

MOVEMENT BUILDING

A movement is not just a network, or actors, or organizations, but a **weaving together of all of these components**; tied together with influencers, direct actions; sewn with continuous consciousness-raising and lobbying; **grounded by reflection.**

IT'S ALL ABOUT
RELATIONSHIPS



WITH BOLDNESS AND SOLIDARITY, WE CAN CREATE A
COLLECTIVE VISION FOR THE MOVEMENT TO END VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

WHAT DOES A GLOBAL SOUTH MOVEMENT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS LOOK LIKE?

*"MY VISION OF THE FUTURE IS THAT WE NEVER POST-PONE THE FUTURE:
THE FUTURE IS WHAT WE CREATE NOW, THE SEEDS WE PLANT TODAY."*

Dilar Dirik, AWID 2016 Forum

Activists and organizations in every region and country are using creative and strategic activism to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG). When we recognize, support and join our efforts we grow ever stronger - this is movement building. More connection means more impact in our communities and our world.

Movements take many forms and grow from the contributions and work of many people and organizations. Weaving the connections and collaborations among ourselves will increase our ability to impact at all levels –local to global.

Firstly, *WHAT DO WE MEAN BY A MOVEMENT?*

Movements are not only about visible moments of mobilization or protest against a specific incidence of injustice. **Movements generally have no exact road map or specific structure, and include a range of strategies, participants, organizations and actions over time.** According to Srilatha Batliwala, a movement has:

- * A political vision and broad agenda;
- * Broad membership & active constituency base;
- * Some degree of organization; formal & informal linkages;
- * Proactive & reactive joint actions in pursuit of common goals;
- * Continuity over time adjusting to moment/context;
- * Include activities that combine "outside" strategies (marches, protests, organizing, gatherings) and "inside" or institutional strategies (advocacy & lobbying, consciousness raising).



HOW ARE WE BUILDING MOVEMENTS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS?

Below we have included some examples of different contributions to movement building from organizations operating at the local, regional and global level.

* Since 2003, the Gender-based Violence Prevention Network has been engaging members in the Horn, East and Southern Africa through peer-to-peer connections and online conversations on how to analyze VAWG based on feminist principles/values. Initiatives such as Get Moving!, Sister-to-Sister, and #Power101 and other online campaigns are **building solidarity and analysis to widen the base of the regional feminist activism preventing VAWG.**

* The African Feminist Forum was born in 2006 out of a need to create a safe space for feminist organizing on the continent and push back against closing political spaces and reduced financing for women's organizations across Africa. **Bringing women and organizations together at a regional level, sharing useful and replicable tools like the African Charter of Feminist Principles, have been key to also sustaining national movements.** For example, the Uganda Feminist Forum started its own space to bring together self-identified feminists to deliberate on key issues of concern to the movement. The UFF is supporting feminist education by holding regular conversations called Adisi Ku Kyoto; an annual Director's Forum to support strategic direction of the movement; and involving potential non-feminist supporters. **Initiatives between the national and regional level are reinforcing a wider movement to end VAWG.**

* CREA is bringing struggles together strategically. The organization has worked in India to **bring together sex workers and trans sex-workers, with middle-class women struggles on labour rights.** As they share differences, they also share common ground on the issue of labour rights and this has been a key strategy to build links between movements.

* Just Associates (JASS) **supports and documents sustained movement-building in multiple regions around the world.** We equip and accompany activists so they are stronger, safer and more strategic. The We Rise platform (werise-toolkit.org) is a collection of our methods, tools and strategies.

* The Move to End Violence's 10 year movement building initiative is supporting cohorts of activist leaders in the US to **build a common vision and strategy to end VAWG.**

* The AWID Feminist Futures Toolkit is helping **movement-builders to consciously imagine a future free of violence.**

During the forum, spaces were created to support us as activists to suspend disbelief and let go of fear, in order to make room for **dreaming about the world that we deserve.**



* **Young Feminists are practicing solidarity and are supportive of other activists' work, whether it be feminist activism, trans, LGBTIQ** - we are lifting each other up! Young feminists across the world are showing up for others, often marching, drumming, taking the streets, planning protests, breaking down silos and showing solidarity between movements. **#practicesolidarity** is a campaign that came out of the AWID forum where young activists got together to discuss what was important for them in building movements across the globe.

* **In our different movements, we are engaging unlikely allies across the globe** – men, white allies, public servants who work in repressive governments, law enforcement officers, religious leaders, parliamentarians and politicians, amongst others. **We are weaving them into our movements made up of diverse communities, networks and actors**, including organizations, activists, influencers, private sector consultants, lawyers collectives, and other marginalized organizations who stand with us in solidarity.

REFLECTING ON OUR MOVEMENTS TO END VAWG:

"NEVER BE THE MOST FEMINIST PERSON YOU KNOW"

Cynthia Enloe

* **How do we handle shame in our organizations and movements?** – i.e. when members don't feel there is a space for learning, they lack the political lingo to "fit in", or feel judged when contributing their ideas

* **How do we handle fear, competition and mistrust in and between our organizations and movements?** What examples can we draw on where movements are coming together?

"FEAR IS, IN ITS ESSENCE, A TOTAL AND UTTER MISUSE OF THE IMAGINATION"

AWID Feminist Futures Toolkit

* What are we doing to capture our processes and efforts? While they may not be linear, how can we better document what we are doing to share our tools and work between movements?

* bell hooks said **"Solidarity is not the same as support. To experience solidarity we must have a community of interests, beliefs, and goals around which to unite, to build sisterhood. Support can be occasional. It can be given and just as easily withdrawn. Solidarity requires sustained and ongoing commitment"**. How do we show support and solidarity within and between our movements? **Are we speaking out together?** Strategizing together? Breaking down silos? Addressing the fear, competition and biases within our groups that create the cracks in our efforts to build wider movements? **How are we addressing privileges and difference in our movements?**

* **"Self-care sustains individual, organizational and collective momentum."** While we know it is essential, why do we feel we need to put our care last? How are we making care a central part of our movement-building? **What needs to change to make time and space for care?**

To go deeper into movement building, check out the resources in the online toolbox at:
www.preventgbvafrica.org/understanding-vaw/zines

This magazine series emerged from a gathering of feminist activists working to prevent VAWG in the Global South co-hosted by Raising Voices and JASS.