



# Raising Voices Feminist Approach to Learning

**As a committed feminist and learning organization, Raising Voices has developed the following principles to guide our learning efforts to prevent violence against women and violence against children. Our learning will:**

**Stay grounded in a gender power analysis.** Knowledge is political, and can itself be impacted by power imbalances that need to be acknowledged and mitigated. This requires using a feminist lens throughout the learning process, including when: deciding which questions to prioritize; interpreting data, observations and experiences; and articulating findings.

**Challenge existing hierarchies around 'what counts' as evidence.** Our learning is best supported through a variety of approaches (including informal stories and organic processes) that can reflect the nuances and often non-linear characteristics of social change.

**Prioritize the diverse voices and experiences of women and children.** Doing so requires us to carefully consider issues of timing, safety, mobility, and location for meaningful engagement in learning activities. In addition, it requires skillful listening and tuning our ear to context and subtext.

**Strive to do no harm.** We recognize that any programming that transforms power can spark backlash. Therefore, it is critical to develop learning tools that consider (and document) unintended consequences and create spaces to pause, reflect, and adapt based on what is happening in communities and schools. Accurate information on referrals to support services must be available as part of all learning and programming.

**Put people first.** This includes upholding people's dignity during every phase of learning, and valuing and acknowledging diverse skillsets involved. It requires that we think critically about the impact that learning activities might have on both staff and community members, including the experience of data collection, analysis and how findings are discussed, shared and applied.

**Enable leadership of individuals closest to injustice.** Just as in feminist programming, feminist learning activities promote accountability, leadership and meaningful roles for those directly affected by the injustices that the work seeks to address. This includes proactively collaborating with activists who deeply care about violence prevention and understand the specific contexts where learning takes place.

**Prioritize knowledge integration and action.** This includes ensuring that knowledge is properly archived, accessible and shared safely. It requires creating space to collectively interrogate, interpret and act on various strands of learning, as well as connecting the dots between the different facets of our work. In this way, we can better ensure that impactful and responsive programming is always the end-goal.

These principles were developed in 2018 and updated in 2023 by the Learning Team at Raising Voices. Illustration by Céleste Wallaert and design by Samson Mwaka.

Suggested Citation: Raising Voices (2023). "Raising Voices Feminist Approach to Learning." Kampala, Uganda. Available online at <https://raisingvoices.org/resources/raising-voices-feminist-approach-to-learning/>

