



*LBQ Feminist
Leadership
Manual*



**This book belongs
to all **LBQ** womxn
in Uganda.**

Acknowledgements

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Foreword

Freedom and Roam Uganda (FARUG) is the most prominent LBQ womxn’s organization in Uganda and East Africa at large. It has the privilege of nurturing, training and mobilizing LBQ leaders and has hence earned my deepest respect. We have made it our core responsibility to teach and model the basics of feminism, feminist leadership and feminist movement building. We have continuously done this by holding workshops and dialogues with members of the LBQ community as well as documenting our work with feminist allies and in feminist spaces. With that in mind, we have put together the “LBQ leadership Manual.”

This manual has been compiled with the intention to clarify the fundamentals of feminism, create awareness about it and its daily relevance and challenge LBQ feminist leaders and aspiring leaders to continually assess their feminist ethos and living. I am delighted to say that it combines both the theoretical and practical application of feminist principles and gives relatable illustrations to readers. It sheds light on several concepts that have been a source of confusion for many striving to understand what feminism truly is, and where it fits in our daily lives.

A lot of thought has gone into writing and compiling this manual. It stretches beyond the generic and conventional perceptions of feminism to extrapolate and explain some of the unique possibilities that occur and exist whilst seeking to create an inclusive and diverse world that is free from all forms of oppression and discrimination for all kinds of womxn. Furthermore it introduces to what it would look like for us to live consciously as feminists and run our organizations solely relying upon feminist principles, having the courage to accept our failures and take responsibility for them so us no to cause harm. We are glad to be the trailblazers along with you on this journey. We sincerely appreciate this opportunity.

.....

Ssenfuka J Warry
Executive Director
Freedom and Roam Uganda



A letter for the Journey

Dear Human,

Welcome to the LBQ Feminist Leadership Manual. You are in the right place.

Welcome to a journey on feminist leadership. On this journey I invite you to be curious, open minded, vulnerable, and steadfast. Nothing about feminist leadership is easy, but it is truly liberating and humanizing.

This manual is divided into three sections. If this is your first time engaging with feminist leadership, we got you covered. We open the manual with a section introducing you to feminism. We provide a couple of definitions to provide the needed foundational knowledge for the discussions that follow in the manual.

We layer that with power, structures of oppression and intersectionality. Is it feminism leadership if we do not analyze power and oppression in an intersectional way? No. We mention this specifically here because we weave power, systems of oppression and intersectionality through the entire conversation of the manual. As feminists, we are taught to see these three things in all our interactions. We must be able to see how they are playing out in our interpersonal relationships, professional relationships, relationships in our communities and in our relationship with the state.

The manual then opens you up to reflect on your life as a feminist through thoughts and questions on individual feminist ethics. Because the personal is political, we explore individual feminist ethics through the framework of the Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists. We make a pause to talk about body politics out of specific interest in the topic and feminist leadership because this manual is primarily for people responsible to other people. If you are not an African, the principles can also apply to you with a bonus on how to ally well with African LBQ womxn.



Institutions are a critical part of feminist work and a place where we get to practice our feminist politics. For this reason, through the Charter of Principles of Principles for African Feminist, we discuss what it means to be a feminist institution. Owing to feminism's deep roots in community and building community, the manual also explores organizing for change and accountability in feminist practice.

Throughout the manual we provide a list of resources to support our hunger for deeper insight and understanding of the different themes covered in this manual. There is a guarantee that the list of readings here will lead you down the necessary rabbit hole for the continuous learning feminist need to develop tools and strategies for resistance, rest, and liberation.

May this manual be to you the first step to an everlasting liberation.

Enjoy the journey. We wish you freedom.

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About the Manual

What is this manual?

This manual is a guide to support LBQ feminist Leaders locate themselves, their politics and organizing work within the world today. The guide attempts to provide introductory information for personal and institutional knowledge acquisition and application to grow health practices and build better communities.

Why this manual?

FARUG's is invested in developing feminist leadership among LBQ womxn in Uganda to contribute to feminist leadership in the world. LBQ womxn although part of the wider Feminist Movement, often still find themselves excluded from both the Feminist Movement and the LGBTIQ movement. This manual is part of the FARUG's desire to ensure there is information available to LBQ womxn and their organizations as part of building grounded individuals, institutions, and communities.



Who can use the manual

This manual is primarily designed for LBQ womxn who are curious about feminism or have chosen to identify as feminists. Outside LBQ womxn, the manual can be used by other feminists and LBQ womxn's allies interested in feeding their curiosity and knowing in analysis of the different broad areas.

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Section 1:

INTRODUCTION TO FEMINISM

Introduction

This manual is based on feminism and feminist thinking. What better way to open this manual than to start with a section on Feminism? We can call this the back to basics for those who have been here before and a welcome to the beginning of something new and beautiful for those who are here for the first time. In this section we will cover the definitions of feminism, the different theories, the evolution of feminism, systems of oppression, intersectionality, and power.

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WHAT IS FEMINISM

ACTIVITY: The Pool of Ideas

(This is an open discussion activity in which the facilitator collects ideas/ thoughts from as many participants as possible. The goal is to get a sense of what the participants think about the topic. During the discussion, the facilitator is encouraged to sort through the ideas and group them into what works for the session. For example, answers can be grouped into myths, truth, theory based, and personality based, among others.)

- *Ask the participants to share their thoughts, what they have heard about and what they know about feminism.*
- *Write down the answers noting the ones that appear often.*
- *Remember to pick on these points in the following section. It is essential to use these ideas because they help participants reflect on their thoughts. It also provides you, the facilitator, with a pool of relatable ideas to work with.*

DEFINING FEMINISM

Facilitator Notes: *In this section, you can prepare a PowerPoint with additional information to what is provided, especially around the definitions.*

“**Feminism** is the struggle to end sexist oppression. Its aim is not to benefit solely any specific group of women, any race or class of women. It does not privilege women over men. It has the power to transform in a meaningful way all our lives. Most importantly, feminism is neither a lifestyle nor a ready-made identity or role one can step into.” – bell hooks, *From Margin to Center*.

For this manual, we will define feminism as a theory, ideology, practice, and tool of analysis whose goal is to create a world free of social, economic, and political oppression. It seeks to radically transform the way human beings interact with each other by dismantling sexism race, capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy, class, ableism, and coloniality. Key to this definition is the use of the term **human beings** as opposed to **women**. Although this manual targets LBQ womxn, feminism is beyond women and the binaries.



As a **theory** – feminism seeks to understand and explain the roots of the oppression of women and other marginalized groups.

As an **ideology** – it is a belief system that informs the way those who subscribe to it behave.

As a **practice** – it can be lived out daily in ways in which we interact with people and the world.

As a **tool of analysis** – we use it to think through problems, experiences, actions and develop solutions.

Applied in the four ways listed in the definition above, the goal for feminism is to confront systems of oppression and their patrons. Feminism also seeks to create alternative practices to counter the current practices which are products of the systems of oppression. Through feminist thinking and practice, we hope to create a world governed by liberation for all people regardless of sex, gender orientation, sexuality, age, race, ethnicity, disability, class, and any other identity used to exclude and oppress people.

SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION

The merriam-webster dictionary defines oppression as unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power. Oppression does not happen in a vacuum, it happens through people, systems, and structures. The systems and structures through which oppression happens operate simultaneously to create a world where people are not seen and treated as equal in the economic, social, and political spheres. Oppression through these systems also happens in the public and private domains. It happens in, on, and outside of our bodies.

The systems of oppression create principles and practices through which this oppression is defined, governed, and reinforced. The systems are diverse and yet interact to create this broken world.

According to Camille Cottais, **patriarchy** refers to the system in which the male social group holds the economic and political power, whether in the family or within society, and has control over the female social group (over their bodies, their work, their sexuality, etc.), resulting in the total subordination of women to men. The Charter of Principles for African Feminists defines patriarchy as “a system of male authority which legitimizes the oppression of women through political, social, economic, legal, cultural, religious, and military institutions. Men’s access to, and control over resources and rewards within the private and public sphere derives its legitimacy from the patriarchal ideology of male dominance.”

Capitalism: Jahan and Mahmud’s definition of capitalism is “Capitalism is often thought of as an economic system in which private actors own and control property in accord with their interests, and demand and supply freely set prices in markets in a way that can serve the best interests of society”. Under capitalism the goal is profit for the owners of the factors of production - labour, land, capital, and entrepreneurship. In the words of Adam Smith, *“It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages”*

Class Action defines **classism** as the differential treatment based on the social class or perceived social class. They add, “classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the



dominant class groups. It is the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class. "One's class one is determined by their ownership and control over factors of production as defined by capitalism.

In a June 1981 keynote presentation at the National Women's Studies Association, Audre Lorde defined **Racism** as the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance, manifest and implied. Dismantling Racism Works defines **Racism** as a situation when the power elite of one group, the white group, has the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society while shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

"**Coloniality** is manifested at two fundamental but interlinked levels. The first involved the expropriation of indigenous worlds by imperial colonisers. Such expropriation included the corralling of indigenous peoples and their ecological spaces for the benefit of imperialism. It ended with formal independence, but the extraction and exploitation of indigenous worlds continues today through neoliberal capitalism and globalisation. Second-level coloniality involves the colonisation of the mind, patterns of knowledge and social structures of indigenous peoples," Sylvia Tamale.



Heteronormativity – "A system of beliefs and practices which holds that people fall into natural, distinct, and differentially valued roles. Man is positioned as the opposite (and superior) of woman, as is the existence of only two 'opposite' genders. Heterosexual sex and attraction are understood as normal, natural, and universal. This system is systematized within social, religious, legal, and other institutional contexts, as well as internalized by individuals. Anything outside of heterosexual norms is treated with suspicion and violence, thus reinforcing heterosexual privilege and the gender binary system." Challenging Male Supremacy Project.

Ableism – Ashely Eisenmenger defines ableism as the discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. She adds that ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require fixing and defines people by their disabilities.

The systems of oppression although defined individually, they do not operate individually. They are intertwined and need each other to survive. To use the words of Mira Matsuda, 'When I see something that looks racist, I ask where the patriarchy in this is? When I see something that looks sexist,

I ask, where is the heterosexism in this? When I see something that looks homophobic, I ask, where is the class interest in this?’

Facilitator’s Note: *To break monotony in this section during a training, ask the participants to share examples of how they have seen these systems of oppression manifest in their lives or around them – in school, hospitals, the media, politics, etc.*

FEMINISM IN THEORIES.

Liberal Feminism – Considered the first theory on feminism, Camille Cottais defines liberal feminism as doctrine that encourages the development of freedoms, particularly in the political and economic spheres. She also states that liberal feminists want to apply the philosophy of liberalism to gender equality: the oppression of women lies in their lack of political and civil rights. Liberal feminists believe that equality can be achieved laws and policies can through laws and policies. The key ideas of liberalism, the root ideology of liberal feminism, are democracy, individual freedom, equal opportunities, and equal rights - right to vote, the right to work.

Marxist and Socialist Feminism – is a feminist theory rooted in Marxist ideology. Marxism a theory that challenges capitalism as an economic system. Led by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel, Marxists argue that capitalism has created two, social classes “bourgeoisie, who owns the means of production, and the workers, who only possess their labour force, which they are to sell in exchange for a wage. (Cottais, 2021). Building on this Marxist Feminists argue that capitalism is the source of women’s exploitation and presents this exploitation through the class paradigm. Socialist feminism shares a lot of similarities with Marxist feminism. According to Cottais, the key distinction between Marxist and socialist feminism is that socialist feminism takes both class and gender factors into account when it studies how patriarchy and capitalism are articulated.

Radical Feminism – is a theory of feminism that identifies male dominance as the source of the oppression of women and demands for the reordering of society to eliminate this dominance in the political, social and economic spheres. Emerging out of the critique of liberal and Marxist/socialist feminism, radical feminism is also constructed in opposition to liberal and Marxist feminisms, “seeks to address the root causes of patriarchal oppression, not



just legislative or economic changes.” Radical feminism also moved away from the individual liberation of women to women as a collective group.

Black Feminism - Maria W. Stewart asked, “How long shall the fair daughters of Africa be compelled to bury their minds and talents beneath a load of iron pots and kettles?” Patricia Hill Collins defines black feminism as a feminism that aims to empower Black women with new and critical ways of thinking that centers how racism and sexism worked to create Black women’s social issues and inequalities that arise from mutually constructed systems of oppression. Black feminism was a response to the exclusion of Black women in America from the rights discourse.

Amina Mama defines **African Feminism** as a radical proposition: it refers to the liberatory political philosophies, theories, writings, research, and cultural production, as well as the organizing work of the transnational community of feminists from Africa. The Charter of Principles for African Feminists emphasizes that “.....struggles as African Feminists are inextricably linked to our past as a continent, diverse pre-colonial contexts, slavery, colonization, liberation struggles, neocolonialism, globalization, etc.” Hence, African feminism centers these unique struggles of African Women on and off the continent in its thoughts and practices of liberation.

Queer Feminism - “Queer feminism to me is a politic of liberation because I don’t just want rights. I want to be free.” OluTimehinAdegbeye. According to Altay, T et al “A queer feminist perspective is based on the recognition that gender and sexuality are not only central to any understanding of wider social and political processes but are also always brought forth in complex intersections with other social inequalities and conditions”. “Queer feminism explicitly includes the LGBTIAQ+ community but it’s a feminism that further incorporates an intersectional approach and challenges power structures that enable all kinds of oppression across gender, sexuality, class and race.” House of African Feminism.

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READINGS.

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FEMINISM AND POWER

Power is the central thread of feminist thinking and practices. How we think about and use power determines how we practice our feminism in both private and public spaces.

What is power?

“Power is the ability to do something, influence something or act in a certain way.” Power is a central part of people’s interactions. As LBQ feminists we work to end injustices, discrimination, harm, build good and healthy interpersonal and community relationships. This work is governed by power. Injustices, discrimination, and harm are a result of an overbearing use of power. Justice, Non-discrimination, Safety and Healing are a result of health use of power. A good question Srilatha Batliwala in the book *all about power* asks that can help us think about power is “do we realize that injustice and inequality of every kind is actually an expression of power or a symptom of power structures?”



We can all be powerful and powerless. Power is not static. It changes with relationships, time, context, resources, age, sexuality, gender identity, race, education, language, geographical location, and many others. These dynamics (the list above) make an individual powerful or powerless in a situation.

To understand how power works, we must understand how it is created or acquired, the types of power and andhow power isexpressed.

Activity: Popcorn approach-in this approach, participants speak-up as and when they are ready to.

- Ask participants to share how they think people acquire power

How Power is Acquired

Srilatha Batliwala in the book *all about power* shares that power is acquired through 1) material or economic resources 2) human resources 3) knowledge resources and 4) intangible resources. When one has all these four things, they hold a lot of power as an individual and within the communities they belong to.

Material and Economic Resources include money, property, a house to live in, clothes, education qualifications, travel documents, and many others. Although many people argue that having economic and material resources is how we ensure our safety, it is both true and false. Although economic and material resources give us opportunities and choice, there are things it cannot protect you from. For example, being black and rich will not protect you from racism, having a passport cannot protect you from homophobia in the society, having a house does not save a woman from violence from men rooted in patriarchy etc.

Activity: Personal Reflection or Group Conversation



1. What economic and material resources do you own or have access to?
2. Reflect on a time when as an individual, family or institution you experienced a lack of financial resources? How did it make you feel?
3. How did this lack of resources affect your ability to make decisions, participate in public spaces, access to much needed services etc?
4. How has having those resources enabled you to better interact with society?

Human resources: Human resources are people. In the world today, the number of people one has access to, control over and the positions these people hold in the current structure of society gives one power. Power from control over human resources come from tow aspects – the number of people you control and the type of people you control. The most “powerful” people control both. The goal here is not to say controlling people is a good thing, we are simply analyzing how power is acquired in the world we live in today. When one controls people (mind or body) they exercise great power over their choices and opportunities. Batliwala in *all about power* uses this example in relation to women, “...the control of our bodies, including our sexuality and reproductive capacity, often lies in other people’s hands. Women

cannot make decisions about sex (even saying no to their husbands) or about whether they want to have children or how many children they want. Where our bodies can go, how they look, where they can be, is controlled by others."

Human resources should also be looked at through labour or workers. If someone controls the work you do, they have power over you. They have power over your time, energy, and cognitive abilities. This control gives them power. For example, a homeowner has power over their domestic workers, employers have power over employees and others.

Activity: Personal Reflection or Group Discussion

- Who do you control? By what means do you exercise power over them?
- Who has power over you? By what means do they exercise this power?
- Share your answers with the people

Knowledge resources – there is an old saying that states, “knowledge is power”. The amount of information a person or community has access to gives them or takes away power. Knowledge creates opportunities, enables people participate in activities that have the capacity to improve their lives and gives them access to other people and spaces that enhance their power. As simple example is knowledge of a language. English is one of the dominant languages of the world. To access opportunities in education, use the internet well, work and many more, one’s grasp of the language plays a critical role.

Another way of acquiring power through knowledge resources is through the control of knowledge. People with the ability to control knowledge through control of the production and distribution of knowledge. These people determine what others know, how they know it and when they know it. They also determine the reason for sharing that information given the context. For example, if an LBQ womxn has not publicly come out, the people who know her sexuality hold power by virtue of this knowledge in a homophobic environment.

Activity – Questions for Individual Reflection.

- What knowledge do you have now that gives you power in a context of choice? (Interpersonal relationships, employment, community etc)
- How did you acquire this knowledge?
- How has this knowledge empowered you?



Intangible resources – Intangible resources are things you cannot see and easily touch. They are hard to quantify but can be tapped into. At social level, intangible resources include a supportive family, close friends, associations, citizenship, and others. At a personal level, intangible resources include one’s personality, age, mental health status, spirituality, level of self-awareness, being conventionally beautiful, and talents etc. These are things that cannot be fully quantified but play a critical role in how we show up in the world. For example, LBQ womxn who came out or were outed and belong to supportive families endure less violence than those who come from homophobic families. A person who gets panic attacks works harder to cope with high pressure environments as opposed to someone who does not get panic attacks.

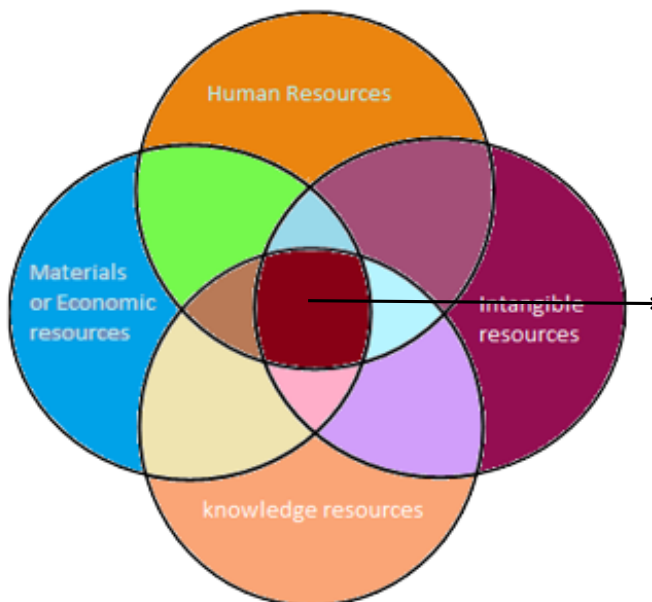
Activity – Questions for Individual Reflection

- Make a list of your intangible resources accessible to you
- How have these resources helped you navigate life?
- What are the intangible resources you wish you had because you believe they will make it easier to navigate life?

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The most powerful people, communities and institutions have a good combination of these resources. At the intersection of the diagram below the most powerful point.



At this point is where an individual or community is most powerful

Given the inequality and violent structures of the world today, these resources are often acquired through violent process with the goal of exercising power over others.

EXPRESSIONS OF POWER

When an individual or a group of people acquire power, there are ways in which this power is expressed. The way power is expressed determines whether there will exist positive healthy relationships or harmful relationships. There are five different expressions of power.

Expression of Power	Characteristics
Power Under	this type of power emerges when people who have been oppressed or are oppressed oppress others. It is an expression of power rooted in the intentional and or unintentional desire to make other people feel the pain and suffering we have been through. For example, when one has lived in poverty and finally manages to escape it, it is easy for them to assume people living in poverty are simply lazy and therefore will deny them services.
Power Over	Characterized by dominance and subjugation, this type of power seeks to create hierarchies governed by unquestionable power practices. In this expression of power, creating an environment of fear and threats of harm is central.
Power With	"the effective empowerment and enabling of all those engaged in the transformative process to create solidarity, mutual support systems, safety nets, etc" Srilatha Batliwala
Power To	"refers to the agency and capacity to act that leadership must leverage, within itself and in others, to create change; it is about the strategic skills, experience, insight, etc., that can be marshaled and mobilized towards the transformative agenda that has been adopted; power to is the recognition of what we, the change makers, bring to the table." Srilatha Batliwala
Power With-In	"this is often the source of the sustainability of feminist organizations and movements, since this relates to the intrinsic power mentioned earlier, but also to the capacity to regenerate oneself and one's strategies in response to the challenges and reversals that feminist change processes inevitably unleash." Srilatha Batliwala



These expressions of power exist in all of us, and we practice them in our daily lives. They show up in how we interact with people and how people interact with us. They also exist in how institutions and the state view and engage with us.

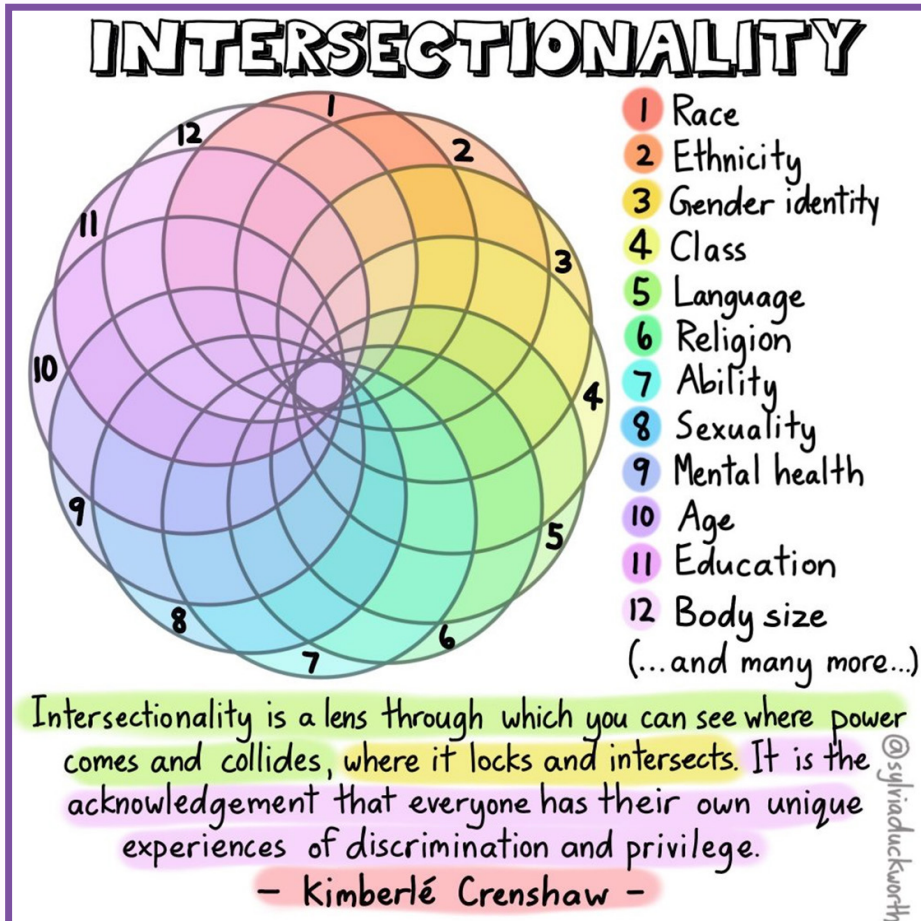
What is the feminist thought on power?

- Feminists understand that power affects all human relations. Power creates and reinforces inequality.
- Feminists seek to build power with, power within and power to because they are the most empowering expressions of power.
- Feminist movements desire to dismantle power over and power under through individual and collective action.

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INTERSECTIONALITY



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What is intersectionality?

Coined by Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw, intersectionality is defined as the lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

Intersectionality is the study of intersections between different forms of oppression or discrimination.

Intersectionality reminds us that we are never always powerful or powerless. Intersectionality also guides us to see that all the people with whom we are in community, who we meet in our life, work and beyond our physical and virtual reality.

Intersectionality and Power.

A central theme in intersectionality, is power. Power informs who will be oppressed and who will experience freedom. Through an intersectional analysis, LBQ womxn can see where they stand on the power grid as a group. This analysis must be taken deeper to see who within the LBQ community is most at risk of multiple oppressions.

To fully utilize intersectionality, one must analyse the manifestation of the different systems of oppression and how they play out in the lives of individuals and communities. This can be done through analyzing social, economic, and political actions in line with the systems of oppressions. Below is a box set of questions to support the process of analysis.

Activity – tracing intersectionality in our organizations and communities.

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Think about your organization/school/community and tick the appropriate rating box. ((1 strongly disagree - 2 disagree - 3 somewhat agree - 4 agree - 5 strongly agree)

Question/ Statement	1	2	3	4	5
We work with all groups of LBQ womxn					
No single group of LBQ womxn is often more represented by others					
Our board/community leadership is a diverse group of LBQ womxn					
Diversity is often discussed as part of our work					
We have links with organizations and communities outside LBQ womxn					
We are ethnically diverse in our community/organization					
We have links to organizations or communities outside our geographical location					
LBQ womxn with disabilities are a key part of our organization/work					
We work with people from diverse socio-economic statuses in our work.					
Our community is age diverse.					

Activity – Intersectionality through the power lens.

Fill out the table below as a group or as individuals. Be as honest and as detailed as possible. The goal of the is not to shame you or your community, it is to support you think wholesomely about your work and community.

Knowledge Resources	
Who in the LBQ Community is likely to have these resources Eg: Educated LBQ womxn. LBQ womxn without disabilities Older LBQ womxn White LBQ womxn LBQ womxn living in urban areas.	Who is likely not to have
Why Access to education - having an education creates more opportunities geographical location - urban areas have more financial opportunities Race -	Why
Material Resources	
Who in the LBQ Community is likely to have these resources?	Who is likely not to have
Why	Why
Human Resources	
Who in the LBQ Community is likely to have these resources	Who is likely not to have
Why	Why
Intangible Resources	
Who in the LBQ Community is likely to have these resources	Who is likely not to have
Why	Why



While feeling out this table, it is important to understand that this is more complex than simply filling the table. The table provides space for the first level analysis. Remembering that we are not single identities and therefore must layer this analysis.

After filling out the table, start to merge identities. For example, if I am an older LBQ womxn with a disability, have received formal education and live in a rural area. If I am a Ugandan queer woman who has no parent living in New York. If I am a partnered unemployed queer sex worker with a disability living in the city but do not speak the dominant language of the area. You will layer more and more depending on the context.

After layering through identity, identify the different systems of oppression at play making this oppression appear. For example, LBQ womxn living in rural areas cannot access good quality formal education because of homophobia, capitalism which has been used to make schools for profit through government laws, policy and practice, imperialism and colonialism which has narrowed what education looks like by narrowing education and acquisition of skills to formal schools only etc.

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Intersectional analysis is heavy in terms of the work we put in to do the analysis. However, when we grasp it, we can see it play out in the world we are living in. We can see it in the way we think, act, and treat ourselves. We can see it in the way others act towards us. We can see it in the situations that claim to represent us and our interests, among others. Normalizing intersectional analysis in our thinking processes also means we can apply it to the way we think about organizing and solving the problems in our community.

Section 2:

FEMINIST LIVING

African Feminist Charter

The personal is political is a slogan that was first used in the 1960s during the 2nd wave of feminism. The slogan links the private and personal experiences to the public social and political structures. Structures of oppression exist beyond the public and affect us in the private spheres as well. For example, violence against LBQ womxn arises from a delicate mix of patriarchy, classism, and homophobia. In the public sphere, there are laws and policies created to end violence against women and girls. There are clauses in the constitution on non-discrimination. However, these laws and policies are incapable of addressing internalized homophobia, misogyny, and classism.

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Although originally coined to point to the things that happen inside the home and on women's bodies. The personal is political is today used to also discuss the things feminists have internalized from living in and engaging with the different systems of oppression. When we show up in the world, show up as our whole selves. It is then important that we check our personal politics to enable us to become better people and build better communities.

The Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists provides a list of individual ethics that can be used by LBQ feminists as a reference point for individual practices within the larger movement. In this section we will discuss each principle and evaluate how we practice it in our daily lives. This personal evaluation and eventual change must never be substituted for taking our energy away from the struggle to create a feminist world. In the 3rd section of this manual, we cover movement building and will discuss how our personal change then transcends into the public struggles.

This section of the manual will use the individual principles of the charter for African Feminist to discuss the personal is political through the lens of our daily living.

Individual Ethics for African Feminists

Principle 1:

The indivisibility, inalienability, and universality of womxn's human rights.

Definition of key words

- **Indivisibility:** *simply means cannot be divided. Womxn's rights cannot be viewed, protected, and promoted in piece meal. They are a whole and must be looked at holistically. If one right is denied, all the others are violated.*
- **Inalienability:** *cannot be transferred, sold, or traded between persons.*
- **Universality:** *every person is entitled to the same rights.*

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In the world today, majority of the LBQ womxn do not enjoy the right to be human beings. They are criminalized, experience physical harm, arbitrary arrests, denied employment, access to health care among others based on their sexuality and gender identity because we live in a homophobic world.

Activity (a)– *Mapping human rights violations experienced by LBQ womxn by community and non-community members. Note down violations that come up more than once and use them as examples in the other session. Spend 20 mins on this activity.*

- Participants should be divided into groups of 4-5 depending on the number.
- Each group is tasked to identify ways in which the individual rights of LBQ womxn have been violated. Who violated these rights? How did the violation of one right affect the enjoyment of the other rights?

- Each group will then present their work and receive feedback from the other members.

Activity (b). *Personal reflection on individual contribution to violation of the rights of LBQ womxn. Each participant is given 10-15 mins to do personal reflection on*

- *Based on the violations mentioned above, have you as an individual ever participated (directly or indirectly) in violating the right of an LBQ womxn?*
- *How did your actions affect the individual's enjoyment of other human rights?*
- *Create space for the participants to share if they are comfortable to.*

As individuals we can and do contribute to the violation of the rights of individuals. This can be through our action or inactions. As an employer, you can violate your employees' right to decent work, rest, health care, a fair wage, and others. As a parent, you can violate a child's rights by causing physical harm, emotional harm, denying them access to community and others. As a partner you can violate your partner's rights by exposing them to harm, denying the right to work, associate and many others.

Our participation in the denial of rights happens both consciously and unconsciously. It is important to check yourself daily to ensure you are not engaging in practices that contribute to the violation of the rights of others.

Principle 2:

The effective participation in building and strengthening progressive African feminist organizing and networking to bring about transformatory change.

Referring to the definition of feminism in section 1 of this manual, feminism is a political movement and therefore requires that we mobilize people to subscribe to and practice feminism if we are to succeed. Feminist spaces still struggle to mobilize women outside the cisgender heterosexual normative.



Being an LBQ womxn does not automatically make you a feminist. Not all LBQ womxn will choose to identify as feminist. However, there must be intentional work done to introduce them to feminist consciousness and hopefully join the movement.

One cannot feminist alone. Feminism requires that we be part of the community and contribute to growing and sustaining that community.

Activity (a) *discussion on how participants are contributing to feminist organizing*

- *As participants to volunteer and share their stories on how they are contributing or have contributed to feminist organizing*
- *How did or does the contribution make them feel?*

Note: *Do not spend too much time here as there is a whole sub-section on movement building and organizing. Here focus on how the individuals are engaging and pick out examples and experiences that can be used to building on the movement building work.*

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Principle 3:

A spirit of feminist solidarity and mutual respect based on frank, honest and open discussion of difference with each other.

The oxford dictionary defines solidarity as unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest, mutual support within a group. Solidarity is a key part of feminist living. As individuals and members of community, it is critical to be in solidarity with each other.

LBQ womxn are not an identical group. Like all other groups, there exist differences in experiences, lived realities, aspirations, strategies, language, and histories to mention a few. However, difference does not mean we do not have things and ways in which we are similar.

Difference is also often conflated with conflict. To use the words of Audre Lorde *"We have been taught to either ignore our differences or to view them as causes for separation and suspicion rather than as forces for change."*

Solidarity does not negate difference. Solidarity requires that we center our similar interests.

Activity (a) *human bingo (the goal of the activity is for people to see the similarity and difference).*

- *Prepare a set of 10 – 15 questions on different areas of life.*
- *Task the participants to find people in the room with whom they share one of each aspect on the bingo.*
- *Reconvene and let them share the experience.*

Within the feminist space, each feminist must be able to recognize, acknowledge and respect difference in ideas and practices. This also means that there must be room within the movement to challenge the differences to ensure non-feminist ideas painted feminism are eliminated.

Principle 4:

The support, nurture, and care of other African feminists, along with the care for our own wellbeing.



“For womxn, the need and desire to nurture each other is not pathological but redemptive, and it is within that knowledge they our real power is rediscovered. It is this real connection which is so feared by a patriarchal world. Only within a patriarchal structure is maternity the only social power open to womxn.” -

Audre Lorde

Feminist work is difficult. The constant interaction with and resistance to deeply violent systems and structures leaves feminists tired and wounded. We are born into and raised in a violent world. LBQ womxn experience an extra layer of violence because of the normalization of heterosexuality and criminalization of the lives of LBQ womxn. LBQ womxn’s acts of resistance bring more violence onto them. For this reason, care is both a form of resistance and healing. Centering care also means creating spaces for healing from the violence directed towards you and the community.

Activity: Imagination of care for others and ourselves

- What does care feel and look like for you?
- What does care for others look and feel like for you?
- What are you learning about yourself from your reflections on care for yourself and others?
- What would you like to do to care for or learn to care for yourself and others better?

Principle 5:

The practice of non-violence and the achievement of non-violent societies. The right of all women to live free of patriarchal oppression, discrimination, and violence.

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Non-violence is a key tenet of feminist living and practice. LBQ womxn exist with violence every day. As a feminist you must, learn what violence looks and feels like for you and the community. You can do this through reflecting on your life experiences, learning the experiences of women like you and learning the experiences of womxn who are not like you. You can also understand violence from knowledge created and stored accessible to you.

In understanding what violence looks like, we are then able to see ways in which we are being violent to others through directly and indirectly through our actions and inactions. This knowledge will help us develop and practice non-violent ways of existing in the world.

Activity Group Discussion.

- Share your understanding and/or manifestation of violence
- Identify the systems of oppression this violence is linked to and how it has been normalized.
- Brainstorm on non-violent ways of existing (they can be personal, for community and how allies can support)

Activity *how we practice/ use violence against ourselves.*

- *How are you being violent to yourself?*
- *What systems of oppression have you internalized and how are they shaping the way you are violent with yourself?*
- *What do you commit to doing to care for yourself outside the framework of these systems of oppression?*

Principle 6:

The right of all women to have access to sustainable and just livelihoods as well as welfare provision, including quality health care, education, water, and sanitation.

LBQ womxn experience grave economic injustices because of their identity. As women they are excluded from economic opportunities because of the patriarchal practices of ownership and access to economic resources. They are further excluded because of the criminalization of their lives. LBQ womxn struggle to access education, jobs, housing health care and other goods and services critical for a sustainable and just livelihood.

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**Activity:** *Reflection questions*

- *Have you or an LBQ womxn you know been excluded from access to a sustainable and just livelihood?*
- *How did or is this affecting the way you or they engage in other areas of life?*
- *If given, what were the reasons used for this exclusion.*
- *How are you contributing to the exclusion of LBQ womxn to the right to sustainable and just livelihoods?*

Principle 7:

Freedom of choice and autonomy regarding bodily integrity issues, including reproductive rights, abortion, sexual identity, and sexual orientation.

The criminalization of LBQ womxn by the state and homophobia in society is the first way through which bodily autonomy and integrity is abused. LBQ womxn are denied the right to fully exist within their bodies and make choices that affirm who they are and would like to be represented through their body.

The second way bodily autonomy and integrity is abused is through the “accepting” of some bodies and “othering” of other bodies. Our society approves of some bodies and disapproves of other bodies. This approval and disapproval are then internalized and manifests in the ways we think about and treat our bodies.

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- What are the bodies approved of in society?
- What are the LBQ bodies that are approved of in the community and in the wider society?
- How does this approval and disapproval manifest?
- How does it affect the ability for the owners of these bodies to make choices and live free of harm?

Principle 8:

A critical engagement with discourses of religion, culture, tradition, and domesticity with a focus on the centrality of women’s rights.

Religion, culture, tradition, and domesticity have played a critical role in the exclusion, subjugation, and violence against LBQ womxn. Homophobia and its supporters find great support for their views and practices within

the frameworks of religion and culture. Yes, some LBQ womxn are part of and actively participate in these institutions and processes, however, it is important to have the deep conversations about how the four contribute to the exclusion and violence against LBQ womxn.

- What are your thoughts on religion, culture, tradition, and domesticity?
- How have these thoughts informed the way you work as a feminist and or LBQ womxn?
- How do religion, culture, tradition, and domesticity contribute to enabling or fighting against discrimination and violence experienced by LBQ womxn?

Principle 9:

The recognition and presentation of African women as the subjects not the objects of our work, and as agents in their lives and societies.

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When working with LBQ womxn, even as an LBQ womxn, you must see them as people and active contributors to the work that you do. This is particularly important if you work with an NGO, Funding organization, academia, media, health and any other entity or platform that engages directly with, documents and tells the stories of LBQ womxn. Understand and value their experiences, speak directly to them, learn from them, and let them contribute information about themselves. They must have a say in the way they are spoken of and responded to.

- What are they ways in which LBQ womxn are treated as objects and not subjects of their lives and societies?
- What are the ways in which we can center and value their lives and experiences?

Principle 10:

The right to healthy, mutually respectful and fulfilling personal relationships.

Patriarchy, capitalism, homophobia, and all other systems of oppression have deprived us of healthy, respectful, and fulfilling personal relationships. Healthy relationships require that we communicate, listen, be accountable, have healthy boundaries, practice healthy power relations and many other ways.

- Do you consider yourself a healthy friend, sibling, and partner? Why?
- Have you intentionally solicited feedback on the type of friend, sibling, and partner you are? What was the feedback and how are you using it?
- What does a healthy relationship look and feel like for you?

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Principle 11:

The right to express our spirituality within or outside of organized religions.

Spirituality is good for the heart and soul. It is one of the many ways we care for ourselves. There must be space in our feminist thought and practice for spirituality outside the options provided by institutionalized religion and spirituality.

- What is your practice of spirituality?
- Share something (an insight, a point of struggle, curiosity etc) about your spiritual practice.
- How does this practice contribute to your feminist work and thinking?
- How does it enrich your LBQ identity or thought on the lives of LBQ womxn?

Principle 12:

The acknowledgment of the feminist agency of African women which has a rich Herstory that has been largely undocumented and ignored.

Feminism did not start with you and the people you know. Feminism did not start with the 1st wave or the Charter of Principles for African feminist. Queer feminism, lesbian feminism, African feminism, and all other feminisms have a rich herstory and we must seek to know them. Just because it is not written in a book or talked about does not mean it doesn't exist. We also have a role to find these herstories and document our current experiences as they will be part of future herstories.

- Share one LBQ feminist herstory you learned from conversation with other LBQ womxn and or from an Ally?
- What would you like to know about the herstories of LBQ womxn?
- Choose an LBQ feminist you know or have heard about to appreciate their contribution to LBQ feminist work today?

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BODY POLITICS

Activity – *Envisioning the “Ideal” Body*

- Create your ideal body. You can do this through drawing, writing (essay, poetry etc), singing and acting. Allow each participant to use their comfort mode of communication.
- Ask participants to share their creation and explain why it is the ideal body. (Note down the emerging reasons)
- What assumptions, beliefs, or information let them to believe this is the ideal body?

LBQ womxn’s bodies are political. They are sites of violence. They are sites of resistance. The ability of LBQ womxn to carry their bodies and use them in ways which center freedom is political and must be protected and promoted.

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The freedom for LBQ womxn to have autonomy and integrity over their bodies does not exist because of the combination of patriarchy, homophobia, and capitalism. For African LBQ womxn the layer of racism and colonialism are added. These systems frame the bodies of LBQ womxnas to be controlled, disposable and valueless. They dehumanize LBQ womxn by dehumanizing their bodies. This violence against the bodies of women including the bodies of LBQ womxn, birthed the right to bodily integrity and autonomy.

Bodily integrity. According to ILGA Europe, bodily integrity is the principle that all people, including children, have the right to autonomy and self-determination when it comes to their own bodies.

Bodily Autonomy. Bodily Autonomy is the freedom, agency, and ability for one to make decisions over one’s body. The right to the autonomy of our bodies means that we have the power and agency to make choices, without fear of violence or having someone else decide for us.

The terms Bodily integrity and autonomy are sometimes used interchangeably. This use of the terms does not take away the underlying principle of bodily integrity and autonomy. Well stated by the Carrie Shelver of the Coalition of

African Lesbians, “this principle envisions a society in which all people are able to exercise autonomy over their bodies and lives and make decisions that affect their own bodies and lives without interference or dictation by individuals (such as fathers, brothers, and husbands), institutions (such as the government), religious doctrine and tradition, and the society and community as a whole.”

The bodies of LBQ womxn are governed through a combination of laws, policies, social (religious and cultural) rules and expectations. Religious and cultural rules are important to look at because they often inform the laws and policies of a given community/country. The context will determine how these rules manifest. But at the heart of it is the desire to control the bodies of women through “morality” informed by class, patriarchy, homophobia, racism, and ableism. (*Please refer to the systems of oppression on page 11 of the manual*).

When we think about the lack of control over LBQ womxn bodies, it is important to understand what systems are at play in depriving us of autonomy. This understanding also helps to identify how the systems have informed how we feel about, think about, and treat our bodies and the bodies of others. It also helps us understand why public spaces and people in these spaces like hospitals, schools, streets, markets, and others treat our bodies the way they do.

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Activity – Bodies and Harm

- *In your opinion and from your experience, what are acceptable and unacceptable LBQ bodies?*
- *How does harm to unacceptable bodies look like and manifest as? (Encourage participants to look at harm beyond sexual and physical assault. Nudge them to think about nutrition, surgeries, housing, access to water etc)*
- *For each type/manifestation of harm, identify the system linked to it and what mediums enable this harm. (mediums = laws, media, policies etc)*
- *Share the information from the discussions and create room for feedback.*

Note: Key things to note here include body size, physical disability, body shape, skin complexion, height, sexuality, gender identity, body art, etc.

The absence of bodily integrity and autonomy in the world and our communities has led to violence against LBQ womxn. This violence shows up as:

- Physical harm/violence, assault,
- Sexual violence, denial of sexual and reproductive health rights including maternal rights.
- Denial and loss of opportunities to earn an income
- Inability to find housing
- Denial of access to education
- Exclusion from participation in decision making and public engagement.

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FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

What is feminist leadership.

Tracy Barton - "Leadership from a feminist standpoint is informed by the power of the feminist lens, which enables the feminist leader to identify injustices and oppressions and inspires her to facilitate the development of more inclusive, holistic ...communities. Feminist leaders are motivated by fairness, justice and equity and strive to keep issues of gender, race, social class, sexual orientation, and ability at the forefront... The elements particular to ... feminist leadership ...include a focus on both individual or micro-level and societal or macro-level social justice concerns, a desire to bring marginalised voices to the centre of the conversation and a willingness to take risks as one strives to enact a transformative agenda."

Characteristics of Feminist Leadership.

Feminist leadership is governed by several principles. In this guide we will focus on 6 principles. Many of these are covered in the section on feminist ethics. We cover more here to provide a go to place for users of the manual.

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Analysis and sharing power

Feminist leadership always analyses power always. In the section on power, we discussed how power is acquired. Through that lens, we analyze power in our interpersonal relationships and community relationships. *"We accept that the ultimate test of leadership is the spaces we create for others to lead. We will work together to establish shared goals and will trust and empower colleagues to share leadership in reaching those goals. Likewise, we will trust and support those in positions of authority to guide us in the best interests of our mission."* ActionAid.

Inclusion

Who needs to be in the room? Who is in the room? Who is not in the room? How do we ensure they are here? What needs to change about the room to ensure we have everyone who needs to be here? In answering these questions, we create inclusive communities and build feminist leadership. Inclusion is closely linked to power. Exclusion happens because power is abused intentionally or unintentionally.

Care and wellbeing

Care is a central tenet of feminist practice and leadership. We care for ourselves and care for other people. Care is both an individual responsibility and community responsibility. We must be aware that our actions, even with good intentions, can cause or contribute to harm and hurt in our communities and to other people. LBQ womxn have experience multiple forms of violence. Experiencing violence alters the way we show up in the world and to other people. Aware of this, feminist spaces must center care and wellbeing as a tool of preventing and healing hurt and healing.

Please refer to **Activity:** "Imagination of care for others and ourselves" on how to build practices of care.

Accountability

Feminist leadership is always accountable. Joe Biel and Faith G Harper define accountability as accepting responsibility for your actions and repairing any harm that you have done. Accountability is not punishment. Accountability stems from the awareness that we are all capable of causing harm because we have been socialized in and by violent systems. Accountability is also a culture and a practice built on over time and mistakes will be made in the process. Accountability requires that we are humble, communicate openly, practice self-reflection and build collective responsibility.

This guide has a full section dedicated to accountability, please refer to it for further details on accountability.

Acknowledging the labour of others

There is no "self-made" feminist. Our work as feminists is located within community. Our work is always a result of collaboration with others physically, economically and intellectually. The practice of feminist leadership requires we acknowledge the work of other women and especially LBQ womxn because they are easily erased.

Self-awareness

To practice feminist leadership, you need to develop self-awareness. Self-awareness is the ability to see, evaluate and take responsibility for your actions consciously and in a balanced manner. Self-awareness requires that



we have honest conversation with ourselves, ask for feedback from others and take responsibility for our actions and reactions. Self-awareness is best achieved through a combination of individual reflection and community engagement. We cannot become self-aware through isolation alone.

In our journey to self-awareness, we must keep in mind our past experiences, present situation, and future aspirations. The table below shows several areas to consider when thinking about self-awareness.

My past	Strengths	Emotional Awareness	Material Resources
My present	Weaknesses	Mental health	Relationships
Aspirations for the future	Talents	Physical health	Physical Context/ Environment

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Activity

- Document in a way that is most comfortable for you what you think about yourself in the 12 different areas listed above.
- Reflect on how this shows up in the way you practice your leadership?
- In what areas do you think you need to or desire to improve?
- Who can help you on the journey to improvement?
- Make a list of people who think know you well enough to give you honest feedback on the type of leader you are. Make time to ask them for feedback.

The journey to safe awareness is continuous because human beings are ever evolving. For feminists, power is a central part of self-awareness. For some of us, arriving at self-awareness will require seeking out professional help given our past experiences. If you can, please do.

Reading List

1. Patience Ahumuza If they go low, drag them to hells basement – Ugandan Feminists Fighting Against Online Body Shaming <https://africanfeminism.com/if-they-go-low-drag-them-to-hells-basement-ugandan-feminists-fighting-against-online-body-shaming/>
2. Bodily autonomy, LGBTIQ rights and climate justice: Noelene Nabulivou's story <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/news/bodily-autonomy-lgbtiq-rights-and-climate-justice-noelene-nabulivou-story>
3. FARUG Guide on Queering SRHR <https://www.faruganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FARUG-GUIDE-ON-QUEERING-SRHR.pdf>
4. A Guide to Respectful Conversation <https://onetable.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/General-Facilitation-Tips.pdf>
5. The Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists <https://www.faruganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CHARTER-OF-FEMINIST-PRINCIPLES-FOR-AFRICAN-FEMINISTS-FARUG-2022.pdf>
6. All About Power by Srilatha Batliwala <https://creaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/All-About-Power.pdf>
7. Thoughts on Radical Care in African Feminist Praxis by Jessica Horn (2020) <https://thesociologicalreview.org/magazine/march-2020/radical-care/thoughts-on-radical-care-in-african-feminist-praxis/>
8. Queer women in Uganda: Don't Rush into Coming Out <https://www.boell.de/en/2020/12/01/ssenfuka-joanita-warry>
9. Interview with the Coalition of African Lesbians on a communal, solidarity-based approach to wellbeing - <https://www.sexualrightsinitiative.org/resources/interview-coalition-african-lesbians-communal-solidarity-based-approach-wellbeing>
10. Mugabekazi (Gloria) Mugasha Reclaiming and Reimagining the Politics of Collective Care as an Act of Radical Existence <https://africanfeminism.com/reclaiming-and-reimagining-the-politics-of-collective-care-as-an-act-of-radical-existence/>
11. Women Human Rights Defenders: How Intersectionality is put into Practice in Southern Africa <https://www.hirschfeld-eddy-stiftung.de/infozentrum/webtalks/women-human-rights-defenders-how-intersectionality-is-put-into-practice-in-southern-africa>
12. Queer community in Nigeria: "My feminism is queer feminism" <https://www.boell.de/en/2020/12/15/queere-community-nigeria-mein-feminismus-ist-queerer-feminismus>
13. ActionAid's Ten Principles for Feminist Leadership. <https://actionaid.org/feminist-leadership>



Section 3:

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

“Yes, think about yourself, reflect on your practice, okay. But then you need to test it in the world; you’ve got to be with people. That’s important. And I hate people! So I say that as somebody who actually is really antisocial.”MariameKaba

INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS

Based on the discussion in section 1 about feminism as a political practice, each participant should identify 4 ways in which the institution they run or work with implements feminist practices. Participants should be allowed to share informal practices as well. Each practice identified, should be linked to at least on feminist principle.

What is a feminist organization?



A feminist organization is an organization that; internally organizes people and work ethic based on egalitarian leadership centering care, intersectionality and advocating for change to systems and structures to create a world free of oppression in all its forms.

Egalitarian leadership. The oxford dictionary defines egalitarian as believing in or based on the principle that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities. Egalitarian leadership is therefore a practice of leadership that centers the equality of all people through access to and enjoyment of equal rights and opportunities.

A discussion with the Institutional Ethics of the Charter of Principles for African Feminists

As feminist organizations we commit to the following:

Advocating for openness, transparency, equality and accountability in feminist-led institutions and organisations

Access to information to support a clear understanding of policies, practices, processes, and responsibilities is central to building an organization culture that centers openness, transparency, equality, and accountability. As an LBQ feminist organization, practices of access to information must ensure all staff can access information about the organization and its work. Access to information also

helps to improve how staff engage with each other and make decisions in the organization. Access to information also enables organizations build practices and culture of equality. Often when people hide information from staff in institutions it is out of the desire to retain certain power. Access to information does not include personal data of individuals in the institutions, passwords, and pins. Information that should be available to staff include budgets, salaries, benefits, terms of contracts, opportunities, job descriptions and others.

- *In what areas are you thriving in relation to openness, transparency, equality, and accountability?*
- *In what areas are you struggling?*
- *What principles or criteria govern access to information in the organization?*
- *How are these principles or criteria reflective of power relations within the organization?*
- *How do these principles and criteria ensure openness, transparency, equality, and accountability?*

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Affirming that being a feminist institution is not incompatible with being professional, efficient, disciplined, and accountable.

Small, big, funded, or unfunded, institutions are capable of being professional, efficient, disciplined, and accountable. You do not need to have a large office, big budget, and many staff to build a culture of professionalism, efficiency, discipline, and accountability. From when you decide to start an organization, it is important that you make time to learn ways to ensure you have basic systems and structures for this culture. Being professional and efficient also helps to build trust in the organization.

Being professional is not incompatible with being flexible and adaptive depending on the context in which you work. Often LBQ organizations are under resourced and may not hire “qualified” people in the sense of what the mainstream system has defined as “professionals”. With this reality at play, it is important to work with other organizations and individuals within your networks to think about and learn ways in which to ensure the organization grows with professionalism, efficiency, discipline, and accountability as part of its practices.

- *What are you doing to build a professional institution?*
- *Do you have a governance structure?*

- What are the areas of improvement? What are you struggling with as an organization?
- Who can support you think through and strategize on ways to improve?
- Who are you learning from as an organization?

Insisting on and supporting African womxn’s labour rights, including egalitarian governance, fair and equal remuneration and maternity policies.

We are aware that LBQ womxn’s labour rights are often violated and there is little recourse for accountability and justice because of the criminalization of their lives, high levels of poverty among LBQ womxn, and limited access to information among others. Feminist organizations must be intentional about protecting and promoting the labour rights of LBQ womxn in and outside of LBQ organizations. Aliveto the reality of limited resources which affects the ability of some organizations to provide fair wages and professional development opportunities, organizations must be clear about this to the staff and collectively agree on a way forward. LBQ and feminist organizations be transparent about resources available and think of strategies through which a decent work environment

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- Are you aware of the national labour laws and policies? Are they available to your staff?
- What policies and practices do you have as an organization to ensure the protection and promotion of labourrights
- As LBQ feminist leaders, what accountability practices would you like to see in your community in the event of violation of labour rights?

Using power and authority responsibly and managing institutional hierarchies with respect for all concerned. We believe that feminist spaces are created to empower and uplift womxn. At no time should we allow our institutional spaces to degenerate into sites of oppression and undermining of other womxn.

Reflecting on the section on power in this manual is that feminist institutions must be built on two types of power; power to and power with. These two expressions of powercenter the use of power to bring about better outcomes for all. To practice power to and power with, LBQ feminist must do a power analysis in their organization and of their work as a collective.

As LBQ feminists who have experienced different forms of oppression, it is easy to become oppressive because of harm suffered at the hand of the system and

individuals. A history of harm can lead us to becoming harmful as well. For example, it is easy to deny people leave because you worked at a place where annual leave was not respected. Or, when we start organizations and are under resourced, we often work long hours for little pay, and this causes us think people who come when the organization is doing better and want more are simply entitled. Abuse of power can also happen through unkind words, harsh tones, expecting people to work long hours and infringing on personal space among others.

To practice healthy and empowering forms of power, each person in the institution must reflect on what power means to them and how they are practicing it. This is critical because how we think of power especially as people responsible for organizations will show up in the institution. In addition to the individual reflection, there must be clear processes to avoid harm from abuse of power. If harm happens (which will), there must also be systems for accountability, repair, and healing. These can be incorporated into organization manuals and policies and other governance documents of the organization. This information must be available to all staff in the organization.

- Reflect on your personal understanding of power and how it shows up in the organization.
- Identify and reflect on a situation within the organization or in an organization where abuse of power happened.
- How was it handled? What would you do or have done differently?
- At organization level, what systems for accountability do you have internally and or externally.
- Are these systems/structures accessible to all people in the organization?
- What can we do in the organization to build better and more equal power relations to ensure a healthy work environment?

Exercising responsible leadership and management of organisations whether in a paid or unpaid capacity and striving to uphold critical feminist values and principles at all times.

Strongly linked to the previous principle, it is important to lead well even when we serve in unpaid roles. However, unpaid work must not be the norm in an organization. If the organization is resource trapped, it is important that all staff are aware, and a way forward is agreed upon collectively.



Often, many LBQ organizations, due to their non-profit nature struggle to raise resources to cover staff salaries. Because of the unique needs of LBQ womxn, these organizations also have shelters and therefore more needs such as rent, utilities etc, beyond the ones of most women's rights organizations NGOs. . Because of this LBQ organizations find themselves between a rock and a hard place when it comes to the question of unpaid work. In principle, feminist organizations must pay their workers, however the practice might be more complex.

- *Referring to the principles of feminist leadership assess how your organization and staff are living up to the different principles of feminist leadership?*
- *What are you doing well and why do you think it is working?*
- *What are the gaps and how will you work to improve?*

Exercising accountable leadership in feminist organisations taking into consideration the needs of others for self- fulfillment and professional development. This includes creating spaces for power sharing across-generations.

Feminist institutions must be intentional about combining the desires passions and aspirations of the individual and those of the organization in relation to skills and professional needs. We must not simply take from the people who work in the organization, we must build a culture of learning for mutual growth. This can be done through setting annual goals for the role and the staff, understanding the professional needs of the staff and creating mentorship relationships or opportunities within the organization.



- *How does the organization document the needs of the professional staff?*
- *How are those needs incorporated into the goals of the role, department and the organization?*

Creating and sustaining feminist organisations to foster womxn's leadership. Womxn's organizations and networks should be led and managed by womxn. It is a contradiction of feminist leadership principles to have men leading, managing and being spokespersons for womxn's organizations.

LBQ womxn's and women's rights organizations must be led by members of the community with shared feminist values. This is important because values are critical in how organizations are step up and run. This is also because within LBQ organizations is where we are sure LBQ leadership can be found. Outside these organizations it is more complex. Therefore, in setting up organizations to meet the needs of LBQ womxn, we must guard the space for their leadership. The

wider feminist community must also actively support the growth of LBQ womxn's leadership within the feminist movement to avoid isolation of LBQ womxn. LBQ womxn must also take up space within the Feminist movement as long as they deem it safe for themselves.

Feminist organisations as models of good practice in the community of civil society organizations, ensuring that the financial and material resources mobilised in the name of African womxn are put to the service of African womxn and not diverted to serve personal interests. Systems and structures with appropriate Codes of Conduct to prevent corruption and fraud, and to manage disputes and complaints fairly, are the means of ensuring institutionalized within our organizations.

Fundraising for the work of LBQ feminist organizing and organizing for womxn's rights in general is hard because resources are limited. When we write proposals in the name of LBQ womxn we must ensure these resources serve the needs of this constituency. As a person or people holding responsibility for leadership of the organization, it is important to ensure a culture of financial accountability is built to ensure financial responsibility and discipline in the organization. It is important to also understand that often, when one LBQ womxn's rights organization is caught up in fraud, corruption, or any other financial malpractices, it makes it harder for other LBQ organizations to raise resources for the work. Therefore, good financial management practices are also important for protecting the larger work of women's rights.



- What policies does your organization have in place to ensure good financial practices?
- What practices does your organization have in place to ensure good financial practices? (Sometimes an organization might have practices that are used and are not written down)
- What is working well about the policies or practices?
- In what areas are you struggling?
- How would like to improve the organization's policies and practices to ensure good financial management?
- What skills or knowledge do you or will you need to improve the policies and practices?
- What is the role of the different people in the organization in supporting these policies and practices?

Striving to inform our activism with theoretical analysis and to connect the practice of activism to our theoretical understanding of African feminism. And, Ensuring that feminist non-governmental or mass organisations are created in response to real needs expressed by womxn that need to be met, and not to serve selfish interests, and unaccountable income generating.

Building knowledge and establishing organizations to support and strengthen the work of LBQ womxn is important. Today, there is some information on which we can build and use to strengthen our work. Linking the work to lived experiences and using lived experiences to develop theory is possible and must be intentionally pursued. LBQ feminist organization must not wait for others to document their work. Documentation is not only academic writing. Documentation can be done through stories, audio, video, art and any other means available and most comfortable to the collective.

- What documentation practices are embedded into the work of your organization?
- How are you using lived experiences of the LBQ womxn you work with to inform how you structure your organization's work?

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Being open to critically assessing our impact as feminist organizations and being honest and proactive with regards to our role in the movement.

Building on the work of theorizing and linking the work to our theoretical analysis, it is important to make time in the work to pause and ensure our organizations are practicing and creating feminist value centered impact. This impact must be assessed both internally on the organization's health and the health of the working environment for the people we work with. Externally, the impact on the lives of people within the greater movements to which we belong. How are you as an organization or the community documenting this impact and how are you using this information to strategize for the future.

Internally

- Why was the organization created (vision, mission, and goals)?
- How has the organization evolved over the past year or years?
- What factors have contributed to this evolution?
- How has the organization's evolution (if any) affected the internal operations of the institutions (look at processes, practices, costs of operation, number of staff, structure of the organization, workload etc)

- How are you documenting these changes and using the information obtained to inform the way the organization operates?

Externally

- Based on the vision, mission and/or goals of the organization, how are the current environment in which you operate changed?
- How has the work you are doing (as an organization or part of the networks you belong to) contributed to this change? This change can be negative or positive.
- For changes in the context (external environment outside the control of the organization) what has changed in the context in which the organization operates over the past years?
- Based on the past and your understanding of the future.
- How is the organization responding to and strategizing for these changes?

Opposing the subversion and/or hijacking of autonomous feminist spaces to serve right wing, conservative agendas.



More and more we are seeing the co-opting and appropriation of feminist language and practices by groups and individuals to promote and reinforces values and practices that pushback on the wins of LBQ womxn and women's rights movements. In 2022, the groups in the United States of America that organized to overturn the right to abortion used "freedom of expression" as part of their argument against abortion rights. Today concepts like choice, sexual liberation, self-care, empowerment, inclusion and others have been appropriated by non-feminist organizers to promote their agenda. We have also seen more heterosexual lead and focused organizations appropriating the language and lives of LBQ womxn to fundraise and build their organization's visibility while actively refusing to ally with them. They are also more interested in being included in LBQ exclusive spaces in the name of "wanting to learn".

Although we understand the value of organizing with people outside the LBQ community, its important to guard this space because it is critical for consciousness raising and strategizing for LBQ womxn's community building work.

- How are you building and protecting LBQ womxn exclusive spaces?
- What are the current threats to LBQ womxn's spaces?
- What strategies can be adopted to protect these spaces?

ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE

“Without community, there is no liberation.” **Audre Lorde**

“Queer and feminist worlds are built through the effort to support those who are not supported because of who they are, what they want, what they do.” **Sara Ahmed, Living a Feminist Life**

“The best way to eradicate inequality and injustice is when oppressed people build strong movements that shift the structures of power” **Srilatha Batliwala**

Feminism is about the individual and the collective. As covered under feminist living, every feminist has the duty to contribute to building a strong movement for the world we desire. While the individual learns and grows in their personal space, it is imperative that we grow as a community as well.

Conscientization for Movement Building

A term influenced by Paulo Freire that refers to raising the **critical consciousness** of an individual or group to understand root causes of oppression and poverty and then act to address the root causes identified.

What is a movement?

In the book *All About Movements* Srilatha Batliwala defines a movement as a set of people with a shared experience of injustice who organize to build their collective power and leadership. In addition to a shared experience of injustice, there must be a shared understanding of the injustice and a shared passion to end it.

Feminist movements are different from other movements (there are many movements in the world) because it centers dismantling and restructuring power systems that create patriarchy, homophobia, racism, and capitalism. This restructuring of power is not only in the public spaces, but also in the private spaces and interpersonal relationships. Feminists understand that abuse of power is the cause of injustices and therefore focus on restructuring where power is located and how it is used.

Movements are important because they build collective power to shift power structures, center those directly affected by the problem in determining the change they desire, create space for people to think and act together and create safety systems from backlash of opposing oppressive power systems.



Principles of and for Movement Building

Shared vision – movements are built on shared vision. For a movement to succeed people must desire the same outcomes of the work. You cannot organize with people who want the opposite for you. Through a shared vision, you can determine who allies and detractors of the work are. It is important to make time within the work to check if you still hold a shared vision within the movement.

Shared values and principles - movements are built on shared values and principles. Although people can come together with a shared agenda, they might have different values and principles. For example, many women’s rights movements are homophobic. Although they desire justice for women, this justice leaves out women like LBQ womxn and Transgender women. Some may be based on religious morality and will not include women like sex workers. Shared values are important for movement building because without shared values, the movement will only achieve justice for the most powerful in it or for those most acceptable by the centers of power.

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Connectedness – movements must be connected and stay connected to the communities. Movements need to exist and build leadership at different levels. This can be geographically, across professions, across age groups, across ethnic groups and others. Connectedness helps to build sustainability and shared leadership for the movements. This is especially critical for feminist movements whose goal is long term systemic change.

Communication! Communication! Communication – movements share information. They check in and talk about the difficult things. Movement building is messy because when you bring people together good and bad things happen. Working towards change requires that we are in constant, continuous, clear, and respectful communication. There must be room in our movements to question each other, build trust and have conflict. Through communication all things are clarified, and relationships grow.

Accountability -movements must be accountable. Accountability is the role of everyone in the movement. Because movements are built on collective power, everyone in the movement has a responsibility to contribute to building an accountable movement. Yes, leadership or leaders in the movement must be more accountable because more power is delegated to them. Accountability can be structured around people, financial resources, actions, goals, and inclusion among others. Accountability helps to build better, healthier, and stronger movements.

Activity

In groups of 3-5, reflect on the LBQ womxn's movement in your locality and answer the following questions

- What is the shared vision of the movement?
- What are the values documents, talked about or espoused by the movement?
- Is the movement connected to the community? How does this connectedness show up in the movement and the community?
- How is information shared within the movement?
- When something unfortunate happens in the movement? What accountability mechanisms are available to community and movement members?
- Share the answers from the discussions.

Activity 2

- Based on the presentations from the group discussion
- Identify areas of improvements
- Build strategies or make recommendations on how LBQ womxn can work together to strengthen the movement

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**Steps in Building Movements**

In the book All About Movements, Srilatha Batliwala lists out 12 steps for movement building

1. Perception of Injustice
2. Inspired, determined leadership
3. Create space and gather to discuss the injustice
4. Frame a preliminary agenda for change
5. Raise awareness, mobilize, and organize others affected by the injustice around the agenda
6. Expand leadership base.
7. Identify and implement strategies and actions for change.

8. Visibility and backlash
9. Absorb gains
10. Expand participation and systematize governance
11. Build new analysis of the situation
12. Deepen the change agenda and identify new strategies and sites of action.

This process will be repeated throughout the movement building process until the injustice ends. This happens because movements are always growing, and new members must also fully understand the injustice and the desired change.

Not all movements will go through this process because they are structured differently. Today, some movements are located online, some are focused on a short-term change which can be achieved without organizing through the 12 steps and others fail along the way.

Activity

- Identify a single issue for LBQ womxn can organize around.
- Using all or some of the 12 steps above, develop a movement building strategy identifying leaders, actions, and allies to work with
- Identify ways in which you will assess the success or failure of the plan.

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Reading List

1. Srilatha Batliwala All About Movements https://creaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/All-About-Movements_Web.pdf
2. Feminists organizing offline in Africa <https://africasacountry.com/2020/07/feminists-organizing-offline-in-africa>
3. Charter Toolkit
4. HRAPF Advocacy Toolkit <https://www.faruganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/HRAPF-LGBTI-SRHR-Advocacy-Guide-for-LGBTI.pdf>
5. https://justassociates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ict_2015_chapter3_web.pdf
6. <https://cofemsocialchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/TS10-Feminist-movement-building-Taking-a-long-term-view.pdf>

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ACCOUNTABILITY

As people born into violent systems, we are all capable of harm and will experience or have experienced harm at some point in our lives. The prevailing culture around harm is the desire to push the perpetrator and the perpetrator's response is to deny causing harm. The current response to violence and harm is to look at it as an individual failure. The people who cause harm are looked at as bad people and those who experience harm are left with the responsibility of getting justice. Feminist accountability argues the opposite. Violence is a product of oppression and violent systems and therefore must be addressed through practices opposed to these systems.

What is Accountability?

According to Zehr, accountability is a practice that invites those who have caused harm to participate in the process of understanding how their actions caused harm, to take responsibility without blaming others, and to work to repair that harm all with the goal of refraining from causing similar harm in the future.



Gifted to them from the Northwest Network, Shannon Perez-Darby defines accountability as taking responsibility for your choices and the consequences of those choices. She further asserts that accountability is a tool to help you figure out what to do if you do something that is against your values, something that is harmful to other humans.

Joe Biel and *Faith G Harper* define accountability as accepting responsibility for your actions and repairing any harm that you have done.

Self- Accountability: *Shannon Perez-Darby* defines self-accountability as looking at yourself, looking at your values and seeing if the choices you make everyday are aligned with your values. Self-accountability requires that we make space in our lives to have honest and difficult conversations with ourselves.

Community Accountability: Is a process in which a community (friends, family, workplace, social group) work together to create strategies with the goal of preventing, participating in, responding to, and healing violence, harm and hurt.

Accountable Communities: Accountable communities are communities that are building or have built a culture of accountability into their everyday practices. They view violence, harm, and hurt through the lens of systems and structures as opposed to individual action. They create and implement practices to address violence, harm

and hurt through collective work between those who have experienced harm and those who have caused harm.

Accountability is not a punishment. It centers responsibility for action and repair of harm and hurt caused. Accountability as a feminist practice acknowledges that we are all capable of cause harm because of the systems through which we are socialized. Accountability is messy, takes time, requires humility and collective effort.

Obstacles to Accountability adopted from the thoughts of Sonya Shah, nurinusrat, Mimi Kim, Ann Russo, Esteban Kelly, adriennemaree brown, Rachel Herzing, Stas Schmiedt, Lea Roth, Leah Lakshmi Piepzn-Samarasinha, and Mia Mingus.

Not socialized for accountability but are socialized for punishment and revenge. – we are socialized to deny any wrongdoing. This is because we are expecting punishment for any wrongdoing. When we experience wrong, we also expect the people who cause us harm and hurt to be punished because this is all we know. Because, feminist accountability is not about punishment, we are unable to participate or build systems outside of punishment.



Pride— accountability requires loads and loads of humility. The humility to accept that we have caused hurt and harm. A principal part of accountability is acknowledging that one has caused harm or hurt, and they are willing to repair the harm and hurt. Pride does not allow us to come to accountability honestly and authentically.

Shame and Fear- There are a multitude of doubts and fears that can cause “normal” people to want to avoid accountability. Fear of failure—I may not be able to come through. Fear of making a mistake, fear of not measuring up, fear it will be too hard, or too risky. There is also fear of losing control.

Limited knowledge - Some people just don’t know how to step out and follow through and are hesitant to be accountable or hold others accountable. Perhaps they’ve not seen a good role model for accountability.

Strategies for Cultivating Community Accountability based on the work of Anna Russo.

1. Shift from “what can I do” to “what can we do”
2. Strengthen Communication Skills
3. Practice collective support
4. Share leadership experiences
5. Build shared vocabulary

6. Practice taking accountability
7. Create space to create concrete accountability steps
8. Practice everyday interventions
9. Create collective analysis and action to the roots of violence
10. Practice, practice, practice

Reading List

1. Self-Accountability and Movement Building by Shannon Perez-Darby (2020).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3eUoi23fgEs&t=822s>
2. Building Accountable Communities Video Series
<http://www.deanspade.net/2018/12/05/building-accountable-communities-video-series/>
3. Addressing harm, a conversation by the Barnard Center for Research on Women
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUhaOYD0ZWY>
4. A Guide to Respectful Conversation
<https://onetable.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/General-Facilitation-Tips.pdf>
5. Project Nia (2013) Transformative Justice: A Curriculum Guide
6. *https://project-nia.org/uploads/images/tjcurriculum_design_small-finalrev.pdf*



Additional Readings

1. Sylvia Tamale – Decolonization and Afro-Feminism
2. Boy Wives and Female Husbands – Stephen O Murry and Will Roscoe (editors)
3. Freeing our Imagination -
4. The History of Sexuality - Michel Foucault
5. Sylvia Tamale African Feminism: How should we change https://www.akinamamawaafrika.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/African_Feminism_How_should_w.pdf
6. African Feminist Perspectives Matter: A Reading List <https://www.blackwomenradicals.com/blog-feed/african-feminist-perspectives-matter-a-reading-list>
7. Bell hooks - Ain't I a Woman
8. (1981) Audre Lorde, "The Uses Of Anger: Women Responding To Racism" <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/speeches-african-american-history/1981-audre-lorde-uses-anger-women-responding-racism/>
9. <https://africanfeminism.com/a-christian-queer-feminists-quagmire/>
10. Feminist Accountability: Disrupting Violence and Transforming Power. Ann Russo

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