tell about blossoming into an operational international women’s fund.

Our concept was always outside the status quo. As an emerging fund, we see ourselves as pioneering in two ways: exclusively funding Black and Afro-descendant women in Latin America and focusing on sexual violence. And from inception, we set out to contribute to a shift in power by practicing participatory grantmaking, following in the footsteps of FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund and other innovative funds.

The lived experience of Black and Afro-descendant women in Latin America exists at the intersection of systemic racism and gender discrimination. Despite a centuries-long legacy of resistance and organizing, they continue to be the disproportionate victims of sexual violence. They also experience poverty at higher rates and have less access to resources for healing and systemic change.

VidaAfrolatina was created to address the acute void in resources. In this report, we share the story of our pilot grant cycle.

Most importantly, we highlight the work of our pilot partners.

Many sectors and institutions have acknowledged the need to address racial injustice in the aftermath of the undeniably unequal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the succession of highly visible acts of racist violence of the past several years. Philanthropy is no exception. It is in this context that VidaAfrolatina has begun contributing a unique, intersectional approach to grantmaking.

For our team, it is a privilege to connect Black women in Latin America with resources. For me, as an African American rape survivor, solidarity is the only option.

The actions of many individuals and entities contributed to our early-stage evolution. Thanks very much to all who have co-created with us in any way, including our Board of Advisors, volunteers, individual and institutional donors and partners. We welcome your continued collaboration and contributions. And we look forward to our collective future of healing, safety and Black feminist progress.
The Humanitarian Crisis

In the Americas, before the COVID-19 pandemic, 34% of women from ages 15 to 49 had experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 11% of women 15 or older were victims of non-partner sexual violence, nearly double the global average of 6%.

While these numbers indicate the significant prevalence of sexual violence, actual rates are likely much higher. This data reflects self-reported violence. It is impossible to know how many women never disclose sexual assault. Additionally, many problems with survey techniques and measurement methods result in undercounting the incidence of gender-based violence.

While sexual violence data is insufficiently disaggregated by race in Latin America, when captured, the evidence of disproportionate impact on Black and Afro-descendant women is clear. A national survey in Ecuador reports that sexual violence among Afro-descendant women is 7% higher than the rest of the population. In another example, when the Colombian government documented victims of war-related sexual violence, 73% were Afro-descendant and Indigenous, yet estimates of Afro-Colombians range from 10% to 20% and Indigenous Colombians are 4% of the population.

With the onset of COVID-19, gender-based violence surged as a result of a variety of factors and triggers, including women being isolated at home with their abusers during quarantine periods, job loss, financial distress and increased alcohol or drug use. Existing services for women experiencing violence became more difficult to access. In Brazil, where Afro-Brazilians are 56% of the population, the federal government slashed resources to address gender-based violence by 90%, from $19 million in 2020 to $1.7 million in 2022.

With public health systems overwhelmed in some countries and with political shifts away from gender justice in others, the pre-pandemic crisis of gender-based violence intensified over the past two years. The repercussions continue to impact the lives of women and their families.

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WHAT IS VIDAAFROLATINA?
VidaAfrolatina is an emerging international women’s fund that mobilizes resources and connects them with Black and Afro-descendant women-led organizations in Latin America that address sexual violence. Selected through a participatory process, our partners provide culturally relevant healing experiences in their communities and launch initiatives to reduce and, ultimately, eliminate sexual violence.

WHY PARTICIPATORY GRANT MAKING?
At the heart of VidaAfrolatina’s participatory model is the process by which participants collectively decide which organizations receive grants. Applicant organizations read each other’s proposals and score them based on a rubric formulated using co-created selection criteria. We are committed to participatory grant making because it inherently shifts power to the historically excluded. This model allows for Black and Afro-descendant women who best understand the problem of sexual violence, as it impacts them, to determine their own solutions. We believe that those with lived experience and intimate familiarity of the context of the violence are best suited to guide funding decisions.

WHY THE FOCUS ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE?
The harms caused by this trauma are commonly life-altering and long-term for survivors, as well as for their families, communities and societies. The World Health Organization calls sexual violence “a global public health problem of epidemic proportions, requiring urgent action.” A human rights violation of this magnitude calls for innovative, expanded and protracted focus in order to effect change. The will to address and eradicate sexual violence has not actualized at the societal level due to deeply rooted gender discrimination. The victimized and vulnerable can’t afford to wait for those with political and economic power to prioritize their healing and safety.

WHY DO WE PARTNER WITH BLACK AND AFRO-DESCENDANT WOMEN EXCLUSIVELY?
While commonly perceived as a gender justice issue, VidaAfrolatina recognizes that sexual violence is also a racial justice issue. Women of African descent have been disproportionate victims of sexual violence throughout the Americas since the start of the transatlantic slave trade 500 years ago.

At the intersection of entrenched systemic racism and gender discrimination, Black and Afro-descendant women experience higher rates of sexual violence. They are also overwhelmingly excluded from the social and political resources and power necessary to foster sufficient safety, autonomy and healing in their own lives. Without investment in Black women’s solutions, the structural, intersectional issues that perpetuate sexual violence will continue on largely unabated and ignored.

THERE’S A GAP IN FUNDING?
Black and Afro-descendant people are one-third of Latin America’s population. Yet, of the total number of grants made in Latin America by human rights funders globally and by U.S. foundations, less than 3% are directed explicitly to people of African descent. ⁶

Although one out of three women and girls have experienced gender-based violence globally, less than 1% of grants disbursed by human rights funders is directed to address gender-based violence. ⁷

For funders committed to eradicating sexual violence from women’s lives, improving women’s health and wellness, strengthening feminist movements or addressing systemic racism, VidaAfrolatina provides a mechanism to reach women who are disproportionately impacted, routinely overlooked and outside the purview of traditional philanthropy.

VISION & MISSION

VidaAfrolatina creates a world where Black women and girls are free to flourish because safety and wellness are their everyday reality. We do this by connecting diverse resources, including funding and capacity support, with Black and Afro-descendant women’s groups in Latin America, with a specific focus on organizations that provide healing services for sexual violence survivors and that create and lead systemic change to end sexual violence.

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Timeline

**Summer 2018** VidaAfrolatina develops participatory model through three focus groups with Black women in Colombia and Brazil, conversations with feminist and other human rights activists, social impact leaders, philanthropy sector colleagues, and lots of research.

**May 2018** Founder Lori Robinson is selected as a Global Fellow by Echoing Green which provided critical support for the initial research and planning phase.

**Fall 2018** The VidaAfrolatina Board of Advisors forms. This volunteer body generously contributes critical expertise, creativity and time to the planning and execution of the organization’s pilot cycle.

**April 2019** VidaAfrolatina hosts a fourth focus group in Brazil.

**October 2019** VidaAfrolatina hosts its first virtual gathering with Black women — including sexual violence survivors, organization leaders, students, artists, researchers, entrepreneurs and healers — in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Colombia, Brazil and Argentina to share our concept, receive input and provide a platform for movement building.

**Summer 2020** VidaAfrolatina hosts virtual gatherings to co-create aspects of the pilot cycle with our growing community of Black women-led groups.

**October 2020** VidaAfrolatina launches its pilot cycle through which applicant organizations review and score each other’s proposals to determine grant recipients.

**January – April 2021** VidaAfrolatina disburses funds to the grantee partners.

**November 2021** VidaAfrolatina holds its closing pilot cycle debriefing session.

**January 2022** VidaAfrolatina hosts Impact: Black Women’s Transformative Healing Work in Latin America showcasing the four grantee partners which share the process and impact of their work.

**March-June 2022** VidaAfrolatina conducts a search for a grantmaking consultant to lead the second grant cycle.

**July 2022** VidaAfrolatina hires a grant making consultant and begins preparations for the second grant cycle.
“I imagine a world where Afro-descendent women can be ourselves, women free to think, pray and love.”

— Makota Celinha Gonçalves
Journalist, social entrepreneur of the Ashoka Network, and National Coordinator of the Centro Nacional de Africanidade e Resistência Afro-Brasileira (CENARAB)
VidaAfrolatina’s participatory process facilitated collective funding decisions. Each applicant organization read and scored other applicants’ proposals. The process produced a strikingly diverse cohort. Every region of Latin America is represented. Project leaders ranged in age from 20 to 48. Their projects incorporated a variety of modalities to foster healing and create systemic change.

**AfroPoderosas** - Costa Rica/México

*Project:* Empoderando Mi Cuerpo Afrodescendiente (Empowering My Afro-descendant Body)

AfroPoderosas educated rural Afro-descendant girls and young women about conscious menstruation and sexual violence risk reduction and prevention through in-person workshops.

**Colectivo Ilé** – Puerto Rico

*Project:* Talleres contra la Violencia Sexual: Raza y Género (Workshops Against Sexual Violence: Race and Gender)

Colectivo Ilé increased awareness about the intersection of race and gender and its impact on sexual violence through virtual workshops centering Black women who are HIV positive, deaf, trans and who have functional diversity.

**La COMADRE** – Colombia

*Project:* Sensibilización sobre la Violencia Sexual vivida por Mujeres Negras Afrodescendientes, través de la Animación Digital (Raising Awareness about Sexual Violence Experienced by Afro-descendant Black Women through Digital Animation)

La COMADRE produced digital animated short films telling stories of Black women raped in the context of the country’s civil conflict as a pedagogical tool and a healing process.

**Revista Afirmativa - Coletiva de Mídia Negra** – Brazil

*Project:* Jornalismo de “escrevivência”: Narrativas de mulheres negras pelo enfrentamento a violência sexual (Escrevivencia Journalism: Narratives of Black Women Confronting Sexual Violence)

Revista Afirmativa held a call for contributors and selected several professional journalists to produce a multimedia series of reports examining sexual violence and toxic masculinity.

“I imagine a world free of physical, emotional and financial violence where Black women and our daughters can develop their dreams.”

— Ayda Córdoba

*Activist & Executive Director of Niara News, an agency focused on ethnic, social and cultural issues in Colombia*
“I imagine a world where Black and Afro-descendent women live without racism and without fear of going out.”

— Bibiana Peñaranda
Afro-Colombian gender and racial justice advocate and organizer, Founder and Social Leader at Red Mariposas Alas Nuevas Construyendo Futuro, and serves as a first-order consultant to the Special High Level Body on Gender as agreed upon in the Peace Accord between Colombia’s government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)
VidaAfrolatina recognizes that an important aspect of our work is to educate potential and current donors and other supporters and allies about the realities of Black and Afro-descendant women in Latin America, particularly because one of the major obstacles they face is their invisibilization across the region. We also work to influence the funding landscape by raising awareness about Black women’s movements in Latin America and their acute lack of access to funding.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date / Host</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>September 19, 2020</td>
<td>Historias by VidaAfrolatina I</td>
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<tr>
<td>VidaAfrolatina’s virtual fundraiser</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 25, 2021</td>
<td>Conference on African-American &amp; Diaspora Cultures &amp; Experience</td>
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<td>University of North Carolina</td>
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<td>at Greensboro</td>
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<td>March 26, 2021</td>
<td>Sisterhood Across Borders: The Participatory Grant Making of VidaAfrolatina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne State University</td>
<td>Co-Presenter: AfroPoderosas</td>
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<td>June 12, 2021</td>
<td>Cultural History, Collaborative Efforts and Social Activism</td>
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<td>Festival Afro Bahia</td>
<td>Co-Presenter: Revista Afirmativa</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 17, 2021</td>
<td>Historias by VidaAfrolatina II</td>
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<tr>
<td>VidaAfrolatina’s virtual fundraiser</td>
<td>Co-Presenter: Colectivo Ilé</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 26, 2021</td>
<td>Conversatorio: Resiliencia y Resistencia en las mujeres negras en el continente americano</td>
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<td>Proyecco Afrodescendencia</td>
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<td>México</td>
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<td>July 30, 2021</td>
<td>Diálogos Contemporâneos - Julho das pretas</td>
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<td>Olodum</td>
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<td>September 15, 2021</td>
<td>Centering Afro-Descendant Lideresas: Women’s Funds and Participatory Grant Making</td>
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<td>Hispanics in Philanthropy</td>
<td>Co-Presenter: La COMADRE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
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<td>Change Philanthropy</td>
<td>Co-Presenter: La COMADRE</td>
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<td>Unity Summit</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26, 2022</td>
<td>Impact: Black Women’s Transformative Healing Work in Latin America</td>
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<tr>
<td>VidaAfrolatina’s virtual event</td>
<td>Co-Presenters: All four pilot grantees partners</td>
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<td>April 21, 2022</td>
<td>Leveling Up: Resourcing Black Women in Latin America.</td>
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<td>ABFE Harambe Conference</td>
<td>Co-Presenter: Revista Afirmativa</td>
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</tbody>
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Financial Report

VidaAfrolatina is fiscally-sponsored by Global Fund for Women.

WE TRUST BLACK AND AFRO-DESCENDANT WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP AND OUR DONORS DO, TOO. THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTNER WITH US TO CONNECT BLACK AND AFRO-DESCENDENT WOMEN WITH RESOURCES FOR THEIR TRANSFORMATIVE WORK.

2020

- Revenue – Institutional Donors: $20,000
- Revenue – Individual Donors: $8,935
- Operating Expenses: $1,500
- Grants Disbursed: $0

Funding Partner: MADRE
Fundraiser: Historias I

2021

- Revenue – Institutional Donors: $220,000
- Revenue – Individual Donors: $4,490
- Operating Expenses: $116,495
- 2020-2021 Grant Cycle – funds disbursed Jan-Apr 2021: $19,500

Funding Partners: Channel Foundation, Collective Future Fund, Echoing Green, Oak Foundation
Fundraiser: Historias II

2022

- Revenue – Institutional Donors: $511,162
- Revenue – Individual Donors: $860
- Revenue – Corporate Gift: $800
- Operating Expenses: $280,000
- 2022-2023 Grant Cycle – funds disbursed Jan-Apr 2023: $95,000

Funding Partners: Channel Foundation, Equality Fund, Collective Future Fund, Echoing Green, Oak Foundation, Shop Latinx *

* Our first private sector partner.

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Next Priorities

01. CONDUCT 2ND GRANT CYCLE
Renew 4 pilot grantee partners and make first-time grants to 13 new partners.

02. OUTREACH
Identify and meet with Black and Afro-descendant-led women’s organizations in Latin America. Galvanize interest in our third grant cycle.

03. TRAINING
Determine partners’ priorities for strengthening and learning and provide organizational and leadership training resources.

04. STRATEGY
Design Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning strategy with collaboration from grantee partners.

05. NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS
Establish and grow relationships with new funding partners. Secure multi-year commitments from three to four new institutional donors.

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My parents are both Afro-descendants from the Colombian Caribbean. During the first years of their marriage, they decided to move to Bogotá to provide their family with better opportunities and a better life.

Living in an area in which we were the only Afro-descendants was not easy for us. Racism was always present in our lives, but we settled there because we thought we were lucky to be part of that society, and because we knew how many Black families in Colombia didn’t have the same opportunities.

It was especially challenging for my sisters and me. As Black girls, we were even more vulnerable, not just to racial discrimination, but also ever-present threats specific to our gender. My mom endured gender-based violence at home and sexual harassment outside.

Despite living in the capital city, the concept of resources for Afro-Colombian women victims of gender-based violence was not a priority for local or national government.

After my parents divorced, I immigrated with my mother and siblings to Ecuador. Living in another capital city, Quito, I observed the same gaps in terms of resources addressing gender-based violence for Afro-Ecuadorian women.

I moved to the United States in 2005 and 13 years later, reconnected with Lori Robinson, who I met while living in Ecuador. She shared the idea of VidaAfrolatina and invited me to be part of it. It was extremely rewarding to see how we, together, were able to build not just a women’s fund, but a strong network of Black women who collaborate, share experiences, ideas and the hope for a better future for Black girls and women in Latin America.

Serving as a VidaAfrolatina Advisor was transformative for me. I’m grateful for the opportunity to reconcile my roots and give back to Black communities in Latin America. I connected with amazing organizations struggling to support Black girls and women without sufficient resources. These groups can benefit not only from VidaAfrolatina’s funding, but also from the opportunities it provides them to connect, learn from each other and strengthen a regional ecosystem for racial and gender justice.

The financial support that VidaAfrolatina has received has been extremely important, enabling us to lay the foundation for the work ahead. But this is just the beginning. With so few funders focused on resourcing Black communities in Latin America, it is critical that institutional donors and individual contributors give generously. I know first-hand the lack of resources for Afro-descendants. And I understand the transformative impact contributions to VidaAfrolatina will have on the region’s Black women and girls.

Message From Our First Advisory Board Member

Elsy Cipriani

Elsy Cipriani

Elsy Cipriani
¡Gracias! Obrigada! Thank you! Profound thanks to the individual donors who discovered us online, through word of mouth or who attended our Historias online fundraising events. Many thanks to all of our institutional funding partners for your commitment to resourcing Black and Afro-descendant women’s organizations. We deeply appreciate your financial and nonfinancial support. Your solidarity has been key to the advances we have made as an early stage women’s fund.

VidaAfrolatina has received diverse support from many members of our transnational community of activists, organization leaders, feminist funders, translation and interpretation volunteers and other thought partners and friends. Special shout out to Echoing Green, EDGE Funders Alliance, FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund, Prospera, Project Tallawah, Central American Women’s Fund, Fondo Semillas, Oak Foundation, Channel Foundation, Equality Fund, and MADRE for the distinct role you have played as nurturers and guides. Extra special gratitude to past and present Advisory Board members, and coach-mentors Shonna Sommer and Chris Underhill. Thank you all for championing VidaAfrolatina.
DONORS

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Collective Future Fund
Echoing Green
Equality Fund
MADRE
Oak Foundation
Shop Latinx

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Diego Flores Benavides
Leo Barreto
David Bornstein
Leticia Bruce
Krista Brune
Kate Bryant
Cinthia Carvajal
Natalia Campos
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Dolly Tittle
Eloisa Tovar
Kristia Watkins
Jessica Yuan

TEAM
Lori Robinson
Executive Director
Vesta Cordero
Executive Administrator

VIDA AFROLATINA HAS BEEN SHEPHERDED BY AN UNPAID VOLUNTEER BOARD OF ADVISORS. MEMBERS HAVE NOT ONLY PROVIDED GUIDANCE, BUT HAVE ALSO PLAYED AN INTEGRAL, ACTIVE ROLE IN MANY OF OUR ACTIVITIES.

CURRENT ADVISORY BOARD
Janet Arelis Quezada
Doreen Dankerlui
Eshe Lewis
Erica Williams

EMERITUS ADVISORY BOARD
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Creating a world where Black women and girls are free to flourish.