

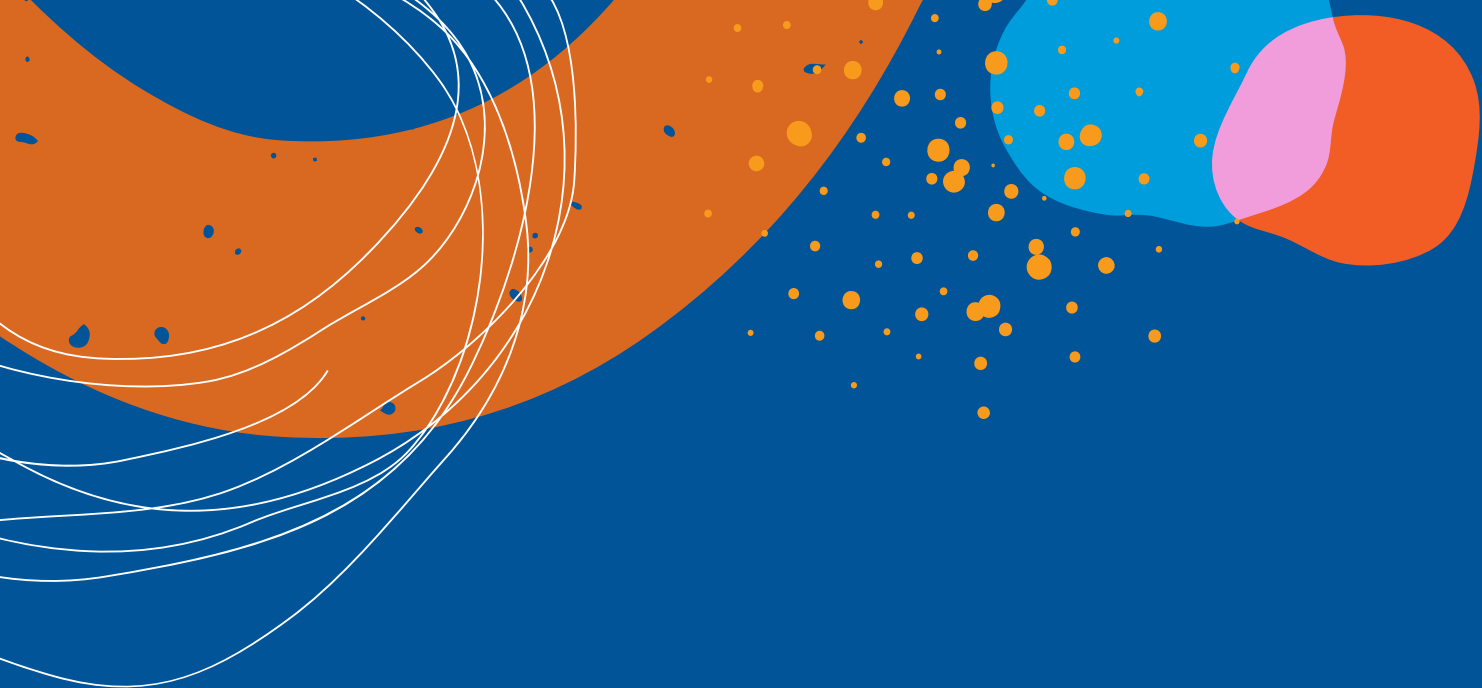


Building Power in Feminist and Women’s Movements to End Violence against Women and Girls:

Learning from Civil Society Organizations Funded by the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

A working paper commissioned by the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women





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About the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

The [United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women](#) (UN Trust Fund) is the only global grant-making mechanism dedicated to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls. Managed by UN Women on behalf of the United Nations system since its establishment in 1996 by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/166, the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women has awarded \$215 million to 646 initiatives in 140 countries and territories. In 2022, the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women managed a grants portfolio of 186 projects aimed at preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in 70 countries and territories across five global regions, with grants totalling \$87 million. The grant recipients were primarily civil society organizations. In 2022, the majority (62%) of these civil society organizations were women's rights organizations.

About the movement-building paper series

In this series of working papers on feminist and women's movements to end violence against women and girls, the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women has prioritized learning from practitioners in the field to inform its efforts to contribute to strong civil society and autonomous feminist/women's movements. The papers are:

1. "Feminist and Women's Movements in the Context of Ending Violence against Women and Girls: Implications for Funders and Grant Makers" (a literature review)
2. "Building Power in Feminist and Women's Movements to End Violence against Women and Girls: Learning from Civil Society Organizations Funded by the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women" (a conceptual framework)
3. "Measuring Results of Feminist and Women's Movements to End Violence against Women and Girls: Learning from Civil Society Organizations Funded by the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women" (a meta-analysis)

Together, these papers have aimed to engage and synthesize field-based practitioner insights, in conjunction with complementary literature review, with the aims of i) supporting organizational learning for the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women on feminist/women's movement-building to end violence against women and girls; and ii) providing practical resources on feminist/women's movement-building to end violence against women and girls for the international community of practitioners, researchers, donors and grant-makers who are working in this domain.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The mission of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund), as laid out in its strategic plan (2021–2025), is to enable civil society organizations (CSOs), especially women’s rights organizations (WROs) and other organizations representing the most marginalized groups, to play a central role in delivering survivor-centred and demand-driven initiatives in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG). It also aims to support their programmes to achieve sustainable impact on ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) in ways that contribute to global solidarity, partnerships and stronger, more inclusive feminist movements. In addition, the UN Trust Fund aims to help enable a bottom-up approach to transformative change by supporting community-based, local WROs/CSOs, which are often the driving force behind social movements.

In 2021, the UN Trust Fund embarked on a learning journey with the organizations and projects funded via the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative – which focused on women’s and feminist movements for EVAWG – to better understand the progress, challenges and opportunities related to supporting WROs/CSOs as they work to build and advance these movements. The first public-facing working paper in the series (i.e., paper 1, Karim 2022) was a review of the external literature on feminist and women’s movements for EVAWG, including literature on the role of funders and grant-makers. That paper noted that there is considerable scope in the field for further knowledge and evidence generation as to how WROs/CSOs conceptualize and engage in feminist and women’s movement-building work specifically to end VAWG. An internal-facing companion report to paper 1, written for the UN Trust Fund, further noted that the Fund is well-positioned to help fill this knowledge gap as it enables analysis and learning about the roles its grantee partners play in the feminist and women’s EVAWG movements in their contexts, the forms of change they seek to effect and the types of movement work they carry out.

In 2022, based on the recommendations of paper 1 and its companion report, the UN Trust Fund commissioned this second working paper of the series. **The aim of this paper was to more deeply examine the roles and work of the Spotlight Initiative grantee organizations in the feminist/women’s EVAWG movements in their countries, and to generate a practice-based conceptual framework of the key types of work they are doing to build these movements and foster progress towards movement goals.** The third and final working paper in the series will be a thematic meta-analysis of evaluations of both large and small grant projects funded by the Spotlight Initiative; that paper will examine the effects of movement-building work on impacts pertaining to VAWG prevention and response.

Methodology

An inductive qualitative analysis was conducted for this paper, to develop a practice-informed framework of key types of movement-building work carried out by the Spotlight Initiative grantee organizations — all WROs and other CSOs — in feminist/women’s movements to end VAWG. The analysis focused primarily on the work of the 26 organizations that received large grants from the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative between 2019 and 2023; three organizations that received small grants during this period also participated in the study. The organizations whose EVAWG work was studied in this paper are WROs (17 organizations), human rights organizations (5), faith-based organizations (3), youth-focused organizations (1), development organizations (1) and international (1) and national (1) NGOs. They range in size from smaller organizations working mainly at the local level to organizations working in multiple countries regionally. The organizations represent and work with diverse populations and often work simultaneously in multiple intersecting health, human rights and social justice domains, to advance the health and rights of groups such as people living with HIV/AIDS, indigenous communities, orphans and vulnerable children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and other (LGBTQI+) people, people with disabilities, self-identified female sex workers (FSWs) and textile workers.

This paper draws on i) the annual monitoring reports submitted to the UN Trust Fund in 2021 by the 26 grantee organizations; ii) background documents on the work of the UN Trust Fund, EU/UN Spotlight Initiative and UN Women; iii) paper 1 of this series and its internal companion report; and iv) select publications on the conceptualization and evaluation of movement-building work. In addition, three 90-minute online focus group discussions regarding feminist/women’s movement-building work for EVAWG were conducted with a total of 11 representatives of 10 grantee organizations (7 of which received large grants, and 3 of which received small grants). The focus group transcripts and 26 annual monitoring reports were analysed using the online Dedoose program for the analysis of qualitative data.

Using a grounded theory (i.e., inductive learning) approach, a set of codes was developed to reflect the emergent themes observed in the grantee data. The identification of key themes in the data, and analysis of the relationships among these themes, led to the development of the seven-point power framework on feminist/women’s movement-building for EVAWG that is presented in this paper. A two-hour validation workshop to discuss and vet the findings was also held with 10 staff members and leaders from nine grantee organizations. The bases of the framework and this knowledge product thus lie in the grantee organizations’ work and practice-based knowledge (PBK).

Findings

The work and perspectives of the Spotlight Initiative grantee organizations indicate that feminist and women’s movement-building for EVAWG is a strategic, iterative and long-term process in which formal and informal groups of women, girls, survivors and their allies join together to build their collective power, amplify their voices and visibility, heal, and work to transform patriarchal and other intersecting oppressive ideologies, attitudes, behaviours, practices, norms and structures/systems that are root causes of VAWG and other harms. The WROs/CSOs and other movement actors work at all levels of society, in different contexts and sectors — including the healthcare, education, government and media sectors; faith and cultural institutions; and community-based settings. Within these contexts, the WROs/CSOs and other movement actors work to sensitize/politicize and develop the activism and leadership capacities of people such as survivors, women/girls, men/boys and people of diverse gender identities, faith and traditional leaders, VAWG service providers, government, justice and law enforcement actors, and the general public — who in turn engage (newly, or increasingly) as movement actors

themselves — shifting their own attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, influencing and engaging others and engaging in individual and collective action.

The grantee data indicate that central to building feminist/women’s EAWG movements is the iterative building and exercise of seven synergistic, mutually reinforcing forms of movement power: people power, leadership power, inner power, network power, narrative power, knowledge power and organizational power. Building these forms of power contributes foundationally to feminist/women’s EAWG movements’ work within and across key thematic outcome areas — e.g., of VAWG prevention, improved survivor services, and strengthened laws/policies — shaping and fuelling EAWG efforts in ways that can increase their reach, sustainability, local ownership and long-term impacts.

Key forms of power-building involved in feminist/women’s movements for EAWG

1. **BUILDING PEOPLE POWER** entails building a robust grass-roots base (of women, girls, survivors and allies) and large-scale public support for ending VAWG. This process involves creating safe spaces for women, girls and survivors to connect, support each other and further develop their critical consciousness; public awareness-raising and community mobilizing efforts; engaging new movement participants; converting opponents; and strengthening the skills and motivation of movement constituents to act as agents of change. Building people power also includes organizing movement constituents into specific ongoing groups (e.g., school groups and women’s economic empowerment groups) that function autonomously but can join together to build collective power and take joint action.
2. **BUILDING LEADERSHIP POWER** takes three main forms: i) with emphasis on women, girls, survivors and those belonging to marginalized groups, movement groups/organizations engage many people as movement leaders and representatives, and strengthen their capacities to advance the movement’s aims; ii) women, girls and survivors develop their capacities to serve as leaders in government and civil society, including as elected officials; and iii) movement groups work to increase the capacities and will of existing leaders, service providers and others with institutional power to advance feminist/women’s EAWG movement aims.
3. **BUILDING INNER POWER:** In the building of inner power, women, girls and survivors of all genders, particularly those belonging to marginalized groups, gain relief from internalized oppression (e.g., in relation to internalized patriarchal beliefs and homo/transphobia). They also gain a heightened sense of self-esteem, self-worth, pride and agency, experience healing, gain knowledge of their human rights, hone their critical feminist analysis skills and perspectives, and build confidence in their ability to take action (individually and as part of a collective) to end VAWG and advance gender equality and social justice. Building inner power is a critical goal in itself in women’s feminist/EAWG movements.
4. **BUILDING NETWORK POWER** involves forming networks, alliances and coalitions among various EAWG movement groups, activists and intersecting aligned movements with the aim of jointly articulating the movement’s vision and goals, setting agendas, taking action, building each other’s capacities, sharing practice-based learning and supporting each other. The movement’s organizations also strategically form collaborative relationships with key institutions and actors such as government offices, traditional and faith leaders, and VAWG service providers.

5. **BUILDING NARRATIVE POWER** involves working to shape and influence societal narratives, attitudes and social/cultural norms towards the support of EAWG and intersecting gender/social justice causes, and increasing the levels of public understanding of and attention to these issues. This takes place through collaborative agenda-setting, narrative-shaping and the training and support of diverse media-makers. It also involves working with women, girls, survivors, movement groups and others on the development of targeted multimodal campaigns, radio and TV programmes, films, dramas, social media campaigns, community events, etc.
6. **BUILDING KNOWLEDGE POWER** involves building the foundation of feminist/women's PBK and research, and sharing these insights and evidence so they can be used to guide EAWG movement efforts. Building knowledge power includes gathering and analysing data and disseminating research and PBK findings regarding various aspects of VAWG (e.g., its prevalence, predictors, contexts, and the evaluation of prevention and response initiatives). Research and PBK efforts foster insight into the lived experiences and perspectives of women, girls and survivors, with a focus on those belonging to marginalized groups, and engage them across research processes.
7. **BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL POWER** involves building the capacity of movement organizations (e.g., WROs/CSOs) to operate sustainably and effectively over the long term in a manner consistent with feminist leadership and management approaches. This includes strengthening organizations' ability to work in an adaptive, resilient way within evolving and challenging contexts, so they can respond to emerging needs regarding VAWG. It also involves strengthening core areas such as organizational leadership, policies/systems, staff training, fundraising, material infrastructure, and the promotion of staff well-being.

Limitations

The annual report content from grantee organizations that informed this paper offers only a partial window into their full body of work, with a focus on that funded by the UN Trust Fund. There was a relatively small sample of grantee organizations represented in the focus group discussions; this limitation was mitigated by hosting a validation session on the paper findings with additional grantees and also receiving written feedback from grantees on a near-final draft of this paper. The sample of organizations studied in this paper is of course not representative of all the WROs/CSOs involved in EAWG movement-building work, and readers are invited to consider how the paper's findings may apply to their contexts. Reporting to a donor may have fostered social desirability bias in the grantees' annual reports and in how they engaged with the focus group facilitator, although it was stated that she was an external consultant. The paper describes the grantees' work and perspectives but does not identify which kinds of activities or approaches are empirically effective for feminist/women's movement-building and making progress towards EAWG movement goals; paper 3 in this series will examine these questions.

Conclusions

Overall, the grantee data suggest that central to building feminist/women's movements for EAWG is the iterative building and exercise of the seven aforementioned forms of movement power. These forms of power are synergistic and mutually reinforcing, often fuelling each other; there is thus some conceptual overlap and fluidity among the categories. Both progress and setbacks with regard to movement goals can be harnessed by movement groups to fuel the building of further movement power.

The pathways of influence extend among all the forms of power, with ripples of impact possible in all directions. Ultimately, the different forms of power all contribute to the building of further people power, whereby people across society increasingly espouse and take individual and collective action for EAWG, gender equality and social justice. The stronger each form of power is, the stronger people power can become. And with the strengthening of each form of movement power, a more enabling environment for the further building of each form of power, and the navigation of challenges along the way, may be fostered.

The grantee data suggest that when organizations conduct EAWG work using an intentional feminist/women's movement-building approach — i.e., work that builds diverse forms of feminist/women's power, that strengthens the capacities and commitment of many EAWG stakeholders, connects and organizes them via groups and networks, and engages and supports them as agents of change — they have the potential to increase the degree to which their EAWG work and its resultant impacts are sustainable, empowering, community-driven and ultimately transformative.

This paper does not assign specific types of power-building work to specific kinds of organizations, nor offer a typology of organizations' overall roles in movements. Rather, the power framework presented herein can be used as a resource by diverse organizations to help them consider which forms of power they want to help build for feminist/women's EAWG movements, and how they can do so from their respective positions.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS:

- 1) Organizations working for EAWG should consider opportunities to carry out their work using an intentional feminist/women's movement-building approach, as this approach has the potential to increase the extent to which their EAWG work and resultant impacts are sustainable, empowering, community-driven and ultimately transformative.
- 2) Within this analysis, organizations should consider the specific types of feminist/women's movement power they want to build and use; this can help to guide the strategic planning, implementation and evaluation of their movement work.
- 3) It would be beneficial for practitioners to compile or co-develop guidelines for ethical practice in feminist/women's movement-building work for EAWG. The guidelines would address key principles for ethical, feminist, survivor-centred, trauma-informed approaches for engaging women/girls, minors, survivors, LGBTQI+ people, men/boys and those facing multiple forms of discrimination in learning, healing, activism, advocacy and other action for EAWG.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS:

- 1) **Further examine the findings of this paper with more stakeholders across different contexts**, and invite their input for next steps in research.
- 2) **Further examine WROs/CSOs' processes of collaboratively building and exercising different forms of feminist/women's movement power.** This could include case studies that address, with attention to movement contexts, how they developed their agendas, strategies and tactics; how they identified and pursued opportunities as they emerged; and how they navigated challenges related to movement-building, including resistance and backlash.
- 3) **Examine the outcomes of organizations' feminist/women's movement-building work for EVAWG** via participatory and collaborative work with WROs/CSOs, **and develop adaptable monitoring and evaluation approaches.**
- 4) **Conduct further research on cross-regional experiences** in building feminist/women's movements for EVAWG.

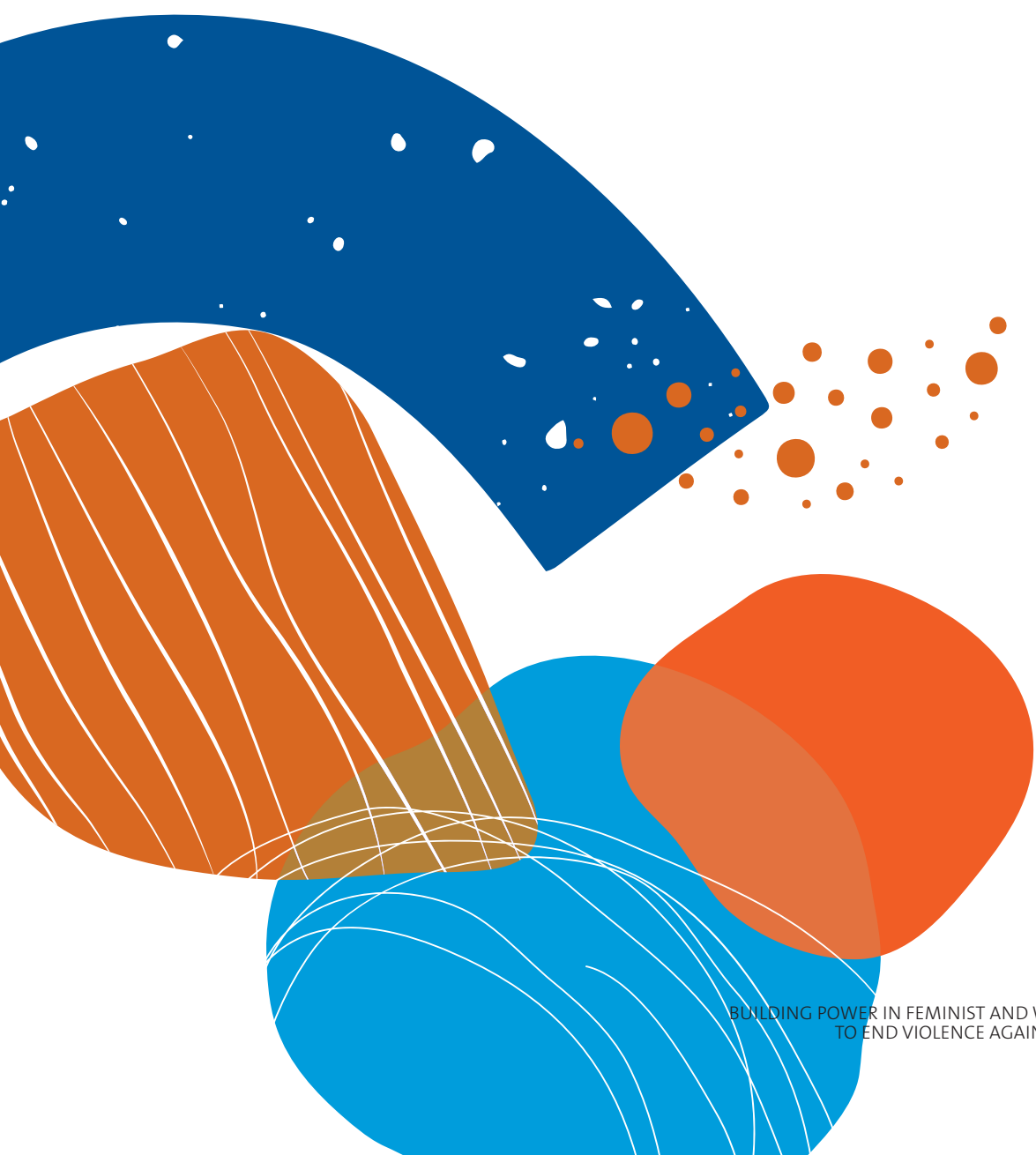
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DONORS:

- 1) **Provide long-term, core and flexible funding to feminist/women's movement organizations.** This will significantly enhance these organizations' ability to conduct their work over the long term, continually strengthen their capacities and adapt to evolving circumstances.
- 2) **Support research in areas such as those noted above**, including study of the processes and impacts of WROs/CSOs' work to build and exercise various forms of movement power.
- 3) **Consider using the feminist/women's power framework presented in this paper as a strategy resource when considering plans for EVAWG grant-making and technical assistance.** Donors can use the framework (or context-specific adaptations) to consider how they might aim to support EVAWG work that is building one or more of the types of movement power described in the framework.
- 4) **In addition to funding, offer complementary technical assistance and other support to accelerate the building of specific types of power** in feminist/women's EVAWG and allied movements.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGYW	Adolescent girls and young women
CBO	Community-based organization
CSO	Civil society organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EVAWG	Ending violence against women and girls
FG	Focus group
FGM	Female genital mutilation
FSW	Female sex worker
GBV	Gender-based violence
LBT	Lesbian, bisexual and trans
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and other
PBK	Practice-based knowledge
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
UN Trust Fund	United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WGWD	Women and girls with disabilities
WRO	Women's rights organization



Girls club members from Musayiwa village using songs and dance to engage the community on ending child marriage

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is the only global, multilateral grant-giving fund specialized in preventing and ending all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Its long-term vision is a world of global solidarity in which women and girls live free from all forms of violence and enjoy and exercise their human rights. Its mission is to enable civil society organizations (CSOs), especially women’s rights organizations (WROs) and those representing the most marginalized groups, to play a central role in delivering survivor-centred and demand-driven initiatives, and to support their programmes to achieve sustainable impact on ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) in ways that contribute to global solidarity, partnerships, and strong, inclusive feminist movements. As highlighted in its strategic plan (2021–2025), the UN Trust Fund pursues its vision and mission and implements its strategy through three key development outputs: i) principled, demand-driven grant-giving and capacity development; ii) collaborative and inclusive knowledge production, exchange and learning; and iii) partnerships, advocacy and resource mobilization.

Over the last 27 years, the UN Trust Fund has played a key role in enabling a ground-up approach to transformative change by supporting community-based, local WROs/CSOs — which in turn constitute the driving force of social movements and have been at the forefront of reaching those most at risk of being left behind in EVAWG efforts. As the key UN system mechanism for grant-giving to WROs/CSOs in the context of women’s/feminist movements for EVAWG, the UN Trust Fund has a long history of supporting and promoting feminist organizing efforts — particularly via demand-driven and context-specific projects. The UN Trust Fund also has a strong commitment to and record of amplifying the practice-based knowledge (PBK) of WROs/CSOs and highlighting the essential role of WROs/CSOs and inclusive feminist movements in EVAWG efforts.

Since September 2019, the UN Trust Fund has supported a portfolio of 55 grantee organizations within the scope of the [European Union/United Nations \(EU/UN\) Spotlight Initiative](#), which is a global, multi-year partnership between the EU and UN to eliminate all forms of VAWG by 2030. In 2019, the focus of the call for proposals under [Outcome 6](#) of the Spotlight Initiative theory of change was to fund WRO/CSO projects that would bolster feminist and/or women’s movements to address and end VAWG in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Thirty-five organizations received large or small grants for projects in 2020 via this call for proposals. Among topics, these projects i) promoted women’s economic empowerment; ii) pushed for institutional changes; iii) addressed harmful traditional practices; and iv) worked to promote societal attitudes that embrace gender diversity. In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN Trust Fund provided additional funding via the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative partnership to 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa (including 20 organizations that had not previously been funded by the Spotlight Initiative) to bolster their organizations’ resilience for crisis response and support the maintenance or adaptation of their existing interventions for EVAWG. Overall, a total of 55 WROs/CSOs across 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and 5 countries in Latin America are currently receiving Spotlight Initiative funds; project implementation via funding from this partnership will continue throughout 2023.

Since 2021, the UN Trust Fund, in collaboration with the grantee organizations funded via the Spotlight Initiative, has been on a learning journey focused on movement-building. Its aim is to better understand the grantees' work and experiences in advancing women's and feminist EAWG movements in their respective contexts, and how the UN Trust Fund can best support WRO/CSO work in these movements. In 2021, the UN Trust Fund commissioned the first public-facing paper of this learning journey (Karim 2022): a literature review and documentation of salient concepts and frameworks regarding movement-building that the UN Trust Fund and other donors could draw upon when working to fund and support organizations that are advancing feminist and/or women's movements for EAWG (this paper will henceforth be referred to as 'paper 1'). That paper noted that there is considerable scope in the field for further knowledge and evidence generation, via feminist approaches, as to how WROs/CSOs conceptualize and engage in feminist and/or women's movement-building work to end VAWG. An internal report for the UN Trust Fund (Karim 2021), which served as a companion to paper 1, also noted that the UN Trust Fund is well positioned to help fill this knowledge gap, as it enables analysis and subsequent deeper understanding of the roles its various grantee partners play in the feminist and/or women's movements for EAWG in their contexts, the forms of change they are seeking to effect and the types of movement work they carry out.¹ In 2022, based on the recommendations of paper 1 and its companion report, the UN Trust Fund commissioned this second working paper of the series.

The purpose of this paper was to more deeply examine the roles and work of the organizations funded via the Spotlight Initiative² in the feminist/women's EAWG movements in their countries, and to develop a practice-based conceptual framework of the key types of work they are doing to build and strengthen these movements. This paper focuses on the work and practitioner insights from 29 Spotlight Initiative grantee organizations, which are a diverse group of WROs, human rights organizations, faith-based organizations, development organizations, youth organizations and national and international NGOs working in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

Building on findings from paper 1 and its companion report, and based on those of focus groups (FGs) with grantees and in-depth qualitative analysis of their annual monitoring reports, this paper finds that **central to building feminist/women's EAWG movements is the iterative building and use of seven synergistic, mutually reinforcing forms of feminist/women's movement power. These are people power, leadership power, inner power, network power, narrative power, knowledge power and organizational power.** Building and exercising these forms of power contributes foundationally to the EAWG movement's work within and across key interrelated outcome areas — including VAWG prevention, improved survivor services and strengthened laws/policies — shaping and fuelling EAWG efforts in ways that increase their reach and potential impacts. When the seven forms of power are plotted against key feminist/women's EAWG movement goals (e.g., VAWG prevention and strengthened services, laws and policies), a practice-based conceptual framework comes into view. **This framework — which describes seven key forms of feminist/women's power and how they can be iteratively built and exercised to help build EAWG movements and advance EAWG movement goals — is the main finding and focus of this paper.**

In addition, this paper finds that doing EVAWG work using a feminist/women’s movement-building approach — i.e., work that builds different forms of feminist/women’s power, that strengthens the capacities and commitment of many EVAWG stakeholders, connects and organizes them via groups and networks, and engages and supports them as agents of change — **has the potential to increase the degree to which the EVAWG work and its resultant impacts are sustainable, empowering, community-driven and ultimately transformative.** With this in mind, this paper suggests that it may be fruitful for WROs/CSOs and other groups and organizations involved in EVAWG work to consider what it means for them to conduct their work using a feminist/women’s movement-building approach — and/or how they might do so even further.

The power framework presented in this paper, together with the accompanying reflection questions on building feminist/women’s power in EVAWG movements, is offered as a practical and adaptable resource. It can be used to support diverse organizations and groups in considering which forms of feminist/women’s movement power they want to build and exercise, and towards which movement goals — from whatever position they may hold or roles they may play in their movement landscape. The power framework can also be used to help shape process and outcome/impact evaluations of this movement-building work.

Overall, it is hoped that this practice-based examination of power-building in EVAWG movements will be useful for gender justice practitioners, researchers and grant-makers/donors as they work to build, bolster and learn about feminist/women’s EVAWG movements in diverse contexts. **Section 2** of this paper discusses the methodology used to learn from the grantees’ work and generate the power framework. **Section 3** provides a general definition of social movements and describes findings from the companion report to paper 1 that this paper builds on. It then summarizes key types of work involved in feminist/women’s movement-building for EVAWG, and presents the conceptual framework of seven key forms of power built in these movements. **Section 4** shares conclusions and reflections, followed by study limitations and recommendations for practitioners, researchers and donors.

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SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

An inductive qualitative analysis was conducted for this paper, to generate a practice-informed conceptual framework of key types of movement-building work carried out by WROs and other CSOs in feminist/women's movements to end VAWG. As noted above, 35 WROs and CSOs in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America received grants from the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative for the grant period between 2020 and 2023. In accordance with the movement-building focus of [Outcome 6](#) of the Spotlight Initiative theory of change, the WROs/CSOs received either large or small grants for projects that aimed to bolster the efforts of feminist and women's movements for EVAWG. The present study focused mainly on the work of the 26 organizations that received large, three-year grants under the first round of funding of the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative partnership. The nine organizations that received small grants in that round were also invited to participate in parts of this study; three of them engaged as described below.³

The grantee organizations that this paper is focused on are WROs (17 organizations), human rights organizations (5), faith-based organizations (3), youth-focused organizations (1), development organizations (1), and 1 international and 1 national NGO, according to their self-descriptions. They range in size from smaller organizations working mainly at the community level, through larger organizations working at the community, provincial, state and national levels, to organizations working in multiple countries regionally. The organizations play varied roles in their respective feminist/women's EVAWG movement ecosystems, building and exercising different forms of movement power so as to advance the movement's aims in areas including (but not limited to) VAWG prevention, improving the quality and accessibility of survivor services and improving VAWG laws/policies and their implementation and enforcement. Annex 1 provides a list of the organizations and their websites.

The grantee organizations represent and work with very diverse populations, and often simultaneously work in multiple interlinked health, human rights and social justice areas. Alongside or often as an integral part of their EVAWG-related work, the organizations all work on additional health, human rights, humanitarian, peace, security, gender/social justice and sustainable development issues, and work to advance the health and rights of groups such as people living with HIV and AIDS; indigenous communities; orphans and vulnerable children; lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and other (LGBTQI+) people; people with disabilities; self-identified female sex workers (FSWs); and textile workers. The dynamic work of these organizations is the focus of this paper.

To begin the inductive analysis process, a rapid review of the annual monitoring reports of the 26 organizations that received large grants from the UN Trust Fund under the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative in the 2019–2023 grant period was conducted. These reports (from 2021, the second grant year) provided a systematic, detailed description of the work done by the organizations in the prior 12 months, and the lessons learned.⁴ The author also reviewed i) background documents on the work of the UN Trust Fund, EU/UN Spotlight Initiative and UN Women (e.g., strategic plans, annual reports, evaluation guidance documents); ii) paper 1 of this series (Karim 2022) and its internal companion report for the UN Trust Fund (Karim 2021), which provided an initial categorization of grantees' roles in EVAWG movements; and iii) select publications on the conceptualization and evaluation of movement-building work, including in feminist and women's movements. The grantees' websites were also informally reviewed.

Three 90-minute, online FG discussions were then conducted with members of the grantee organizations in November 2022. The invitation noted that participation was optional and on a voluntary basis, and that sessions would be available in Spanish, French and English. Based on participant registration, one FG was held in Spanish and two were held in English. A total of 11 executive directors and staff members of 10 grantee organizations based in Africa and Latin America participated; seven of these organizations had received large grants and three had received small grants. The FG sessions were led by the author of this paper, with technical support provided by an assistant. In the FGs, the practitioners discussed what the feminist/women’s movements for EVAWG look like in their respective contexts, the role(s) each of their organizations plays in the movement, and their perspectives more broadly as to the kinds of work that constitute feminist/women’s movement-building for EVAWG, including discussion of specific types of power-building involved. Based on the aforementioned initial rapid review of the organizations’ annual reports, a preliminary set of power categories was drafted and presented to the FG participants for their input.

The FG transcripts and the 26 grantee annual reports were then coded and analysed in Dedoose, an online qualitative data analysis tool (Sociocultural Research Consultants LLC 2016). Based on an initial reading of the FG transcripts and a preliminary coding of 10 of the annual reports, a codebook was created and used to code the full set of transcripts and reports; some additional edits were made to the codebook as the coding progressed. In total, approximately 900 pages of detailed annual monitoring report content were read and coded for all 26 grantee organizations. Using a grounded theory (i.e., inductive learning) approach,⁵ the codes were developed to reflect the emergent themes observed in the grantee data (Strauss and Corbin 1998). A complementary review of select articles in the literature on movements and power, including paper 1 of this series (Karim 2022), provided an initial set of general concepts (Bowen 2006) that also informed the development of this project’s codebook and resultant power framework. These included concepts of community organizing and mobilizing, concepts of what feminist movements and women’s movements broadly aim to do and achieve, concepts regarding the feminist generation of knowledge and evidence, general descriptions of the types of power involved in diverse social movements (e.g., people power and narrative power) and the notion that specific types of power can be built by specific movements.

The identification of key themes in the grantee data, and analysis of the relationships among these themes, led to the development of the seven-point power framework on feminist/women’s movement-building for EVAWG that is presented in this paper. The bases of the framework and this overall knowledge product thus lie in the grantee organizations’ PBK.⁶ Several drafts of this paper were reviewed by staff members of the UN Trust Fund, who discussed the text internally and provided consolidated written and verbal feedback. A near-final draft of the paper was shared (in blind review format) with internal and external peer reviewers and grantee organizations for their written input. Grantee organizations were also invited to participate in a two-hour, online validation workshop in June 2023 to share their feedback and reflections on the draft content. Ten staff members and executive directors from nine organizations, in addition to UN Trust Fund staff members and an external reviewer, participated in this workshop. Overall, to summarize the grantees’ total participation in group dialogues to inform this paper, the three FG sessions and the subsequent validation workshop involved discussion with 19 staff members and the directors of 16 grantee organizations.⁷ This paper also builds on findings from Karim’s (2021) companion report, which conducted additional FGs with Spotlight Initiative grantees and reviewed their prior annual reports, as discussed in Section 3.2 below.

SECTION 3: FEMINIST/ WOMEN'S MOVEMENT- BUILDING TO END VAWG — BACKGROUND, SUMMARY DESCRIPTION AND POWER FRAMEWORK

This section first provides a general definition of social movements that the paper builds on. Next, it describes select findings from the companion report to paper 1 of this series, on which this paper also builds. It then summarizes key forms of work carried out by the grantees to build and advance feminist/women's EAVWG movements, followed by a table with this paper's framework of types of feminist/women's power and how these are exercised by WROs/CSOs to advance movement goals. Finally, the seven forms of feminist/women's movement power are discussed in detail.

*City Workshop with
groups and organizations
of women and diversity
in the Rio Cuarto region,
Cordoba, Argentina.*

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3.1. A general definition of social movements

This paper builds upon Batliwala's (2012) definition of social movements as **'an organized set of constituents pursuing a common political agenda of change through collective action'** (page 3). Batliwala states that the key elements of a movement include **a base of constituents/members** that is collectivized and mobilized; **collectivization** via informal or formal organizations; **continuity of engagement** and activity over time (rather than just individual actions or campaigns); **a clear political agenda**, including a shared analysis of the social/structural challenges faced and changes sought; **collective actions** taken in pursuit of the movement goals; the use of **diverse strategies and tactics**; and **clear internal and external targets** to be engaged in the change process (e.g., their own constituents and communities, in order to expand and strengthen the movement base; society at large, to change attitudes, norms and practices; and specific social groups, actors and institutions that violate their rights). Batliwala also notes:

"While these characteristics are essential to qualify as a movement, their constituents may be organized with different levels of closeness, from very loose to very tight. Thus, movements have different degrees of cohesion and often live embedded . . . or connected to each other in different ways. This is familiar to those of us who identify as belonging to something as large, loose, and generic as a global or national women's movement, with a very broad political agenda of gender equality. But this broad movement is in turn populated by a variety of other movements (as well as organizations and individuals) with tighter ties, sharper agendas and more specific constituencies, e.g., a women's reproductive rights movement, a lesbian or disabled women's movement, an indigenous women's movement, the Iranian women's movement, and the African women's movement. Thus the women's movement has within it movements of women organized around a particular set of issues, identities, nationality, or region" (2012, page 4).

The present paper builds on this conceptualization of social movements, examining the Spotlight Initiative grantees' work and perspectives on building feminist/women's movements for EAWG.

3.2 How this paper advances the UN Trust Fund learning journey on feminist/women's movement-building to end VAWG

The internal UN Trust Fund report (Karim 2021) that accompanied paper 1 of this series (Karim 2022) conducted a preliminary examination of how UN Trust Fund Spotlight Initiative grantees viewed their organizations' roles and work in advancing their respective (e.g., local and national) movements for EAWG. The FGs were held in English, French and Spanish with a total of 20 representatives of 20 grantee organizations. The analysis also involved reviewing the 2019 and 2020 annual reports of the aforementioned 35 Spotlight Initiative grantees that received funding in 2019, and reviewing other UN Trust Fund background documents.

Based on this content, the report endeavoured to categorize each grantee organization as 'movement-created,' 'movement-building/movement-supporting' or 'movement-serving' (adapted slightly from Batliwala's 2012 typology of organization–movement relationships); most organizations' descriptions of their work were found to align best with the 'movement-building/-supporting' category. Although this exercise provided an initial orientation to the grantees' work and movement roles, the report noted a need for a more systematic, in-depth analysis of the grantees' work and perspectives, and for a holistic framework to be developed regarding the key types of work the grantees are carrying out to advance feminist/women's movements specifically for EAWG.

The present paper took on that aim — that is, of developing the aforementioned framework based on an analysis of UN Trust Fund grantees’ work and perspectives. In the new FGs held for this paper, some of Batliwala’s (2012) typology of organization–movement relationships was discussed again (with some brevity) with grantee organization staff and leaders. In the FGs, there was no consensus among the respondents as to whether it was useful or feasible for them on a practical level to distinguish between organizations that were created by movements and those that are working to further build or support movements, or those that provide services. For example, one respondent noted that her organization does various forms of work that contribute to her country’s EAWG movement (e.g., prevention work, training paralegals from other organizations, and participating in advocacy efforts as part of coalitions), such that at any given moment her organization was engaged in a range of activities that might be conducted by different types of organizations as defined in Batliwala’s typology. Other respondents felt more clearly that work such as the provision of survivor services, provision of immediate-need resources to women and girls (e.g., COVID-19-related financial support), self and collective care for movement activists, and financial management was more in the realm of movement-supporting or service work. Some respondents also felt that drawing distinctions between organizations that were created by movements and those that presently work to build and/or support movements had more of a focus on the historical chronology of events than they found practically useful.

The present paper focuses on what emerged inductively from the grantee data, to generate a practice-based conceptual framework of types of work conducted by diverse WROs/CSOs to build and advance feminist/women’s movements specifically for EAWG. While the author initially expected to develop categories of types of work or activities per se, what emerged as themes in the grantee data were overarching forms of feminist/women’s power that the grantees were building and exercising, with more specific kinds of work (e.g., training journalists on VAWG reporting) falling within the power categories.

This paper finds that diverse organizations, with varying roles and positions in the movement ecosystem, build diverse forms of power in order to build and advance feminist/women’s EAWG movements. This paper does not try to assign specific types of power-building work to specific kinds of organizations, nor categorize organizations’ overall roles in movements. Rather, the power framework presented herein can be used as a resource by diverse organizations/groups (and even individual activists) and donors to help them consider which forms of power they want to help build, from their respective positions, and to help guide assessments of the progress and outcomes/impacts of their EAWG movement work.

3.3 A summary description of feminist/women’s movement-building to end VAWG, and key forms of power built by the UN Trust Fund grantees

Based on the work and inputs of the various Spotlight Initiative grantee organizations (all WROs/CSOs), this paper finds that **feminist/women’s movement-building for EAWG can be described as a strategic, iterative and long-term process in which formal and informal groups of women, girls, survivors of all genders, members of marginalized groups and their allies join together to build their collective power, amplify their voices and visibility, engage in healing, and work to transform patriarchal and other intersecting oppressive ideologies, attitudes, behaviours, practices, norms and structures/systems that are root causes of VAWG and other harms.**

WROs/CSOs active in feminist/women's EAWG movements work at all levels of society, in different contexts and sectors — such as health, education, government, media, faith and cultural institutions, and community-based settings — to promote individual and social transformations, strengthen VAWG prevention and response, and advance gender equality and social justice. Within these contexts, the WROs/CSOs and other movement actors work to politicize and strengthen the activism/leadership capacities of people such as survivors, women/girls, men/boys and people of diverse genders, faith and traditional leaders, VAWG service providers, government actors and the general public — who in turn engage (newly, or all the more) as movement actors themselves — shifting their own beliefs and behaviours, influencing others and taking individual and collective action.

THE KEY FORMS OF WORK CONDUCTED OR CATALYSED BY THE GRANTEEES IN BUILDING FEMINIST/WOMEN'S EAWG MOVEMENTS INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO):

- **Collectively developing shared movement visions, goals, narratives, strategies and tactics** to advance social and systemic/structural change
- **Building a robust grass-roots base** of women, girls, survivors and allies of all genders, with a focus on those facing multiple forms of discrimination, and **building large-scale public support** for EAWG
- **Conducting public awareness-raising⁸** on various aspects of VAWG (e.g., women and girls' human rights; types of VAWG and their impacts on survivors, families and communities; VAWG laws and policies; critical analysis of gender norms, patriarchy and intersecting forms of oppression; visions of gender-equitable relationships and communities)
- **Facilitating ongoing safe spaces** where women, girls, survivors and those belonging to marginalized groups can connect, heal, learn together, gain (more) critical/feminist politicization, and unburden themselves of internalized oppression
- **Strengthening people's activism skills and confidence** in their personal and collective ability to take action for EAWG
- **Forming structures of leadership and representation** in movement organizations and networks
- **Building leadership capacity and commitment** for EAWG in movement organizations, in government/institutions, and across civil society
- Conducting/gathering and sharing **research and PBK** regarding EAWG
- **Shifting public narratives, discourse and norms** in favour of EAWG and gender/social justice
- **Community organizing, mobilizing, advocacy, peer education** and other collective action to advance changes in attitudes, beliefs, norms, practices and systems/structures related to EAWG and intersecting issues
- **Building collaborative relationships and networks** with aligned activists, groups and movements, and with institutional actors
- **Mitigating resistance/backlash** and navigating political opposition
- Creating spaces for movement constituents' **personal and collective care**
- **Sharing capacity-building and support** among movement activists and groups/organizations
- **Strengthening the sustainability and resilience** of movement groups/organizations.

The grantee data indicate that **forms of work such as those above reflect the iterative building and use of seven key forms of power** that can be categorized as **people power, leadership power, inner power, network power, narrative power, knowledge power and organizational power.** (These forms of power are each described in Table 1 and further below in the text of this section.)

The grantee data also indicate that **the grantees' outcome areas of focus in their EVAWG movement work funded by the UN Trust Fund — i.e., the key movement goals towards which they exercise their movement power — can be broadly categorized as i) VAWG prevention; ii) improving the quality and accessibility of survivor services; and iii) improving VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement.**⁹ While the grantees viewed movement-building for EVAWG (i.e., building the seven forms of power) as a process that can accelerate progress towards all movement goals in a cross-cutting way, they also viewed movement-building as a goal in and of itself. An FG participant working with HACEY Health Initiative (Nigeria), whose Spotlight Initiative project fostered collaborative local strategies to end female genital mutilation (FGM), stated:

“Movement-building is a strategy to achieve any or all of the outcomes. It can be a tool that you can use, or it can be something in itself . . . For instance, in the current projects that HACEY is working on with the UN Trust Fund, apart from the different activities that we are carrying out . . . we are building a movement, an alliance of non-profit organizations to push forward on the different focus areas or outcomes that we are trying to achieve . . . It's part of the strategy we are using to achieve our goals. It is both a tool and an outcome for us. [Movement-building] can also stand on its own — that we are building a stronger movement. It's either [one] . . . The idea behind it is to build that stronger body of feminists or woman-focused advocates, or the idea is to use that movement to push forward a larger priority area or larger goal.”

Overall, building and exercising the aforementioned forms of power contributes foundationally to EVAWG movement work within and across thematic outcome areas — such as VAWG prevention, improving survivor services and improving VAWG laws/policies — in turn shaping and fuelling EVAWG efforts in ways that have the potential to increase their sustainability, reach, level of local ownership, and long-term impacts.¹⁰ An FG participant from Alliances for Africa (AfA, Nigeria), an international African-led NGO which works on various fronts for VAWG prevention and response (e.g., organizing and strengthening women's groups, and law/policy advocacy) noted:

“I think if [we are going] to the effort to evaluate movement-building and impact, then it's important that power-building, which is part of the process of movement-building, is clearly defined within the context of the three pillars [i.e., main outcome areas] . . . There has to be a recognition that every single one of us that has spoken here, has spoken of power in one way or another, either at the community level, at various relational levels with others.”

With this introductory content in mind, **Table 1 provides a conceptual framework that summarizes each form of power, and shows how building and using each form of power can contribute to EVAWG movement work in each of the three key outcome areas. These forms of power are interlinked and affect each other (rather than being siloed), as are the outcome areas.** Most of the grantees are working in more than one of these outcome areas, and their work to build a given form of movement power often yields benefits across additional forms of power and multiple outcome areas. Organizations also often exercise multiple forms of power in relation to a given outcome area.

Ultimately, the different forms of power all flow towards people power. The stronger the other forms of power are, the stronger people power can become. The forms of power are synergistic and mutually reinforcing, often bolstering and enriching each other; there is thus some conceptual overlap and fluidity among the categories. The discussion that follows shares many rich examples and insights from the grantees' work of building each form of feminist/women's movement power.

Overall, the grantee data indicate that when WROs/CSOs engage in EVAWG work using an explicit feminist/women's movement-building approach — i.e., work that builds different forms of feminist/women's power, that strengthens the capacities and commitment of many EVAWG stakeholders, connects and organizes them via groups and networks, and engages and supports them as agents of change — it has the potential to increase the degree to which the EVAWG work and its resultant impacts are sustainable, empowering, community-driven and ultimately transformative. It may thus be fruitful for organizations engaged in EVAWG work to consider what it means to them to conduct their work using a feminist/women's movement-building approach, and/or how they might do so even further. The power framework in Table 1, as well as the accompanying reflection questions on building feminist/women's power in EVAWG movements (Annex 2), can be used to help organizations consider which forms of power they want to help build and use — from whatever position they may hold or roles they may play in their movement landscape.

This power framework is offered as a tailorable/adaptable framework. A given organization or group might engage in some of these forms of power-building and less on others, or there may be variations on these themes based on such factors as the local context or the ecological level of work. Donors might also consider this discussion of movement power on a more macro level as they consider the kinds of movement efforts they are aiming to fund and help bolster, within and across movement ecosystems (as delineated by geography, population, issue area, etc.). Groups may also prefer to use different terminology to refer to the concepts discussed.

Mhototi Ward door-to-door awareness campaign.

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TABLE 1: Conceptual framework of types of power-building work in feminist/women’s movements to end violence against women and girls

The left-hand column summarizes each key type of power-building work. The columns to the right describe ways in which that form of power might be iteratively built and exercised over time within the thematic outcome areas (i.e., prevention, services and law/policy). The forms of power are synergistic and mutually reinforcing.

TYPE OF POWER-BUILDING WORK	Prevention of VAWG via transformations in attitudes, behaviours, norms, practices and systems/structures	Improved access for survivors to essential, specialist and quality multisectoral services	Increased effectiveness of VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement
<p>BUILDING PEOPLE POWER</p> <p>Building people power involves building a robust grass-roots base (of women, girls, survivors and allies of all genders) and large-scale public support for ending VAWG. It involves creating safe spaces for women, girls and survivors to connect and deepen their critical feminist analysis; public awareness-raising and mobilization efforts; engaging new participants; converting opponents and ‘neutrals’; and strengthening people’s motivation and skills (e.g., for activism and advocacy) to act as agents of change. It also includes organizing movement constituents into ongoing groups (e.g., school groups and women’s economic empowerment groups) that function autonomously but can come together to build collective power and take joint action</p>	<p>People of all genders are strengthening their knowledge and critical social analysis, and strengthening their skills and drive to take action to prevent VAWG. They are challenging patriarchal attitudes, norms, practices and systems/structures, and promoting gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), positive masculinities and other forms of gender/social justice. They may be organized into local groups that act collectively for VAWG prevention. Women, girls, survivors and allies of all genders, especially those belonging to marginalized groups, share their perspectives and experiences to inform the design, implementation and evaluation of VAWG prevention programmes.</p>	<p>Women, girls, survivors and allies of all genders engage in activism and advocacy to ensure that survivor services are accessible, welcoming, non-discriminatory and responsive to the needs of all survivors. They provide critical input, feedback and training on these topics to service providers and leaders, and demand accountability. They also strengthen their capacities to play activist and professional roles in improving service quality, accessibility and use — e.g., as trainers, survivor advocates, paralegals and counsellors.</p>	<p>Women, girls, survivors and allies of all genders conduct monitoring activities and mobilize to demand institutional accountability (using various tactics) regarding the passage, reform, implementation and enforcement of laws/policies and national action plans that address VAWG prevention and response, including ensuring that VAWG cases are expeditiously and fairly adjudicated.</p>
<p>BUILDING LEADERSHIP POWER</p> <p>Building leadership power involves growing the corpus of leaders across society who have the capacity and will to advance EAWG and gender/social justice. This work includes i) strengthening the capacities of many people — particularly women, girls, survivors and those belonging to marginalized groups — so they can serve as leaders and representatives in EAWG movement groups, organizations and networks; ii) strengthening leadership skills and supporting women as they pursue formal leadership roles in government and civil society; and iii) strengthening the capacities and will of existing leaders, service providers and others with institutional power, so they will work to advance EAWG.</p>	<p>Movement groups and organizations engage many leaders and representatives, particularly women, girls, survivors and those belonging to marginalized groups, and build their capacities to advance VAWG prevention in various ways. Existing leaders (e.g., in government, education and faith-based groups) are sensitized to the need to advance VAWG prevention via the transformation of harmful/patriarchal beliefs, norms and practices, and take action.</p>	<p>Movement leaders’ and representatives’ capacities are strengthened to advance the EAWG movement’s aims of improved quality and accessibility of services for survivors. They engage in advocacy, train service providers, monitor service quality and use, and hold service providers and systems accountable. Existing leaders (e.g., in government and within service systems) become sensitized to the need to improve the quality and accessibility of VAWG services, and take action to advance the cause.</p>	<p>Leaders and representatives from EAWG movement groups are engaged and strengthen their capacities to advocate for improved VAWG laws, policies and implementation/enforcement, and hold institutional leaders accountable. Existing leaders with institutional power are sensitized to the need to address VAWG and take action to advance the cause. Women, girls and survivors run for office and also assume other formal leadership positions from which they can act for EAWG.</p>
<p>BUILDING INNER POWER</p> <p>In building inner power, women, girls and survivors of all genders, particularly those belonging to marginalized groups, gain relief from internalized oppression (in relation to internalized patriarchal narratives and homophobia/transphobia, etc.). They also gain an increased sense of self-esteem, self-worth, pride and agency, experience healing, gain knowledge of their human rights, hone their critical/feminist analysis skills and perspectives, and gain confidence in their ability to take action (individually and as part of a collective) for EAWG and gender justice. Inner power may be bolstered in settings such as safe/healing spaces and women’s economic empowerment programmes. Building inner power is a critical goal in itself in feminist/women’s EAWG movements.</p>	<p>Through VAWG prevention initiatives, women, girls and survivors are gaining critical consciousness and knowledge regarding gender/social justice issues and their human rights. There are safe and empowering spaces for them to discuss their experiences and concerns, support each other, learn together, and gain skills as activists, advocates and leaders. In turn, the strengthened inner power of women, girls and survivors helps them take action, in their communities and beyond, to prevent VAWG.</p>	<p>Services for survivors are safe, inclusive, high quality, centred on survivors’ needs and grounded in feminist principles. Services explicitly aim to help survivors build their inner power, including by helping them situate their personal experiences of VAWG within a broader feminist/social justice analysis. The increased inner power of women, girls and survivors may move them to take action to advocate for improved VAWG services, and their sense of agency may be further bolstered by these forms of action.</p>	<p>The inner power of women, girls and survivors helps them to take action for improved VAWG laws, policies and implementation/enforcement (as activists, advocates, paralegals, etc.). Their inner power may also be further bolstered by seeing that they can indeed engage in personal and collective action to claim their rights and demand change.</p>

TYPE OF POWER-BUILDING WORK	Prevention of VAWG via transformations in attitudes, behaviours, norms, practices and systems/structures	Improved access for survivors to essential, specialist and quality multisectoral services	Increased effectiveness of VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement
<p>BUILDING NETWORK POWER</p> <p>In building network power, networks, alliances and coalitions are formed with various EAWG movement groups, activists and intersecting aligned movements. They jointly articulate the movement vision and goals, set agendas, take action together, develop each other's capacities, share practice-based learning and support each other to bolster resilience in the face of adversity. Strategic collaborative relationships are also formed with key actors holding formal authority and decision-making power, such as government offices, traditional and faith leaders, and VAWG service providers.</p>	<p>Joint action is undertaken by allied groups, movements, leaders, service providers and others for the prevention of VAWG and advancement of related/intersecting causes.</p>	<p>Joint action is undertaken by allied groups, movements, leaders, service providers and other collaborators to improve the quality and accessibility of survivor services, and advance related/intersecting causes.</p>	<p>Joint action is undertaken by allied groups and movements and other collaborators to advance improvements in VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement, and related/intersecting causes.</p>
<p>BUILDING NARRATIVE POWER</p> <p>Building narrative power involves working to shape and influence societal narratives, attitudes and social norms towards the support of EAWG and intersecting gender/social justice causes, and also increasing the level of public understanding of and attention to these issues. This takes place via collaborative agenda-setting, narrative-shaping, training and support of media-makers, and working with women, girls, survivors, movement groups and others on the development of targeted multimodal campaigns, radio and TV programmes, films, dramas, social media and community events, etc.</p>	<p>Diverse communication and public engagement strategies are employed to spark critical dialogue, reflection, and transformations in attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, practices and social norms related to gender, power, VAWG and intersecting gender/social justice issues.</p>	<p>Diverse communication and public engagement strategies are employed to help dispel social stigma surrounding VAWG and increase people's willingness and knowledge of how to report VAWG and seek survivor services (in settings where quality services are available). Communication initiatives also address how to support a survivor and help them seek services they wish to receive.</p>	<p>Diverse communication strategies are employed to increase public understanding and shape public opinion on VAWG and related laws/policies, and influence/pressure duty-bearers to take action. This includes efforts such as highlighting recent events and legal cases that demonstrate the need for strengthened laws or implementation.</p>
<p>BUILDING KNOWLEDGE POWER</p> <p>Building knowledge power involves building the foundation of PBK and research on EAWG and sharing these insights and evidence so they can be used to guide EAWG movement efforts. This work includes gathering and analysing data and disseminating research and PBK findings on various EAWG topics (e.g., prevalence, drivers, contexts, evaluation of prevention and response initiatives). Research and PBK foster insight into the lived experiences of women, girls and survivors, with a focus on those belonging to marginalized groups, and engage them across research processes.</p>	<p>The research findings and PBK regarding varied aspects of EAWG are used to inform the targeting and design of diverse, locally relevant VAWG prevention initiatives. Prevention programmes are monitored and evaluated; these applied research findings are then disseminated and inform further prevention efforts.</p>	<p>Movement organizations provide service providers/systems with women- and survivor-centred input and guidance on how to improve the quality, accessibility and use of services. Their insights are based on sources such as PBK, client feedback, research on survivors' use of services, and other direct engagement with women, girls and survivors.</p>	<p>Movement organizations provide lawmakers, policymakers and other key actors with PBK and other research-based input on various topics pertaining to VAWG laws, policies, and their implementation and enforcement (e.g., their impacts, current level of enforcement and recommendations for reform).</p>
<p>BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL POWER</p> <p>Building organizational power is about building the fundamental capacity of EAWG movement organizations (e.g., WROs/CSOs) to operate sustainably and effectively over the long term, in a manner consistent with feminist approaches to leadership and management. It includes strengthening organizations' ability to work in an adaptive, resilient manner within evolving and challenging contexts, so they can respond to emerging needs regarding VAWG. It also involves strengthening core areas such as organizational leadership, policies/systems, staff training, fundraising, material infrastructure and the promotion of staff well-being.</p>	<p>Organizations and their staff have the processes, resources, knowledge, skills and wellness required to engage in VAWG prevention work in a manner that is resilient and adaptive to current needs and realities.</p>	<p>Organizations and their staff have the processes, resources, knowledge, skills and wellness required to take action for improved survivor services in a manner that is resilient and adaptive to current needs and realities.</p>	<p>Organizations and their staff have the processes, resources, knowledge, skills and wellness required to take action for improved VAWG laws/policies and implementation/enforcement in a manner that is resilient and adaptive to current needs and realities.</p>

3.4 Building people power

“This is a movement that is going to be collective. It will bring together people and organizations that are working in those different [outcome] areas, but coming together to create more power, to build a stronger voice and move things collectively.”—FG participant, Integrated Disabled Women Activities (IDIWA), Uganda

The work of the grantees indicates that building people power in feminist/women’s EVAWG movements involves engaging, organizing, strengthening the skills and motivations of, and mobilizing a robust grass-roots base of women, girls, survivors and their allies of all genders — particularly those facing multiple forms of discrimination — and fostering large-scale public support for ending VAWG. The grantees’ work shows that feminist/women’s movements to end VAWG require critical masses of people throughout society to be engaged, motivated and empowered as agents of change — in terms of examining and shifting their own beliefs and behaviours, influencing those around them and engaging in diverse forms of individual and collective action for EVAWG and gender justice. Large-scale public support for EVAWG also creates a more enabling environment for social and structural change.

The grantees’ work to build people power¹¹ — much of which is simultaneously part of VAWG prevention work — includes conducting awareness-raising and conscientization work in varied settings; engaging new movement constituents; and converting opponents and ‘neutrals’ to the cause. This awareness-raising and conscientization work addresses topics such as types¹² and impacts of VAWG; women and girls’ human rights; VAWG laws/policies that exist or are needed; VAWG reporting options and available services for survivors; and the critical analysis of unequal power relations — due to patriarchy and other intersecting forms of oppression such as ableism and HIV stigma — as the root cause of VAWG.



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A key component of building people power is the building of narrative power (discussed in Table 1 and Section 3.6) — i.e., the ability to shift public discourse, popular opinion and norms towards support for EVAWG. Narrative power and people power operate in a mutually reinforcing way. For example, compelling narratives that support EVAWG and gender justice, shared widely via various mediums and platforms (e.g., community dialogues, radio and television programmes and talk shows, social media campaigns, films, sermons and participatory street theatre), help inspire people to join the cause and take action, thus building people power. An active base of movement constituents (people power) can amplify the impacts of EVAWG movement narratives by sharing and discussing the content with people in their networks (thus building narrative power). People power without a compelling narrative (e.g., one focused on why it is urgent to end VAWG now and how people can take action) can struggle to gain further traction to advance the movement, and narratives alone, without an active base of people to share and discuss them with their networks, may not lead to substantial change. The grantees thus engage in extensive efforts to build both forms of movement power.

The process of sparking people’s critical social analysis and dissatisfaction with the status quo of VAWG, patriarchal norms/systems and gender inequity is part of gender-transformative VAWG prevention work (Rutgers 2018) and key to the building of feminist people power. The grantees carry out many efforts to engage people in gender-transformative dialogue, as is discussed further below. The building of people power can also be accelerated by seizing moments of mass public anger or concern, as in the event of highly publicized cases of VAWG, and using these opportunities to engage the public in both critical dialogue and mass mobilization. An FG participant from Andhes (Argentina), a women-led NGO that addresses violence against cisgender, transgender and lesbian women in northwestern Argentina, noted: ‘Movements are generated by a demand . . . by being unsettled by gender inequalities, inequalities of power — that is how movements develop.’

As an example of building movement momentum and people power in response to visible cases and media attention to VAWG, an FG participant from the women’s rights organization United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers (UFDUM, Liberia) described how members of grass-roots women’s groups (which UFDUM had previously helped to organize and train) self-mobilized and engaged others, contributing to a result of thousands of people protesting and marching in response to alarming rates of sexual violence in the country. He said:

“Let me tell you [of] a case in point, one of the achievements these movements made in Liberia. As a result of the active participation of this women’s movement and . . . feminists and young men all coming together to say ‘Enough is enough . . .’ The president listened to their cries. They listened to our cries because we had a big march, a rape march. [With] that march, the president had to declare rape as a national emergency. Now they have the full backing of the president himself, the president of the Republic of Liberia.”

These kinds of moments of mobilization represent a key opportunity to bring newly engaged movement constituents into existing organized groups and boost their capacities as activists and advocates.

Overall, the grantees have worked on a rich array of community mobilizing efforts to end VAWG, such as marches, protests, sit-ins, speak-outs, community dialogues, collective attendance at VAWG trials, and various arts and advocacy events to engage more people in the EVAWG movement, catalyse collective action and advance EAWG movement goals. The grantees co-planned many of these mobilization efforts with local groups, and supported the leadership of grass-roots EAWG movement groups that they had previously helped to organize or train. For example, the Institute for Young Women’s Development (IYWD, Zimbabwe), a WRO building grass-roots women’s collective power for EAWG in Zimbabwe, wrote:

“IYWD and JASS SNA supported actions by women conducted by Vongai and Patience [i.e., local women leaders] which were part of a campaign targeting the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, police, community leaders, women and men, towards raising awareness on the violence being experienced by women and girls in public transportation spaces, challeng[ing] societal norms embedded in patriarchal beliefs that promote VAWG, and building new alliances against GBV [gender-based violence]. The supported campaign titled WHAT WOMEN WANT: LADIES FIRST PAZUPCO was a starting point towards reforming the public transport system to make it women-friendly and safe. This was done through hiring two ZUPCO buses which were only boarded by women for free. This action was part of an information dissemination and gathering campaign which contributed towards empowering women with information on ways to protect themselves and report abusers. During the bus rides a legal expert took the opportunity to speak to the women and provide legal advice and information on how to report violence experienced in public spaces. Among the issues gathered in the discussions, many women reported that rank marshals were even taking the opportunity to forcibly ask women for their contacts in exchange for an opportunity to get on to the bus early. The current situation requires urgent action from all relevant stakeholders to end a culture of impunity, especially towards perpetrators . . . The advocacy initiative received media coverage.”

To build people power to end VAWG, many of the grantees also reported establishing safe spaces (in person and online) where women and girls, survivors, and members of diverse marginalized groups could come together on a regular basis. In these groups, they were able to discuss their life experiences and concerns, support each other, build community, learn about their human rights, VAWG and related issues, hone their political analysis abilities and build their capacities to engage in collective action to end VAWG. The grantees’ work shows that building people power also involves engaging men and boys, traditional and faith leaders, parents/caregivers, educators and others in similar learning and critical reflection on VAWG and gender justice topics, and bolstering their capacity and commitment to act as agents of change for positive masculinities, EAWG and gender justice. An FG participant from the WRO International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA, Cameroon), which works towards goals including the improved implementation and enforcement of VAWG laws/policies, reported during the FG discussion:

“FIDA Cameroon has identified the fact that those who are so wedded to customs need to be turned into feminists so that they can have a change of mindset and attitude. These are custodians of customs or traditional leaders and village councils. We work a lot with traditional leaders, village councils, and educate them on activities they perform, which are . . . harmful traditional practices, and build their capacity to treat all cases of GBV using a human rights-based approach.”

Examples of ongoing groups and cohorts organized by the grantees include women's village savings and loan associations, other women's economic empowerment groups, women's self-help groups, student sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) groups in schools (girls only and multi-gender), school- and community-based human rights clubs for youth, girls' discussion forums, FSWs' solidarity groups, unions of women textile workers, men's groups, cadres of community champions and in-school champions, and cohorts of faith and traditional leaders. Organizing the groups and inviting people to join enabled participants to connect with others who had shared experiences, interests and needs; learn together; build relationships; develop their activism skills; and build their sense of commitment and ability to take action (individually and as part of a collective) for EAWG and on related issues. Many of the groups met in person; some met online. These ongoing groups were spaces where various forms of movement power could be built over time (for example, in addition to people power, they provided opportunities to build leadership, inner and narrative power, as described below).

Once organized, and with their capacities strengthened, these groups could then autonomously decide, or be engaged by the grantee organizations, to mobilize for specific actions (e.g., advocacy with leaders and service providers, peer education activities and participating in protests and marches). For example, the IYWD (Zimbabwe) established feminist movement-building schools. The schools used a trainer-of-trainers model to strengthen young women's activism and leadership skills and deepen their critical understanding of factors that foster VAWG. The work of the schools was rooted in principles of inclusion and intersectionality; the participants included women human rights defenders, self-identified FSWs, and lesbian, bisexual and trans (LBT) women. IYWD found that participating in the schools helped to increase the women's sense of agency as activists and advocates for EAWG and gender equality, and that they subsequently formed autonomous groups that could undertake collective action. The IYWD wrote in their annual report:

“We realized significant gains through implementing the What Women Want intervention. We strengthened and equipped women and project partners with knowledge, tools and skills on understanding and articulating power and its relationship to VAWG . . . In all three provinces, women started to self-mobilize, organize, provide each other with feminist solidarity and engage community leaders to address VAWG in their respective communities. This self-mobilization occurred without direct involvement of IYWD and JASS-SNA staff members . . . demonstrating evidence of movement building. Some of the community-led campaigns and initiatives that were initiated and used by women activists who self-mobilized themselves for action included the Whistleblower Campaign [and] PaChitubu Chevasikana (a virtual WhatsApp platform where women meet every Friday to discuss issues affecting them whilst engaging duty bearers for co-creation of solutions) . . . This, as a direct result of the ongoing accompaniment as well as tools shared during the feminist movement-building workshops. Interestingly, the women's agency and proactiveness played out as a key continuity strategy for continuing to challenge violence against women and, where necessary, engage local powerholders and other women to influence and co-create safety mechanisms to mitigate VAWG at local community levels.”

This example, as well as the example from UFDUM (Nigeria) above, illustrates how WROs/CSOs and other organizations can act as facilitators and supporters of grass-roots movements — that is, by helping local groups to form and organize, providing them with training and tools, supporting the leadership and empowerment of local activists and groups, and leaving the ownership of the movements to them — to identify their issues of interest, build their strategies and narratives and take action together.

Several grantees noted that, when local movement groups they had helped to organize were functioning well in one or a few settings, they then worked to help replicate them elsewhere — increasing the initiatives’ overall visibility and reach, and creating opportunities for cross-group learning and mentorship. For example, Scripture Union West Africa (SUWA), a faith-based organization in Nigeria focused on preventing SGBV in schools and early/child marriage in the states of Benue and Kaduna, organized SGBV student groups that were eventually replicated in several schools in Nigeria. Similarly, the Fund for Congolese Women, a WRO working to end SGBV in schools in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), worked to create safe spaces and trained members of girls’ clubs such that they mentored each other across schools in leadership related to SGBV prevention efforts (in addition to receiving mentorship from adult women leaders across the country).

Several grantees engaged men, boys, allies of all genders and faith and traditional leaders in various ways to shift patriarchal attitudes, prevent VAWG and build people power (in addition to other forms of power, such as narrative and leadership power). This was the case, for instance, for activists working with the human rights organization Sonke Gender Justice (South Africa, Eswatini), who facilitated gender-transformative dialogues in community settings. The dialogues addressed topics such as gender norms; sex, gender and socialization; gender, power and discrimination; gender violence and relationships; and ‘enabling change.’ The participants included men, women, members of religious communities, male chiefs representing 20 chiefdoms, and male and female youth. Describing some of this work, Sonke Gender Justice wrote:

“Community education and mobilization work is anchored in a deep-rooted commitment to gender equality. Through it, the project was able to actively promote changes in the patriarchal values, attitudes and behavior prescribed by society and in the unequal gender relationships that result from these. The transformation of gender norms is a prerequisite for the eradication of GBV and intimate partner violence. It is in this light that the project ensured that they formed part of the educational strategies . . . Men and boys will have gone through a transformation process that will help them reflect on the social and cultural norms that drive aggressive, violent relationships, and the costs these norms have to their well-being. They will have increased knowledge of women’s rights, and increased motivation to engage in healthy, caring, nonviolent relationships . . . Dialogues and workshops were conducted for both men and boys, reaching 1353 of them.”

As another example of grantees’ VAWG prevention work that aimed to challenge patriarchal norms and build people power (and other forms of power), the International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV/AIDS (INERELA+, South Africa, Burundi, Ghana) conducted a training and organizing initiative with religious leaders called ‘Carrying the Message on Positive Masculinity during Sunday Services.’ The leaders shared sermons and messages on VAWG prevention, and also organized people into small, facilitated groups at the churches to foster dialogue and men’s positive behaviour change regarding VAWG.

Many grantees also built people power by building the capacities of women, girls and survivors to advance the movement goals of improved survivor services and VAWG laws/policies and engaging them in these efforts. For example, the Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT, Zimbabwe) — a faith-based CSO working to address the high incidence of VAWG and HIV among FSWs and adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in Zimbabwe — worked to build formal and informal solidarity groups of AGYW and FSWs in three districts. Through these ongoing groups, FACT increased the participants’ knowledge about VAWG, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and their rights, and strengthened their capacities in advocacy and project management. FACT then engaged the AGYW and FSWs as agents of change, inviting them to serve as advocates and trainers for the provision of respectful and

quality services from police, health-care providers and the courts. In this example, people power is being built with the AGYW and FSWs as they develop their critical knowledge/analysis skills in the aforementioned areas and begin to use and grow their skills in advocacy and training. As they progress and more frequently or formally represent their movement group (in this case, FACT), this could be considered to be the building of leadership power; there is thus direct continuity and some overlap between people power and leadership power. Leadership power is also being built in this example with the providers and authorities, as their skills and will to support EVAWG (hopefully) grow.

Along similar lines, IDIWA (Uganda) built people power by building the capacities of women and girls with disabilities (WGWD) to serve as advocates and trainers for non-discriminatory, accessible survivor services. An FG participant from IDIWA stated:

“From where I stand, feminist and women’s movement-building work entails organizing, community organizing. We need to rally people, to invite them to join us in the effort to end violence against women and girls. It entails capacity-building for organizations that are on the front line and even people that are within the organizations that are playing different roles . . . They need to understand their role and do it better. It also entails sensitization. We need to make aware the challenges that women face, the effects of violence on the women and girls, on the households, and communities. We need people to appreciate [this] so that they join the fight.”

Overall, the grantees engaged in a large number of efforts to build and exercise people power by engaging women and girls as advocates and trainers for improved VAWG services, laws and policies. In turn, this often fostered further opportunities for building leadership and network power. For instance, an FG participant from AfA (Nigeria) stated:

“[We are] building synergy with service providers . . . We normally assume that the security man knows what to do, the health worker knows what to do. But sometimes they are ignorant when it comes to the issue of violence against women and girls. Building their capacity and putting them in a kind of network to build synergy makes the work very effective. Then . . . targeting religious and traditional rulers is very key to having a breakthrough in the communities . . . Getting to work with them and bringing women to the table of decision-making — from grass roots, right to where they sit at community level to take decisions. We’re able to get women’s voices to those places organically. . . because they see the point, they see the relevancy. In our own group, we’ve seen leaders saying they didn’t know they were cheating themselves by keeping women off decision-making. Now women are at the table with them, they’re beginning to see the potential that women bring.”

The grantees’ work also shows that people power is often built in a cascading manner, engaging many activists and gradually expanding the reach of projects. Several grantees worked to strengthen people’s capacities as activists/educators, and those trained then went on to sensitize and train others. For example, the Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (Honduras), a WRO that promotes and defends women’s human rights through legal aid, legal education, advocacy and community organizing, used a trainer-of-trainers approach to train groups of women political activists and human rights defenders in skills for feminist activism; those leaders then trained more groups in their respective geographic regions. As another example, the women’s rights organization Zambia

National Women's Lobby trained 700 girls in girls' leadership clubs in 18 schools on VAWG prevention/response, the rights of the girl child, laws that guarantee their freedom and protection, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); those girls then conducted girl-to-girl outreach in the schools and in their local communities, providing peer education to over 6,600 girls. In addition, the Public Interest Law Center (PILC, Chad) — a CSO that works to eradicate harmful norms and practices and enhance survivors' access to services — trained around 300 neighbourhood delegates (including community members, social workers and traditional leaders) to sensitize others on VAWG; they then sensitized over 5,000 people locally. PILC wrote:

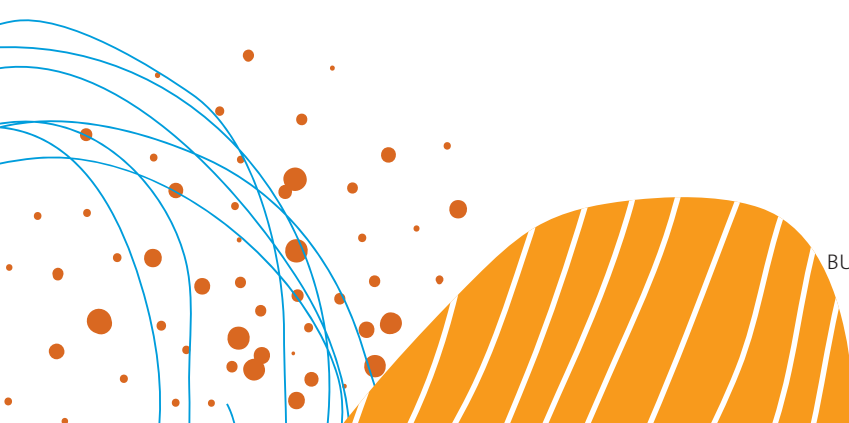
“PILC organized a series of campaign and awareness caravan[s] throughout 10 cities... In Ndjamena, all the districts have been crisscrossed by the teams and members of the surveillance committees for sensitization. The population was [gathered] in public places and some sensitized from house to house, in markets, in churches, in mosques, in schools and universities. Community leaders took part in the campaign and awareness-raising caravan.”

Overall, these kinds of efforts are part of the grantees' work to build both a strong grass-roots base of engaged, skilled and committed activists/advocates and widespread public support for EAWG and gender/social justice. These two elements of people power — a strong base and widespread support — are viewed by the grantees as important for creating an enabling environment for EAWG and accelerating change in societal attitudes, beliefs, norms, practices and systems.

A key challenge faced by several grantees in their work to build people power was resistance or backlash in communities. The grantees had to implement strategies to navigate this in ways that would let them proceed with their planned work as much as possible, but also prioritize the safety of those involved in the work (i.e., participants, activists and staff) and mitigate the potential harm experienced by them. For example, regarding the risks and resistance encountered in conducting their public sensitization work, FIDA Cameroon wrote:

“The attitude and perception on GBV and VAWG held by some members of local communities. Some communities and individuals found this topic so funny and treated it lightly as they claimed women were created to be subjects. Some of them became hostile when we pursued with our sensitization. Whenever this happened, participants and staffs were called to withdraw to avoid escalations, however letting them know that a strong legal framework is set against any form of violence against women and girls; should any case be reported, FIDA would take all necessary measures to obtain justice.”

Another example comes from the Centre for Women Studies and Intervention (CWSI, Nigeria), a WRO working to end FGM in Nigeria's Cross-River State. An FG participant from CWSI described how they handled resistance from community men and male leaders when CWSI established women's EAWG groups:



“When we tried to formulate a group of women to address the issue of violence in the community, the men saw it as a threat because they felt it was our own strategy of using the women to fight them as men or make them not to respect them as men. It was very difficult for them to accept the group and rather [they saw it] as something that shouldn’t be given access to within their communities. But when we brought it in the course of our preventive process of putting an end to different violence in the community, it was easy for the community and the traditional community leaders to accept it. That’s why I am of the opinion that bringing it together alongside the preventive process is the best way to help it have effect in communities.”

This example shows how feminist/women’s movement organizations must deftly navigate the tensions inherent to challenging (or wanting to challenge) the patriarchal status quo, inviting men and male leaders to collaborate on aspects of the work they are in favour of (which can have some positive instrumental impacts on EVAWG) and trying not to alienate them. It also demonstrates that organizations sometimes have to start by increasing men’s support for VAWG prevention, rather than with the declaration of a broader (overtly stated) goal of gender equality or the intention to transform patriarchal norms and systems.¹³

Overall, the grantees’ work and progress in building people power for feminist/women’s EVAWG movements has been facilitated by the exercise of many skills and personal/collective resources, including vision, organizing skills, creativity, tenacity, adaptability, resilience and a highly nuanced understanding of the contexts in which the grantees work. The building of people power is clearly not a linear process but rather is entwined with the building of all other forms of power, as will be further discussed in the next sections.

TABLE 2: Examples of projects building people power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
Centro de Intercambio Subregional Cono Sur Alahua (CISCSA, Argentina)	Runs a feminist training centre that offers courses to organizations, government, the media and the public on preventing and responding to VAWG in public spaces	Prevention and law/policy
International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV/AIDS (INERELA+, South Africa, Burundi and Ghana)	Catalysing faith-based initiatives such as VAWG-focused sermons and discussion groups at churches	Prevention
FACT (Zimbabwe)	Developing the advocacy and training skills of AGYW and self-identified FSWs	Prevention, services and law/policy
Scripture Union West Africa (Nigeria), Fund for Congolese Women (DRC), Zambia National Women’s Lobby	Building people power via school- and community-based initiatives with girls, boys, students, educational professionals, parents, mentors, uniformed personnel and others	Prevention

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (Honduras)	Conducting training-of-trainers in feminist activism, with women human rights defenders	Services and law/policy
Cameroon Association for the Protection and Education of the Child (Cameroon)	Working with female refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers to strengthen their knowledge of the forms, causes and impacts of sexual violence, increase their service-seeking and engage them in sexual violence prevention efforts	Prevention and services
Sonke Gender Justice (South Africa and Eswatini)	Strengthening the capacities and commitment of men, boys and faith/traditional leaders to take action to end VAWG and promote positive masculinities	Prevention

3.5 Building leadership power

The grantees' work shows that building leadership power entails increasing the number of people in leadership roles across society who have the capacity and will to advance EVAWG and broader gender/social justice efforts. Leadership power can be viewed as a subcategory of people power because i) movement-building work aims to engage many people as leaders; ii) concepts of being an 'activist,' 'advocate' and 'leader' are closely related (particularly for youth); and iii) leaders are of course also members of society and move in and out of various roles. However, given the scope of this theme and the fact that it has its own logic and potential impacts, it is presented in this framework as a distinct category.

Building leadership power involves several elements; three salient forms of work are discussed here. The first element of building leadership power involves strengthening the capacities of diverse leaders and representatives within feminist/women's EVAWG movement groups, organizations and alliances (particularly women, girls and survivors belonging to marginalized groups), so they are prepared to advance the movement's aims via interaction with entities including institutions, service providers, aligned movements, alliances/networks, communities and the general public. This work can also involve training and supporting leaders in responding to resistance to or backlash against their efforts. Feminist/women's EVAWG movement organizations often train many women, girls and survivors as leaders and representatives (rather than focusing on just a few), and provide them with opportunities to exercise these roles and continue building their skills.

For instance, building on the example from FACT (Zimbabwe) above, once the AGYW and FSWs started gaining experience as EVAWG advocates and trainers, FACT (Zimbabwe) further engaged them to participate in and lead advocacy and accountability efforts at district- and national-level events and ongoing roundtables with providers and officials. The AGYW and FSWs co-led interactive interface workshops and community scorecard sessions with service providers (e.g., health-care providers and police) to help transform their harmful attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding FSWs and AGYW. In addition to FACT staff, they participated regularly in victim-friendly system meetings at two regional courts, at which they shared their perspectives and advocated for

respectful, non-discriminatory services that respond to their needs. FACT noted in their annual report that these and other activities fostered the ‘increased involvement and recognition’ of FSWs and AGYW in EVAWG and sexual/reproductive health programmes in their targeted districts and beyond. This kind of work builds leadership power and other forms of power such as people, inner, narrative and network power.

As another example of the grantees’ work to develop women’s critical consciousness and their leadership skills, the Asociación Colectiva de Mujeres para el Desarrollo Local (ACMDL), a WRO in El Salvador, partnered with the National Association of Salvadoran Councilors and Mayors to provide a seven-day training course for women’s activist groups entitled ‘Human Rights, Citizen Security and New Specialized Legal Framework for Women who Experience Violence.’ It aimed for participants ‘to acquire core conceptual tools for the analysis of their reality, which allows them to position themselves to defend their rights with emphasis on the right to a life free of violence for women.’ The training was completed by 37 women representing coalitions in eight municipalities; they then met with several mayors, and during these meetings they presented their demands and established ongoing follow-up/accountability mechanisms with them.

An example of women’s leadership training that also addressed personal healing, the building of inner power and navigating backlash comes from the WRO Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas — TZUNUNUJA/IXTZUNUN (MMITZ/IXTZ’UNUN, Guatemala), which works to end violence against indigenous women and girls in Guatemala. They provided women human rights defenders with training on feminist movement-building, including technical, political and strategic knowledge, in addition to spaces and skills for self-care and collective care. They described this training as a ‘combination of... theoretical/normative/conceptual elements of violence with exercises/practice of healing techniques, allow[ing] participants to face moments of decompensation due to the acts of violence experienced and their effects on bodies/mind/life.’ The organization then provided physical accompaniment and emotional support as the leaders carried out this training with women’s groups in their communities and also navigated backlash against these efforts. They wrote in their annual report:

“Induction of female leaders who carry out replicas strengthens their knowledge, overcomes fear and insecurity to carry out replicas. The monitoring/follow-up sessions after aftershocks [i.e., backlash] allows women leaders to collectively reflect on limitations/issues to strengthen/techniques to implement with groups of women in their communities. The application of healing techniques in the aftershocks allows participants to face the situations of violence [they have] experienced [or are] living.”

A second element of building leadership power in EVAWG movements is supporting/mentoring women and strengthening their leadership skills as they pursue formal leadership positions in government and civil society, including in elected office. For example, the Centro de Estudios de la Mujer — Honduras, a WRO that works to strengthen the capacities of women’s and youth organizations and networks to engage in political advocacy for EVAWG, established feminist training schools with 56 young women leaders from two regions. With both virtual and in-person components, the first training module addressed political communication, how to serve as a spokesperson, student governance and women’s leadership and civic participation. The second module addressed sexual and reproductive rights, the body and sexuality. The training was found to increase participants’ knowledge of their sexual and reproductive rights, and also their motivation and commitment to participate in decision-making spaces and serve as spokespersons in their communities and student governments to support women and girls’ human rights. As another example, IDIWA (Uganda) supported women and girls with disabilities in gaining elected office. In their monitoring report, they wrote:

“We also realized beneficiaries’ participation in politics. After the human rights training, WGWDs understood and appreciated the need to engage in politics as the only means to have power to participate in decision making processes. Many contested and were elected at village, sub county and district levels, especially as representatives of people with disabilities. This is anticipated to increase the women with disability agency and voices in the decisions made at the different levels hence leading to prioritization of issues and needs of WGWDs in the sub county and district budgets and plans.”

IDIWA’s work in this example above has the potential to build not only leadership power (with WGWDs and the other leaders they interact with and motivate), but also other forms of power such as WGWDs’ inner power (as WGWDs gain an increased sense of agency), narrative power (as WGWDs’ messages gain visibility) and organizational power (as organizations representing WGWDs gain increasing institutional support).

A third element of building leadership power is strengthening the capacities and will of existing leaders, service providers and others within institutions and systems that have decision-making and influencing power regarding aspects of VAWG (e.g., governments, military, legal/law enforcement systems, faith/traditional entities, education systems, the media and survivor services), so they increase their efforts to advance EAWG and broader gender/social justice. In this context, leadership power is built by leveraging collaborative relationships (often built via networks, described below in the section on network power), and training institutional actors on topics such as human rights, the needs and realities of survivors and marginalized women and girls, and existing VAWG laws/policies and government commitments. The premise and hope of this work — acknowledging that it often does not happen easily or quickly — is that, once their knowledge and motivation/will are sufficiently bolstered, these institutional actors will be more likely to increase their efforts to strengthen VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement, improve VAWG services, advance VAWG prevention, and so on. (Once leaders and institutional actors become allied with the EAWG cause, they can also be considered as becoming part of People Power, fostering greater holism in the EAWG movement.) An FG participant from Andhes (Argentina) noted the importance of engaging government officials as feminist/women’s EAWG movement actors:

“I feel that feminist movements alone cannot eradicate violence. Because it needs a state that listens to the feminist movements, that supports the struggle of the feminist movements, and that there be feminists within the state who sustain the struggle from [within].”

As an example of working to build elected officials’ capacities and will to act for EAWG, the two organizations from El Salvador noted earlier in this section led an eight-session course with women councillors from 18 municipalities focused on ‘mainstreaming gender equity.’ The course addressed topics such as citizen security, governance and the right to a life free of violence. In addition, to train future legal practitioners on gender justice issues, the organizations conducted the first ‘Gender and Women’s Rights Specialization’ programme of El Salvador’s National Judiciary Council.

There are many examples of grantee project activities that were rooted in their organizations’ critical power analysis and built leadership power with both formal and informal leaders in communities. For instance, the Institute for Young Women Development (Zimbabwe) worked to build leadership power for EAWG by sensitizing both traditional and government leaders regarding uses of their institutional power so it would become a solidarity-focused ‘power with’ women, girls and survivors, rather than ‘power over’ them.¹⁴

“Ongoing Power Analyses has been central to [IYWD and JASS-NA’s] methodologies as acknowledging how power affects how women respond to VAW and how they seek recourse. We conducted power analysis before and during activities and sometimes in the presence of power holders, including traditional chiefs and local government leaders, so they understand that how they use their power perpetuates VAW yet as leaders they are supposed to challenge it. We aided the processes by de-rolling [sic], including removing titles of participants in meetings and also facilitating non-hierarchical and informal sitting arrangements where we sit in ‘circles’ representing equality.”

The work of IDIWA (Uganda) illustrates the synergistic links between the building of people power and leadership power with community-based women/girls and formal leaders. IDIWA first trained WGWDs as activists and leaders. The WGWDs then worked both to educate service providers and government officials and also to hold them accountable for action. (Those providers and officials might then sensitize others and enlist them to take action, building further people and leadership power.) IDIWA wrote in its annual report:

“[We have] increased stakeholders’ understanding and commitment towards inclusive services for WGWDs who are SGBV survivors, especially in the health department. There were a number of provisions such as ramps, adjustable beds and wheelchairs put in place to enhance WGWDs access to SGBV services. There is increased stakeholder engagement on inclusive services by WGWDs. This is as result of the knowledge and skills gained by the women through the human rights trainings. The women can now boldly come out to hold the duty bearers accountable of the existing gaps in SGBV service delivery. We deliberately included duty bearers from the planning, health, procurement, and education departments, and councilors . . . to promote ownership and continuity of the accessibility audit function and enlist local government support . . . The duty bearers have become disability advocates and willing to move forward even with limited support from IDIWA.”

TABLE 3: Examples of projects building leadership power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
ACMDL (El Salvador)	Built leadership power with women councillors in 18 municipalities across El Salvador, regarding gender equity and EVAWG	Law/policy
Gender Links (GL, South Africa, Eswatini and Madagascar)	Rolled out the Sunrise Campaign with 44 local government centres of excellence for gender mainstreaming, which run EVAWG campaigns and support VAWG survivors via economic empowerment opportunities	Prevention, services and law/policy
PILC (Chad)	Built leadership power with faith and traditional leaders, military personnel, law enforcement, journalists and others, including via the training of trainers	Prevention, law/policy and services

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
FIDA (Cameroon)	'Built the capacity of 36 customary court judges, 30 traditional leaders and Queen Mothers, and 49 paralegals in the 2 project regions. This further strengthened the partnership and collaborative efforts by these key stakeholders in the fight against VAWG at various levels in local communities.'	Prevention, services and law/policy
Fund for Congolese Women (DRC)	Built leadership power among girls in school-based GBV clubs, including knowledge on GBV, feminism and women's rights, public speaking skills, and willingness to voice their opinion	Prevention and services
Institute for Young Women Development (Zimbabwe)	Built leadership power with government and traditional leaders; taught them about practising a solidarity-focused 'power with' women, girls and survivors	Law/policy and prevention

3.6 Building inner power

As shown by the work of the grantees, **building inner power is central to building feminist/women's EAVWG movements. It involves working with women, girls and survivors of all genders, particularly those experiencing multiple forms of discrimination, to help them unburden themselves of internalized oppression, gain a heightened sense of self-esteem, self-worth and pride, experience healing, gain knowledge of their human rights, develop their critical/feminist analysis skills and perspectives, and gain confidence** in their ability to take action to help end VAWG and advance gender equality and social justice. Many of the grantees work to foster inner power within healing services and empowering safe spaces for survivors. They also work to foster inner power through feminist/women's activism and leadership training (which also build people and leadership power), and via empowering public narrative work (discussed under narrative power, below), among other avenues.

Internalized oppression in relation to VAWG involves the personal internalization of harmful societal ideologies that one has been subjected to, and coming to believe that gender inequality, VAWG and intersecting forms of oppression — such as homo/transphobia, racism, xenophobia, ableism, classism and HIV stigma — are natural, normal, inevitable or justifiable. For example, the Centre for Women Studies and Intervention (Nigeria) wrote in their annual report:

“A key factor responsible for violation of women's rights is that rural women believe that women do not have rights and that their malefolks are naturally or divinely ordained to have total control and authority over women, even when such wrongly perceived authority leads to violence against them. This notion is also held by men in the rural communities to the extent that women live their lives through them and are subject to their whims and caprices. We will debunk this fallacy by continuously organizing regular workshops on women's rights in those communities, towards eliminating the wrong perceptions.”

As shown by the grantees' work, **gaining inner power in the context of EVAWG involves identifying and challenging one's own internalized oppression, and gaining elements such as** i) increased knowledge of the various forms of VAWG and one's own human rights, including the right to live free of violence; ii) increased pride in one's identities and an increased sense of self-worth, self-esteem and resilience; iii) heightened determination and sense of agency to assert one's rights and pursue life steps that reflect one's rights, dignity and potential; and iv) increased confidence in one's ability to take action — individually and as part of a collective — for EVAWG and gender/social justice.

The grantees' work indicates that, **for survivors, gains in inner power may lead to an increase in their assertiveness, willingness to seek justice and other services for their experiences of VAWG (in settings where adequate services are available), willingness to speak out for EVAWG and the rights of women and girls, and willingness to help other survivors** report violence and seek support if they so choose. Several grantees noted that once VAWG survivors have been able to engage in personal healing and are feeling strengthened by collective support and services, they might elect to 'stand up' as part of the EVAWG movement and engage in prevention/response efforts as public speakers, peer supporters, educators, advocates and leaders, thus bolstering the movement's people power, leadership power, narrative power and knowledge power (among other possibilities). For example, HACEY Health Initiative (Nigeria) has engaged and supported survivors of FGM in sharing their personal stories with other community members to help end the practice.

The bolstering of people's inner power can thus help foster new social realities in which survivors are less likely to remain silent about their experiences of violence, thereby shifting social power dynamics that have previously helped violence to continue unabated. When increasing numbers of women, girls and survivors are seeking and receiving support, speaking out, and taking on activism and leadership roles in EVAWG, this can help foster an enabling environment and virtuous cycle for more of these actions to occur, in turn building even more inner power and other forms of movement power in a synergistic and mutually reinforcing way, and supporting progress towards EVAWG movement goals.

It is important to simultaneously highlight, however, that **the bolstering of inner power is an important goal in and of itself in feminist/women's EVAWG movements, which seek to eliminate internalized oppression and increase women and girls' own sense of well-being, self-worth, agency, and certainty of their equal rights and value.** Demonstrating how movement organizations' creation of safe, healing and empowering spaces for women, girls and survivors can bolster their inner power (in addition to people, leadership, network and narrative power), the IYWD (Zimbabwe) described how creating safe spaces for women 'in all their diversity' helped to reduce prejudice, build a sense of common cause and support women's inner strengthening:

"In Year 2, there was increased interaction . . . by different women's groups in safe spaces . . . Self mobilized activities compelled women to empathize with each other irrespective of sexual orientation or belief systems. This translated to a shift of perceptions of other women groups and acceptance of women being diverse but equal in their diversity. Similar to the shift and increased confidence in identity that was noted for Sex Workers, there was a behavioural shift of women who identify as LBT women as they became more confident in the safe spaces where project partners convened. The group also opened themselves up to building alliances with other women groups to collectively fight to combat VAWG. Building up on the confidence gained in the safe spaces with other project partners, one activist from Manicaland openly resolved to stand up against police brutality targeted at the LBT community, despite the country still having laws that criminalize any actions perceived as being homosexual."

As another example of work that built both inner power and people power, the WRO Asociación Mujeres Transformando (El Salvador), which addresses physical, sexual and psychological violence against women in workplaces, had these aims for its feminist conscientization training sessions with women textile workers:

“The de-normalization of violence against women and girls increases in the seven municipalities where the project intervenes . . . Establishing new paradigms in socio-affective relationships between women and men . . . Adult and young women workers in the textile sector, participants in training and self-awareness processes, identify power relations, the different forms and expressions of sexist violence, and obtain greater knowledge and personal and collective tools to confront it.”

Several of the grantees also paid explicit attention, in their project monitoring, to the inner experience and confidence (i.e., inner power) of women and girls as they worked with them to build people power and leadership power. For example, the Fund for Congolese Women (DRC) wrote of the girls they trained as activists and leaders in girls’ school clubs:

“Out of 400 girls trained . . . 74% lead awareness sessions more effectively, put forward plausible arguments to respond to questions and concerns raised by their peers during discussions. While 103 others also have improved knowledge, but act in the background. Reluctant to take the lead, align with others’ ideas, and rarely voice opinions unless asked questions or dictated roles to be played within the team . . . The knowledge acquired on the rights of women /girls and feminism strengthens girls’ capacity and technique to carry out awareness-raising, advocacy, etc. Regular exercise reinforces their knowledge of being and doing. They self-evaluate and define areas for improvement, thanks to mentoring [and] experience-sharing sessions.”

As an example of how the grantees’ work simultaneously bolstered inner power and leadership power with established government leaders — who need inner strength and resources to challenge the patriarchal status quo within governments — IYWD (Zimbabwe) shared a story of impact:

“An honourable member of Parliament shared her story of how the project has empowered her in executing her duties as a member of parliament. Before her interaction with the project, she shared that she had limited capacity to engage on issues and debate as her fellow male MPs. She narrated how training under the project has allowed her to debate on issues of young women with confidence. She gave a specific example of how she has lobbied for the Constituency Development Fund to focus on the key issues that women have identified to mitigate VAW in efforts to access public services delivery. The honourable member acknowledged the capacity building . . . and how it goes a long way in ensuring that women play an active role in decision making not only for their households but for the broader community.”



A health worker receives COVID-19 prevention materials from Faith Kalagbor, an Alliances for Africa staff member.

© Uche/Alliances for Africa (Nigeria)

An element of EVAWG programmes that grantees view as critical to building inner power — and supporting the formation of EVAWG movement groups overall — is the economic empowerment of women and survivors. An FG participant from The Bethany Project (Zimbabwe) noted that the economic empowerment element of the women’s groups that her organization has formed is what has drawn women to join the groups, and that the women can then be engaged in sensitization on gender justice issues:

“We’ve realized that to create a movement that is strong, you need to have the economic empowerment as part of the movement-building. That is what keeps the women and the girls together . . . It’s more of the motivation . . . The main discussion would be around sexual violence and sharing experience and educating each other, but then to sustain the groups, there is need for an economic empowerment . . . Most of the cases of GBV or sexual violence . . . are triggered by the fact that women are dependent on men and boys . . . With the economic empowerment . . . they become independent. When a woman is independent, they can actually make decisions by themselves.”

Another FG participant from AfA (Nigeria) similarly noted that the economic empowerment component sustains their women’s groups, increases women’s agency and has led to the groups’ growth and replication over time:

“We have the Village Saving and Loan Association [for women] . . . We’ve seen a lot of women being able to — once a woman has an income, it affects the whole family. They’re able to pay their children’s school fees, some of their businesses are thriving, some have even built houses. It’s something that is sustainable even when the programme ends, because the group keeps going on. The VSLA [Village Savings and Loan Association] group keeps increasing. We planned to have 20, and we now have over 40 groups in three years because of the economic empowerment.”

Regarding the risks of engaging in economic empowerment work, IDIWA’s annual report noted that there was backlash among men in response to their wives’ participation in economic empowerment groups, and indicated a need to mitigate this:

“Women’s increased income generation, greater financial autonomy and asset ownership are a means of reducing SGBV. We learnt that WGWDs’ involvement in employment programs help reduce violence against them, as men see benefits of women’s participation and their contribution to family development. However, it was observed that WGWDs’ economic advancement and asset accumulation can bring either protective effects or increase their risks of violence, depending on contextual factors, such as dominant gender attitudes restricting women’s involvement in paid work or women managing financial and productive resources.”

TABLE 4: Examples of projects building inner power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
Center for Women Studies and Intervention (Nigeria)	Organizing ongoing community-based workshops on women’s rights	Prevention
Asociación Mujeres Transformando (El Salvador)	Building inner power via training and self-awareness processes, including discussion of power relations, de-normalization of VAWG, and building personal and collective tools to confront it	Prevention
Voluntary Services Overseas (Zimbabwe)	Hosting community dialogues that aim to increase women’s knowledge of their rights and confidence to assert them (including via reporting and seeking services)	Prevention, services and law/policy
Fundación para la Promoción de la Economía Social y Cooperativa (Argentina)	Working to build women survivors’ sense of self-esteem, empowerment, autonomy and knowledge of their rights, via training and accompaniment by neighbourhood counselors who are part of a network of women-led territorial councils	Services and law/policy
GL (South Africa, Eswatini and Madagascar)	Working to build women’s agency, confidence, economic independence and control in relationships — via life skills and entrepreneurship training and small grants	Prevention and services
FACT (Zimbabwe)	Working with FSWs to bolster and affirm their sense of self-worth, knowledge that they deserve safety from VAWG, and awareness of their rights and equal protection by the law	Prevention and services
IDIWA (Uganda)	Providing opportunities to WGWD to build their leadership skills and confidence by publicly advocating for their rights and EAWG	Prevention, services and law/policy

3.7 Building network power

As shown by the grantees' work, building network power in feminist/women's EVAWG movements involves i) forming networks, alliances and coalitions that include diverse EVAWG movement groups, activists and intersecting aligned movements; and ii) forming strategic collaborative relationships with key institutions and actors such as government offices, traditional and faith leaders and VAWG service providers.

Forming networks, alliances and coalitions with various EVAWG movement groups, activists and aligned intersecting movements has many benefits. It enables the participants (WROs/CSOs, other organizations, informal groups and activists) to jointly articulate the movement vision and goals, set agendas, learn from each other, strengthen each other's capacities, amplify their voices collectively, support each other in navigating challenges (including resistance and backlash) and take joint action on EVAWG and intersecting issues. The networks include groups working on various intersecting causes, such as advancing the health and rights of indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, youth, FSWs and LGBTQI+ individuals, and advancing SRHR and women's rights to land and inheritance. Working in such networks, with attention to intersectionality and solidarity, thus enables movement actors to collectively address multiple interlinked issues in mutually reinforcing ways. They often partner and coordinate to complement each other's efforts, as groups often play synergistic roles in the movement ecosystem, and they also sometimes partner with researchers and academic institutions to foster joint learning. Overall, building network power can in turn bolster all the other forms of movement power described in this paper, and can significantly accelerate progress towards the movement goals.

Government officials, Manicaland Athletics Board officials and representatives of the project women's network at the Marathon to commemorate 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in Manicaland Zimbabwe.

© Nqobizitha Nyakunu/Voluntary Service Overseas (Zimbabwe)



Several grantees described, in their reports and in the FGs, what intersectional collaboration can look like and the ways in which network power can amplify the voices, reach and impact of grass-roots movement actors. For example, an FG participant from IDIWA (Uganda) stated:

“We are working at the lowest level, sub-national level . . . It involves collaboration, networking with other organizations that are promoting women’s human rights. These include women rights organizations. As a disabled people’s organization, we are also working with organizations for people with disabilities . . . but also, other mainstream organizations that are willing to . . . champion the cause of ending violence against women and girls. Organizations that are willing to mainstream gender-based violence in their programming. Then our relationship within the feminist ecosystem is that we are here at the local level, at the sub-national level, contributing to the bigger picture of the feminist movement. National organizations depend on us. We collaborate. We partner on implementation. We collaborate on policy, dialogue, resource mobilization. At times, we implement programs together. That’s how we relate.”

Some of the grantees facilitate the formation of networks and alliances by intentionally bringing diverse groups together. For example, the Art and Global Health Center Africa (ArtGlo, Malawi), which focuses on EVAWG, SRHR and women’s empowerment, provided trainings on topics including strategic partnership-building to over 50 CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) working on EVAWG, harmful norms and women’s empowerment in five districts, and helped them form networks for ongoing mutual learning and joint advocacy at the district and national levels. And in regard to its facilitating the formation of intersectional networks for ‘cross-movement building’ — i.e., shared learning, solidarity, action and support — IYWD (Zimbabwe) wrote:

“As IYWD and JASS-NA we continued to . . . combine our approaches aimed at building solidarity and alliances across movements for collective action and safety. We did this by bringing together diverse women across geographic areas, sexual identities, political affiliations and sex workers intentionally. This helped us build common ground, shared learning and analysis, and ensured women had the networks and support needed to access resources, were safer and found belonging. We achieved this by also developing formal alliances by deliberately reaching out to and working with cross-sectoral organizations, including linking local and national level work. This multi-sectoral approach not only builds knowledge of shared experiences across different issue areas, but also ensures that different constituencies — such as sex workers and LBT women — can develop a shared and deeper understanding of their specific issues from a more structural perspective by seeing how the same institutions, norms and practices are at the roots of their different experiences. These alliances formed a solid base for our work as we moved into communities . . . Using text messages and WhatsApp to amplify women’s voices on various issues reduced the digital divide.”

In addition to forming networks with fellow movement groups/activists as described above, **the grantees' work to build network power also involves strategically forming and participating in networks, roundtables, advisory groups and collaborative relationships with key entities/actors that hold 'power over' in terms of formal leadership roles, decision-making authority and influence, so as to be able to work with them towards EVAWG movement goals.** These actors include government ministries/offices, traditional and faith leaders, and service providers/leaders (e.g., police, judiciary, customary courts, and those working in health care, psychosocial services and education) whose work and partnership are key to advancing systemic improvements for VAWG prevention and response. Examples of the progress towards EVAWG movement goals that has been facilitated by the grantees' collaborative engagement with authorities include the establishment of referral networks and standards of care for survivors; the establishment of VAWG data-collection mechanisms; the fostering of opportunities for WROs/CSOs to deliver sensitizing training to authorities on the experiences and needs of diverse women, girls and survivors; and the fostering of opportunities for WROs/CSOs to advocate at close range for the apt adjudication of VAWG legal cases.

The grantees noted that this relationship-building can require significant time and trust-building effort — especially among groups that have not often collaborated, such as WROs and the police. Once these relationships start forming, they can enable movement organizations to work collaboratively and incrementally with gatekeepers, often over several years or even decades (e.g., via trainings, advocacy, the provision of critical input from stakeholders and the establishment of ongoing accountability mechanisms), so as to strengthen their capacities and commitment as allied actors in the EVAWG movement. As leaders and duty-bearers join forces with the EVAWG movement, this in turn builds the movement's leadership power. As an example of intentionally building relationships (i.e., network power) and then collaborating with groups that hold institutional 'power over,' PILC (Chad) worked to provide police with 'training in respect for women's rights in different bodies' so they 'could influence others through their behaviour and lead them to change positively (snowball effect).' PILC wrote:

“For reasons of political-military crisis due to the death of the President of the Republic . . . we were only able to reach the 125 police officers who will train the others. We have testimonies from girls and women when we discuss with them, that they are better welcomed and understood when they come to the police stations to denounce the violence they suffer. And the police officers who listen to them seek solutions to their problems when they listen to them. This explains the number of referrals from the police to the PILC.”

There are many examples of grantees exercising network power to increase survivors' access to high-quality essential services (which, in turn, can build other forms of power such as inner power and people power). For instance, the ACMDL (El Salvador) was part of a successful joint advocacy effort that led to the building of the first 'Women's House' in the western region of El Salvador, which will provide specialized care for VAWG survivors and conduct VAWG prevention work. This win was achieved via advocacy to the municipality by an inter-organizational council called the Table for Sexual and Reproductive Health, in which several governmental institutions and women's organizations participate; the ACMDL plays a leadership role on this council.

As an example of leveraging network power to carry out gender-transformative VAWG prevention work (which can in turn build more forms of movement power), Sonke Gender Justice (South Africa and Eswatini) noted how partnerships and networks increased the reach and impact of their capacity-building work:

“The partnerships developed with various partners and networks, coupled with trainings and engagements with CSOs and CBOs, created a ground-swell of organizations that integrated intimate partner violence [IPV] in their programming, taking ownership of the IPV prevention and response activities. This was evident in that they were able to develop [or] rework action plans that were implemented within their own constituencies . . . The project is happy to have witnessed their activities in action when invited. In Soweto, a NGO which specializes with inner healing integrated IPV in their workplans and they want to take the newly found strategy to their national structures. The local stakeholder dialogues attracted officials from various government departments and interrogated IPV, but also developed policy pathways for advocacy at the national level.”

Finally, **there are several examples of grantees leveraging network power to advance improvements in VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement.** For instance, AfA (Nigeria) built a coalition of state and civil society actors called the Imo State Committee on Ending Violence against Women and Girls. This coalition established mechanisms and advocated for the enactment and effective implementation of the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act in Imo State (the Act was passed at the federal level in 2015). The strategic efforts of this coalition helped to catalyze the enactment of the Imo State VAPP Act in December 2021. AfA’s annual report noted that that ‘this win was achieved through the synergized efforts of the network of partners and their ‘unwavering commitment to the mandate of improving access to essential services for women and girls survivors of violence in the State.’

An important challenge inherent to building network power is that the ability of WROs/CSOs to form collaborative relationships with government actors can be subject to political realities and political will to constructively address VAWG. For example, several grantees noted having to re-establish relationships or refocus their alliance-building efforts in instances where elections and political transitions led to staff turnover, loss of funding, loss of technical knowledge on and institutional memory of EAWG work, and loss of political will and inter-institutional forums to address VAWG. These and other sociopolitical obstacles (e.g., conflict, security risks, lack of government support for autonomous CSO work and active governmental repression) have required that grantees exercise significant agility in terms of their alliances and action strategies. For example, the ACMDL (El Salvador) wrote, among its lessons learned:

“Dialogue with the new local administrations is necessary and fundamental to publicize the work of the Collective and the work of local organizations, considering that these new civil servants . . . are unaware of the work and the efforts that have been developed. [This] requires the creation of a new local and national advocacy strategy to promote the initiation and realization of joint work favorable to women’s rights and municipal management with a gender approach.”

In addition, **while the grantees emphasized the value of forming collaborative relationships and working directly with entities holding institutional ‘power over,’ WROs/CSOs often simultaneously speak out and engage the public to voice demands and hold institutions accountable** with regard to various gender/social justice, democracy and human rights issues (including and in addition to EVAWG). This duality can require that movement organizations be strategic as to how they simultaneously play the ‘inside game’ of working collaboratively with given power-holders and gatekeepers and the ‘outside game’ of organizing and mobilizing the public to demand change.

Overall, many grantees noted the ‘game-changing’ and ‘transformative’ value to their work of building and participating in networks and alliances with other movement groups/actors. They stated that it was essential for their organizations to be able to collaborate, partner, synergize, share practice-based learning, support each other in challenging times, engage in joint advocacy and so on in order to work effectively, grow (as individual practitioners and organizations) and advance the movement to end VAWG. The collective of movement groups was viewed as far more than the sum of its parts, and the overall movement network/ecosystem became its own broader, sustained, impact-generating entity. **Developing and leveraging collaborative relationships with institutional power-holders was also a key part of building network power.**

TABLE 5: Examples of projects building network power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
ArtGlo (Malawi)	Catalysed the formation of networks of CSOs and CBOs in five districts for mutual learning/exchange and joint advocacy at district and national levels for EVAWG	Prevention and law/policy
HACEY Health Initiative (Nigeria)	Catalysed the formation of the End FGM Alliance, which comprises over 60 organizational and individual members	Prevention, services and law/policy
Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (Honduras)	Built online forums and activist networks via the virtual platform of the Universidad Popular. Provided political and technical tools to networks of women engaged in political advocacy and oversight with municipal authorities	Law/policy
ONG Dignité et Droits pour les Enfants en Côte d’Ivoire (Côte d’Ivoire)	Worked via networks to build the capacities of implementing partners and others involved in the fight against VAWG, with emphasis on a new national law on survivor protection and care	Services and law/policy
Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir, A.C. (Mexico)	Brought CSOs and victim groups together for joint advocacy work. Built strategic alliances with local organizations and collectives to demand implementation of a national VAWG law and adjudication of cases. ‘In this way, a civil society is formed that demands its rights before the authorities’	Services and law/policy



Courtesy of the Center for Women Studies and Intervention

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3.8 Building narrative power

The grantee data indicate that narrative power in feminist/women's EAWG movements is **the power to shape dominant public opinion, societal narratives and norms towards the support of EAWG and gender/social justice, and away from the espousal of patriarchal and other oppressive ideologies and practices.** As noted above, building Narrative Power is a key element of building People Power and has a mutually-reinforcing relationship with it, as well as the other forms of power in the framework. Given the scope of the narrative power theme and the diverse forms of work it includes, it is presented in this framework as a distinct category.

The grantees' work shows that **building narrative power in EAWG movements involves framing the issue of VAWG to shape people's understanding of its nature, scope, importance and what can/must be done about it, and to share a vision of a better future.** For example, the grantees have co-developed social and behaviour change communication¹⁵ initiatives that aim to increase public knowledge of the definitions and prevalence of different kinds of VAWG; increase the visibility of specific forms of VAWG (e.g., femicide, feminicide, sexual violence and FGM); normalize the breaking of social silences regarding VAWG; reduce the stigma and prejudice faced by VAWG survivors and women and girls belonging to marginalized groups; challenge dominant narratives regarding the acceptability and 'naturalness' of VAWG and gender inequity; increase public understanding of how patriarchal norms, beliefs and systems are the root causes of VAWG; normalize reporting and help-seeking for experiences of VAWG (where adequate survivor services are available); galvanize the public to urgently demand institutional action on specific VAWG cases, laws or proposed reforms; and, more generally, spark critical public dialogue on issues such as human rights, masculinities, harmful practices, and what people can do to respond to and help end VAWG.

The grantees' communication initiatives on EAWG often involve the development of tailored, targeted content and participatory campaigns, informed by people's lived experiences and local realities. The content, mediums and dissemination strategies are often planned with the aim of reaching and engaging particular audiences (including the general public) in a relevant, accessible way. For example, the grantees have partnered with community groups to develop public EAWG campaigns with complementary in-person and online components (#NiUnaMenos, #WhatWomenWant, Nada Sobre Nosotras Sin Nosotras, #MasMujeresMasDemocracia). The grantees have also worked with community members, artists and others to develop radio talk shows and TV programmes informed by local realities; documentaries and reality-based fiction films; community dialogues; participatory street theatre; songs, murals and posters; public service advertisements; and printed social and behaviour change communication materials for wide dissemination. The grantees have also created, facilitated and co-catalysed diverse public actions (as discussed above in people power) such as marches, sit-ins, speak-outs and events for the 16 Days of Activism campaign, which elevated the visibility of the EAWG movement and its messages. Many of the grantees' narrative efforts have strategically combined multiple forms of engagement.

Building feminist/women’s narrative power involves learning and collectively shaping narratives with women, girls, survivors, allies and aligned movement groups (e.g., WROs/CSOs). For instance, ArtGlo (Malawi) works with over 50 CSOs and CBOs in southern Malawi to strengthen their capacities to change harmful norms and make women’s empowerment mainstream at district and national levels. This narrative work includes conducting training programs with CSOs on the use of human-centred design and participatory art approaches, for the production of public information and education (IEC) materials, arts-based events, and VAWG prevention programmes that are informed by the lived experiences of women and girls, including those who are LBT and/or who live with disabilities. Another example of building narrative power comes from Centro de Estudios de la Mujer (Honduras), a WRO that launched a project aiming to help prevent and end VAWG (e.g., domestic, sexual, psychological and patrimonial violence and femicide) via multi-stakeholder collaboration and networks of civil society groups. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, its work to build narrative power was mainly conducted online. Its annual report states:

“Recreational and resistance activities carried out by young women from neighborhoods [have] allowed them to penetrate the consciousness of the community, with anti-patriarchal, anti-classist, anti-sexist and anti-homophobic messages, in social networks and virtual campaigns. The virtual campaign was key for the communication of women’s problems and proposals, as well as the requirement and demand before the state to expeditiously attend to women and girls who are victims of violence. Likewise, the virtual campaign made it possible to break the silence resulting from confinement and isolation within the framework of the measures to prevent the spread of the COVID19 virus.”

Several grantees have also trained media professionals in the skills needed for accurate, ethical and appropriate reporting on VAWG (including protection of survivor privacy) and helped leaders and influencers strategize on how to use their platforms to boost VAWG prevention and response (e.g., via their sermons and social media). These training sessions have also aimed to increase the media professionals’ and leaders’ sense of responsibility and commitment to address VAWG. For example, regarding its training sessions for journalists, PILC (Chad) wrote in its annual report:

“Journalists who have been trained . . . [have] a better understanding of their roles in preventing and reporting VAWG. They are committed to making programs and writing articles to fight against VAWG and are already doing so.”

As part of this work, PILC assesses the proportion of trained journalists who know the legal definition of rape, the number who commit to creating programmes and writing media articles on women’s rights and VAWG, and the number of media pieces they create. **In addition, the grantees often engage the media in covering public actions on EAWG led by local groups** they have helped to organize — e.g., women-only bus rides organized by women’s groups that IYWD (Zimbabwe) trained — to help boost their visibility and impact.

As noted earlier, the grantee data show that narrative power is linked with the other forms of movement power in a mutually reinforcing way. As an example of work that may have helped to build narrative power and also people, inner and leadership power, IYWD (Zimbabwe) partnered with three local organizations to create a 16-episode set of short reality-based films depicting women's experiences of VAWG, entitled *Ndafunga Kure*; it was screened in live venues and via social media for the 16 Days of Activism campaign. At the premiere, one of the actors in the film candidly shared her own story of VAWG survivorship with the audience. In a public statement on the series,¹⁶ IYWD noted: 'Rewriting the narrative that women and girls are not only victims/survivors, but powerful change agents who articulate their needs and want to thrive in modern society is important.' Its annual report also notes:

"The collaborative campaign collectively created awareness on VAWG and advocated for gender equality as a means to prevent VAWG. This partnership was key as a strategy for heightening visibility, for uptake and for collective advocacy for #WhatWomenWant demands that are key for mitigating structural VAWG if met. [We] ran a campaign dubbed Ndafunga Kure which depicted lived realities of women in their diversity in different sectors, raising awareness on the prevalence of GBV whilst advocating for gender equality and women empowerment as a key prerequisite to prevent and mitigate VAWG . . . The premiere . . . was attended by representatives from parliament, civil society organisations, government departments and funding partners."

Increases in the public visibility of VAWG issues can, in turn, help to accelerate the EAWG movement's work and increase the number of opportunities available to movement groups for engagement. Noting this, an FG participant from SUWA (Nigeria) said:

"The feminist movement — because there have been so many issues on GBV, the awareness has become so high that people are talking about it. That is bringing about collaboration, bringing about networks and bringing about people being open. So, what do we do? We have been active in this network and trying to take leadership by helping to build capacity of other organizations."

Overall, building narrative power contributes to boosting people and leadership power, as more people become inspired to align and engage with the EAWG movement. Importantly, as noted above, building narrative power can also foster increases in inner power as people encounter and internalize empowering narratives that are increasingly circulating in society (and/or that are visible in targeted spaces, such as in-person and online support spaces for women, girls, survivors and LGBTQI+ people). Engaging with feminist/women's movement narratives of equality and empowerment can help diverse women, girls, survivors and others to transform the patriarchal/oppressive narratives they have internalized into empowering inner narratives of self-pride, rights and agency. In addition, as more people gain inner power, they may be more likely to support others and take action for EAWG and related issues, further bolstering additional forms of movement power.

In addition to directly highlighting the lived experiences of women, girls, survivors and other movement constituents, the content shared in efforts to build narrative power often stems from PBK and research findings on VAWG (i.e., knowledge power), discussed next.

TABLE 6: Examples of projects building narrative power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
PILC (Cameroon)	Trained journalists to report on VAWG with accuracy, sensitivity and attention to ethics	Prevention, services and law/policy
ArtGlo (Malawi)	Used participatory arts and human-centred design to shape public discourse on VAWG; highlighted survivors' first-person stories	Prevention
CISCSA (Argentina)	Created videos and other media with first-person perspectives on 'the right to the city' — i.e., the right of women and LGBTQI+ people to enjoy and be safe in cities, and participate in their design and management	Prevention, services and law/policy
ACMDL (El Salvador)	Co-led media campaign (incorporating digital media, street billboards and bus ads) to prevent political violence against women candidates, entitled <i>More Women, More Democracy</i> . The messages were co-created with women involved in politics	Prevention
FIDA (Cameroon)	Conducted in-person and mass media efforts to sensitize the public on types of VAWG, prevention, where and how to report cases, human rights, existing laws and availability of legal aid	Prevention, services and law/policy
Voluntary Service Overseas (Zimbabwe)	Trained 15 CBO partners on the use of social media for digital advocacy campaigns. The CBOs created media accounts and some created campaigns for the 16 Days of Activism.	Prevention and law/policy

3.9 Building knowledge power

The grantees' work indicates that building knowledge power in feminist/women's EAWG movements involves **generating and disseminating research findings and PBK on topics related to VAWG, its prevention and response and EAWG movement-building, in a manner consistent with feminist research principles and ethics**, so as to advance EAWG research, practice and the overall impact of the movements.¹⁷ Research and PBK address topics such as the incidence, prevalence, causes, risk and protective factors, and impacts of specific types of VAWG victimization and perpetration in given contexts. Additional topics addressed include assessments of the quality, accessibility and use of VAWG services, and evaluations of VAWG prevention and response initiatives (in terms of formative, process and outcome/impact evaluations). A wide range of monitoring, evaluation, learning and research efforts are conducted by WROs/CSOs as well as academic institutions, government agencies and others; the present section focuses mainly on work conducted by the grantees — i.e., WROs/CSOs.

WROs/CSOs' research and PBK advance understanding of the life experiences and perspectives of women, girls and survivors of all genders, particularly those belonging to marginalized groups. WROs/CSOs regularly engage women, girls and survivors not only as providers of information for research (i.e., as study participants), but as collaborators across different phases of research and in subsequent action based on the findings (e.g., contributing to the design, implementation and evaluation of EVAWG initiatives, and engaging in related advocacy, capacity-building and community education efforts). This intentional engagement builds additional forms of movement power, including people power and narrative power.

Continually building the foundation of research and PBK helps to build EVAWG movements within and across countries via information-sharing, capacity-building and mutual learning. It also helps feminist/women's organizations make the case that VAWG (and specific forms thereof) is an urgent health and human rights problem that requires immediate action. Finally, it helps point the way for further action, providing information that can guide strategies for improving — and demanding the improvement of — VAWG prevention initiatives, survivor services, and laws/policies and their implementation.

As an example of building and leveraging knowledge power, several of the grantees produce monitoring reports on VAWG laws/policies and international conventions in collaboration with women and girls, and then use these reports as a tool to demand institutional accountability on EVAWG. For instance, the women's rights organization MMITZ/IXTZ' UNUN (Guatemala) led a project to strengthen the capacity of local indigenous women's organizations to advance progress on EVAWG and to empower indigenous women and girls to demand and protect their human rights. As part of this work, they periodically produced monitoring reports — which they called 'alternative reports' — that examined the national government's progress in implementing recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Committee of the Universal Periodic Review, specifically in relation to indigenous women and girls. To write a recent monitoring report, MMITZ/IXTZ' UNUN engaged 50 indigenous women leaders in an information-gathering session so the report would reflect their voices, experiences and realities. Its annual report for the UN Trust Fund notes:

“[The] socialization of research and forums have made it possible to promote a political position on the situation of indigenous women and girls in the face of violence, as a demand mechanism for the fulfillment of the guarantee of their rights.”

*In-person workshop in Tucumán in the third year of the project
“Access to justice for Cis, Transgender and Lesbian women” led by ANDHES*

© Tania Nasrallah/ANDHES (Argentina)



As noted above, knowledge power fuels narrative power, as WROs/CSOs regularly use research findings and PBK to shape public narratives, VAWG education/prevention content and advocacy messages. For example, the international NGO Voluntary Services Overseas (Zimbabwe) produced research reports on the prevalence and contexts of VAWG in artisanal mining sectors in the country. Its annual report notes:

“Part of the key findings were that many women were not reporting cases because of the corrupt acts of the local police. Another finding was that there are no proper counselling services after a case has been reported. In each of the provinces, we had the partner organizations take the lead and these organizations offered safe spaces for the women who go through abuse, assistance in reporting cases and following up on the cases, with additional assistance in engaging service providers such as clinics . . . Concrete evidence is always needed to guide any serious advocacy work. Both evidence from the baseline report and the report on violence against girls and women among artisanal miners is key in drafting any advocacy position to end violence against girls and women in Zimbabwe.”

Similarly, to inform their advocacy work regarding the needs of AGYW and FSWs during the COVID-19 pandemic, FACT (Zimbabwe) conducted a pandemic impact assessment. Its annual report notes:

“According to the preliminary results of the COVID-19 Impact Assessment by FACT, incidences of violence and abuse against FSW by clients, boyfriends and law enforcers have been noted . . . across all project districts. Lockdown also seriously compromised FSWs’ ability to earn enough income for their daily needs and for their families increasing their vulnerabilities in the process. Thus, most FSW experienced food shortages . . . AGYW were equally affected by the lockdown . . . Consequently, AGYW spent most of their time at home and in their neighbourhood where they faced increased SGBV risks. Reports of elevated number of teenage pregnancies and child marriages were presented during the COVID-19 assessment and day to day engagement with target populations.”

These findings helped FACT to adapt their work during the pandemic and engage FSWs and AGYW in knowledge-driven advocacy and shifting of narratives to urge improved VAWG prevention and response efforts from duty-bearers.

Other examples of grantees’ applied research and PBK generation include their programme-monitoring work and mid-term and final programme evaluations. For instance, the women-led international CSO Gender Links (GL) (South Africa, Eswatini and Madagascar) is in the process of assessing the impacts of its economic empowerment programmes with VAWG survivors by drawing on varied sources of quantitative and qualitative data (e.g., a Gender Empowerment Index, Personal GBV Incidence Score, monthly income, participant testimonials, business plans and mentorship reports). To maximize the reach and impact of its research, it plans to disseminate its findings by various means, including conference papers, a video, a booklet and numerous articles in mainstream media platforms.

Overall, the grantees regularly share their research and practice-based insights with diverse audiences by varied means such as journal articles, reports, briefs, podcasts, interviews, conference presentations, blogs and mainstream media coverage; the integration of research and PBK findings into the content of public education and mobilization campaigns; capacity-building and collaborative work with other movement organizations and networks; and advocacy work with decision-makers. These knowledge-sharing efforts are a key aspect of the grantees' work to inform the EVAWG movement ecosystem and contribute to the growing body of shared knowledge on EVAWG. Their efforts also highlight the links between building knowledge power and the other forms of movement power, including narrative, people and leadership power.

TABLE 7: Examples of projects building knowledge power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
MMITZ/IXTZ' UNUN (Guatemala)	Produces monitoring reports ('alternative reports') on government progress in implementing the recommendations of the Committees on CEDAW, CERD and UPR, in relation to the experiences of indigenous women and girls, to support demands for action. Shares/makes research findings accessible in various ways for diverse audiences, including indigenous women and girls	Law/policy
Voluntary Services Overseas (Zimbabwe)	Conducted research on the prevalence and contexts of VAWG in artisanal mining areas, to inform tailored advocacy and VAWG response efforts	Prevention and services
Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir A.C. (Mexico)	Monitoring cases of femicide and disappearance, to identify opportunities for improved government action in investigation and prosecution. Developed indicators to monitor government progress in implementing/enforcing a new mechanism for the protection of women's human rights	Services and law/policy
ArtGlo (Malawi)	Trained CSOs on participatory research methods and human-centred design to integrate the perspectives of diverse women and girls in the design of VAWG prevention programmes	Prevention
FACT (Zimbabwe)	Conducted a COVID-19 impact assessment to understand the varied impacts of the pandemic for AGYW and FSWs and shape programmatic and advocacy work	Prevention and services
GL (South Africa, Madagascar and Eswatini)	Assessing impacts of its economic empowerment programmes with VAWG survivors using quantitative and qualitative data (e.g., Gender Empowerment Index, Personal GBV Incidence score, participant testimonials, monthly income, business plans and mentorship reports)	Prevention and services

3.10 Building organizational power

As shown by the work of the grantees, building organizational power in feminist/women's EVAWG movements involves increasing the core capacity of movement organizations to operate sustainably and effectively over time, and thereby build all the other forms of power discussed in this paper. Building organizational power includes strengthening organizations' ability to work in an adaptive, resilient way within evolving and often highly challenging social, political and environmental contexts, so they can respond to emerging needs regarding VAWG. In broad terms, it also includes bolstering organizations' capacities in fundamental areas such as organizational leadership, management, policies, infrastructure, staff members' subject area knowledge and skills, fundraising and administration. Explicitly building feminist organizational power involves working to ensure that the organization's policies, management approaches and other internal workings are also consistent with principles of feminism and feminist leadership, so that the organization is not only pursuing feminist/women's work externally, but is also feminist in its internal practices.¹⁸

The salient challenges noted by the grantees in their annual reports included dealing with myriad impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, environmental/climate challenges, political obstacles and transitions, and various forms of societal violence/conflict and challenges to safety and security. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, grantees described both relying on and strengthening their organizational power in order to adapt to new realities in various ways. Adaptations included the procurement of new material resources (e.g., internet access, laptops, mobile phones and data plans, Zoom and WhatsApp accounts for remote work, vehicles and fuel for staff and client transport, personal protective equipment, and the setup of an audio recording studio for media content); strengthening staff skills (e.g., in the use of online work and secure data storage platforms); reorienting of work and programmes to take place online, by phone and via mass media (e.g., online or hybrid programmes with programme participants, creating or increasing the number of free VAWG hotlines, creating radio programmes and ads, and conducting online trainings for movement groups); adapting in-person programmes (e.g., increasing the size or number of VAWG shelters to respond to increased need); engaging resources for collective and personal care for staff, to support their health, safety and well-being (e.g., food assistance and hiring therapists to be available for staff); and updating organizational policies to enable the aforementioned changes (e.g., work-from-home policies).

At the onset of the pandemic, all grantees also received additional flexible funds from the UN Trust Fund that could be used to build their capacities for crisis response. The aim of this second round of funding, as quoted in the grantees' annual reports, was for their organizations to be 'institutionally strengthened¹⁹ to sustainably respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises while maintaining or adapting existing interventions for the elimination of VAWG, with a focus on the most vulnerable women and girls.' The grantees took steps to bolster their organizational resilience by the use of this funding, and their descriptions of their work indicate that this is indeed an essential and continual form of power-building work conducted by organizations in feminist/women's EVAWG movements. As an example of efforts to build supportive community and foster collective decision-making among staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, CISCSA (Argentina), which focuses on addressing VAWG in public spaces, wrote:

“Face-to-face meeting days were organized, with all the necessary precautions . . . These sessions were key to strengthening the team both in operational and strategic matters, and getting to know each other . . . They allowed us to see each other, listen to each other . . . we opened up to show ourselves as we are. In those instances the team began to be woven; we were able to connect . . . and discover our own role within the project and within CISCSA . . . The other face-to-face sessions focused on project planning . . . We made the organizational decision to meet once a week, virtually, with the entire project team, to share progress, exchange ideas, discuss challenges, and reflect on what has been implemented, in order to enhance teamwork and strengthen our project strategy. This series of meetings resulted in a collective learning with the different sub-teams more aligned, and for this reason a deeper co-production of work.”

Fundraising is also a universal need among EAWG movement organizations. WROs/CSOs often face significant resource constraints, and fundraising and resource mobilization are key to building organizational power. This work can involve developing fundraising strategies that are aligned with organizational goals, building relationships with donors and developing a diversified funding base that does not rely only on a single source or type of support. It is also key for EAWG movement organizations to be able to receive long-term, flexible core funding, so they can focus on the content of their long-term movement-building work in an agile and adaptive manner. As an example of an organization that is pursuing varied means of generating income and funding to support its sustainability, GL (Eswatini, Madagascar and South Africa) has established an income-generating arm called the GL Sustainability Hub, which includes fee-for-service work such as fundraising, fund management, advisory services, training, production work and conferencing. The proceeds are invested in the GL Future Fund to bolster the sustainability of GL programmes and operations.

As an example of providing WROs with capacity-building support on organizational management and fundraising, with attention to gender-related policies, the WRO United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers (Liberia) wrote in its monitoring report:

“With the rolling out of the National Gender Policy (NGP), beneficiaries were trained and encouraged to develop gender policies for their respective organizations . . . This document is considered a key requirement for all CSOs wishing to apply for a Sectoral Clearance to the Gender Ministry of Liberia . . . It is also a requirement in order for CSOs/CBOs to apply/submit project proposals to donors for funding . . . All ten Women Rights Groups have developed gender policies in line with the NGP for their respective organizations . . . and three . . . have applied and [are] in the process of obtaining sectoral clearances. Two groups . . . have also submitted applications or proposals for projects with their Gender Policies attached as a reference document for the work they do.”

It would be valuable for future research and practice-based learning initiatives to learn more about how feminist/women’s EAWG organizations conceptualize, build and exercise organizational power (with regard to their own organizations, or in capacity-building roles with other WROs/CSOs) in areas such as organizational policies, structures, systems, leadership, fundraising and approaches to accountability and learning, all with attention to feminist approaches.

Overall, organizational power is a fundamental form of power in feminist/women’s EAWG movements that organizations themselves build and that donors can also help to bolster, including by providing long-term, core and flexible funding. Donors’ investments in organizational power have the potential to improve organizations’ resilience and responsiveness in times of crisis and also increase the sustainability and impacts of their work to end VAWG.

TABLE 8: Examples of projects building organizational power

Organization	Sample activities	Outcome area
UFDUM (Liberia)	Provided capacity-building training to 10 women’s rights groups on the rollout of the National Gender Policy and development of gender policies for their respective organizations, to enhance their fundraising and collaboration opportunities	All/transversal
ArtGlo (Malawi)	Developed a business continuity plan that adapted work-plans and targets in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic	All/transversal
GL (Eswatini, Madagascar and South Africa)	Established the GL Sustainability Hub — the income-generating arm of GL. It includes fundraising, fund management, GL Advisory Services, GL Training, GL Productions and GL Cottages and Conferencing. The proceeds are invested in the GL Future Fund to ensure sustainability of GL programmes and operations	All/transversal
PILC (Chad)	Adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic included acquisition of an app to send survivor data to lawyers virtually; acquisition of vehicles to enable staff to better cover the work areas; and refurbishing survivor listening centres as shelters for VAWG survivors	All/transversal

SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the grantee data and the power framework presented above, this section first shares a set of conclusions and reflections on building power in feminist/women's EAWG movements. The study's limitations are then discussed, followed by recommendations for practitioners, researchers and donors.

4.1 Conclusions and reflections on building power in feminist/women's movements to end violence against women and girls

This subsection summarizes the key study findings and shares additional reflections, based on the grantee data, on building power in feminist/women's EAWG movements.

Overall, the grantee data suggest that central to building feminist/women's EAWG movements is the iterative building and deployment of seven key forms of movement power. The forms of power that emerged as key themes in the data are people power, leadership power, inner power, network power, narrative power, knowledge power and organizational power. These forms of power are synergistic and mutually reinforcing, often bolstering and enriching each other; there is thus some conceptual overlap and fluidity among the categories.

Building and exercising these forms of power serves to shape and fuel WROs'/CSOs' EAWG movement work in and across key EAWG outcome areas including (but not limited to) VAWG prevention, improving survivor services and improving VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement. Both the progress made and setbacks experienced in the pursuit of such movement goals can be harnessed to fuel the building of further movement power. The power framework presented in this paper is not offered as fixed or exhaustive, but rather as adaptable content for groups and organizations to consider in relation to their own contexts.

While earlier sections of this paper focused mainly on describing individual forms of power built collaboratively by WROs/CSOs in EAWG movements, **it is also important to highlight the relationships among the different forms of power, as this can help groups to consider theories of change in their work.** Below are some examples:

- Strengthening the critical feminist analysis and activism/advocacy skills of women, girls and survivors can bolster inner power and people power in the near term. They may then progress to take on leadership roles within their movement organization, run for public office or assume other civic leadership roles pertinent to EAWG, thereby building leadership power.

- Building the foundation of feminist research and PBK on VAWG builds knowledge power. Widely sharing these research findings and insights and using them to inform media content, advocacy efforts and public education campaigns can build narrative power — which in turn can inspire more duty-bearers and members of the public to become EVAWG movement constituents (thereby building leadership and people power).
- Building narrative power by disseminating feminist/empowering narratives in the media that challenge patriarchal and other oppressive beliefs and norms (e.g., via radio talk shows, films, social media and online discussion spaces) also helps to build inner power and people power — which, when exercised, can then foster increases in leadership power and other forms of power.
- Building collaborative relationships with institutional decision-makers (i.e., network power) allows WROs/CSOs to provide them with training sessions to increase their understanding, skills and will to take action to end VAWG — thereby also building leadership power.
- Building intersectional networks with diverse movement groups/organizations and activists (network power) helps them to support and learn from each other, plan collective action and amplify their voice and impacts. This in turn can further boost each type of power (including organizational power) and accelerate progress towards EVAWG and intersecting movement goals.
- Ultimately, at the core of movement organizations' capacity to build and use different forms of movement power is their own organizational power, which enables them to promote staff wellness and carry out all of their work — including building and using movement power towards movement goals — in a resilient, adaptable and feminist way.

The pathways of influence extend among all the forms of power, with ripples of impact possible in all directions. Ultimately, the different forms of power all contribute to the building of further people power, whereby individuals, communities and leaders across society increasingly espouse and take individual and collective action for EVAWG and gender/social justice. **The stronger each form of power is, the stronger people power can become.** And as each form of power grows, this may foster a more enabling environment for the further building of each form of power and navigation of challenges faced along the way.

Overall, the grantees' work and inputs emphasize the importance of conducting EVAWG work using an intentional feminist/women's movement-building approach.²⁰ The grantee data suggest that carrying out EVAWG work using a feminist/women's movement-building approach — i.e., work that builds different forms of feminist/women's power, that strengthens the capacities and commitment of many EVAWG stakeholders, connects and organizes them via groups and networks, and engages and supports them as agents of change — has the potential to increase the degree to which the EVAWG work and resultant impacts are sustainable, empowering, community-driven and ultimately transformative.

For example, with regard to the value of movement-building approaches for VAWG prevention, an FG participant from the Centre for Women's Studies and Intervention (Nigeria) stated:

“I think [movement-building] forms part of the preventive process. I say this now because in the course of my work, I now begin to see the necessity of bringing together the women group, empower them and then . . . make them able to demand for their rights themselves. Because in the communities where I work here in Nigeria, you who is the NGO working cannot just come forward and make the people on their own change these things. But it's easier when the people themselves come forward to demand and request for what they want.”

Similarly, an FG participant from The Bethany Project (Zimbabwe) noted:

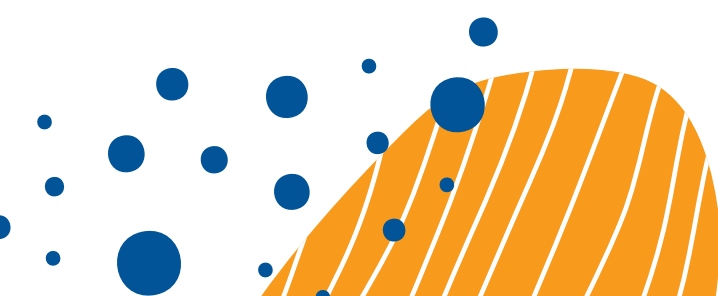
“I’m looking at the movement-building challenging the negative social norms that exist within the communities. Sometimes change doesn’t really come from the outside. It has to start from the inside. I feel that the movement-building actually works. It looks at collaboration, it looks at transforming the social norms from being the negative to the positive.”

Through a movement-building approach to EVAWG work, once movement constituents and groups have been organized and their strategic capacities and networks strengthened, they can more readily stay together and undertake collective action that they lead — with potentially less need for ongoing intensive support from the organization that brought them together. Regarding the sustainability of movement-building approaches, the HACEY Health Initiative (Nigeria) annual report noted:

“As part of our post project plan to sustain the result of the project, the End FGM alliance created will continue promoting advocacy efforts and engaging in community sensitization and awareness. Through partnerships established with media organizations, we will also continue promoting key messaging on FGM and FGM reporting to ensure that people are aware. State partnerships will also support the continued engagement of community focal points to facilitate reporting and response to FGM at community level.”

Describing effects of capacity-strengthening and the independent formation of new local movement groups and relationships, UFDUM (Liberia) wrote:

“Key community leaders like the chiefs, traditional and religious leaders, youth groups [and] SGBV task force continued to raise awareness, provide knowledge, understanding and information on the prevention and protection of women and girls in the project’s selected communities and counties. This has also led to the increase of community structures/watch groups from 11 to 18 groups in the two counties, to increase the level [of] awareness and reporting of cases to authorities on time. These structures were established by community members and leaders to serve as advocacy/action groups in their communities, charged with the responsibility to engage parents and leaders to ensure children, especially girls, are allowed to go to school, and are also working with the school authorities to include in the school syllabus SRH education to prevent sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in schools. Community watch forums in Cape Mount and Montserrado are now working with the police/WACPS officers to track and report crimes including SGBV cases in the communities.”



Similarly, an FG participant from the Centre for Women Studies and Intervention (Nigeria) noted:

“The impact for me so far is the sustainability ground we have established . . . Because I can boldly tell you that even if the UN Trust Fund [grant] comes to an end, these women are ready to move forward because they have formed a network of groups. That means they have a bigger group, then smaller, smaller units which filter downwards into the local villages themselves. They’re able to address their matters. Even the communities now are gradually taking [notice] of them and know them, and they have the backing of the traditional rulers . . . That’s the impact of having them on ground. It will sustain the project.”

The importance of working for social change goals (such as EVAWG) with a ‘movement mindset’ has been discussed by some writers in the movement literature. For example, the movement-advising organization Beautiful Trouble²¹ describes this mindset as ‘a set of beliefs, attitudes, and actions that seek to support and expand the power of civil society — grassroots movements, informal activist groups, and people-powered organizations — to create transformative change.’²² It is then important to explicitly incorporate the element of **feminist or women’s** movement-building into the ‘movement mindset’ concept to support EVAWG organizations’ intentionality not only in planning movement-building work per se, but ensuring that the goals and content of their work are focused on advancing **feminist/women’s** movements. The forms of power outlined in this paper have a feminist/women’s focus integrated within their descriptions, but it must be highlighted again that feminist/women’s aims and content must be explicitly present in order for each form of power built to be regarded as a **feminist/women’s** EVAWG movement power.

With this in mind, the grantees’ work indicates that **it may be fruitful for organizations involved in EVAWG work to consider what it can look like for them to conduct their work using a movement-building approach — and specifically a feminist/women’s movement-building approach²³ — and/or how they could do so even further.** The power framework presented in this paper can serve as a resource for supporting this process of reflection. Supplemental reflection questions, rooted in the power framework, are provided in Annex 2.

Overall, if organizations consider which specific types of feminist/women’s movement power they are aiming to build and exercise (probably as part of a broader movement ecosystem), it may be beneficial for the strategic planning, implementation and evaluation of their EVAWG movement work. In addition, as noted earlier, the grantee data suggest that different organizations/groups can consider which forms of power they want to help build, and how, from whatever their position may be in the movement ecosystem.

4.2 Study limitations

The limitations of this study include the fact that the grantees' annual reports that were analysed provide only a partial window into their overall work, with a focus on that funded by the UN Trust Fund. There was also a relatively small number of grantee organizations represented in the FG discussions. This limitation was mitigated by hosting a validation session regarding the study findings with additional leaders and staff from the grantee organizations, and inviting and receiving written feedback from grantees on a near-final draft of this paper. It was also mitigated to an extent by the fact that the study was informed by and built on research conducted in the first part of this learning journey with additional grantee participants and materials (Karim 2021). The sample of organizations included in the study is of course not representative of all WROs/CSOs that conduct EVAWG movement-building work in varying contexts, and readers are invited to consider how the paper's findings may pertain to their contexts. Reporting to a donor may have fostered social desirability bias in the grantees' annual reports and in how they engaged with the FG facilitator, although it was stated that she was an external consultant. Regarding the study scope, it describes grantees' work but is not an evaluation and does not identify which kinds of activities or approaches are empirically the most effective for building feminist/women's EVAWG movements and achieving progress towards movement goals; paper 3 in this series will examine these questions.

Women co-creating violence mitigation strategies as part of the "What Women Want" advocacy campaign.

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4.3 Recommendations for practitioners, researchers and donors

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS:

- 1. Organizations should consider opportunities to carry out their EAWG work using an intentional feminist/women's movement-building approach.** Conducting EAWG work using this approach involves building different forms of feminist/women's EAWG movement power, strengthening the capacities and commitment of many EAWG stakeholders, connecting and organizing them via groups and networks and engaging and supporting them as agents of change. The grantee data indicate that conducting EAWG work using a feminist/women's movement-building approach may increase the extent to which the EAWG work and its impacts are sustainable, community-driven, empowering and ultimately transformative.
- 2. Within this analysis, organizations should consider which types of movement power they want to help build and use, as this is likely to be helpful for the strategic planning, implementation and evaluation of their feminist/women's EAWG movement work.** For example, if an organization decided it would be strategic to build more network power and people power, this could lead it to be all the more intentional in working to build strong partnerships and networks (network power), and strengthening more people's critical analysis, skills and commitment to act as agents of change (people power). This, in turn, may help drive increased and more sustained positive change at multiple levels. The power framework shared in this paper, in addition to the sample reflection questions in Annex 2, is an adaptable resource that organizations can use to consider which forms of feminist/women's movement power they want to be building and using and how they can do so, in relation to given movement goals.
- 3. It would be valuable for practitioners to compile or co-develop guidelines for ethical practice in feminist/women's movement-building work for EAWG.** Many of the grantees work to engage women/girls, survivors, minors, LGBTQI+ people, men/boys and others facing multiple forms of discrimination in activism, advocacy, public testimonial-sharing and peer leadership for EAWG. While it is of course essential for movement constituents to be able, for example, to publicly share their personal stories and perspectives regarding VAWG and other forms of oppression and harm they have experienced, this kind of work can carry a risk of harm (e.g., in contexts where VAWG survivorship is stigmatized, or same-sex relations are criminalized). Similarly, while it can be helpful for men to publicly share their stories of personal change after having held patriarchal beliefs or perpetrated VAWG, this runs the risk of causing harm (e.g., if survivor privacy is compromised without their consent, or patriarchal attitudes are promulgated from a public platform). In addition, although it is key to centre the leadership and voices of women and girls in work to help end VAWG, it is also important to avoid placing an excessive burden of responsibility on them (e.g., girls in schools) to both avoid experiencing VAWG and end it. The principles for ethical, feminist, trauma-informed and survivor-centred work that organizations are already using in their movement-building work could be compiled and integrated, or a set of practice-based principles could be collectively developed, to support the planning and conduct of diverse movement-building initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

- 1. Further examine the findings of this paper with more stakeholders, and invite their input to shape the next steps in research.** This working paper presents a conceptual framework on the forms of power that the WROs/CSOs studied herein are collaboratively building in feminist/women's EAWG movements. It would be helpful for future research to examine the generalizability of the findings in relation to more groups and organizations engaged in feminist/women's EAWG movement work in different contexts. Broad stakeholder input should also be sought to identify the next steps in this line of research.²⁴
- 2. Further examine the processes of feminist/women's movement-building work for EAWG.** It would be valuable to learn more about WROs'/CSOs' context-specific processes of building and deploying different forms of power in feminist/women's EAWG movements. Case studies could examine how organizations have built each form of power in collaboration with women, girls, survivors, movement groups/activists and others. The case studies could also examine how the organizations have developed their agendas, strategies and tactics for the near and longer terms; pursued opportunities as they emerged; conducted safety/risk analyses and advanced their movement work in contexts of potential resistance; and navigated challenges, including resistance and backlash, along the way.
- 3. Examine the outcomes of organizations' feminist/women's movement-building work for EAWG, and develop adaptable monitoring and evaluation approaches.** In addition to examining movement-building processes, it would be helpful for future research to examine the nature and sustainability of the outcomes of WROs'/CSOs' movement-building efforts for EAWG, and in turn identify promising and effective practices. For example, this research could examine specific forms of power that have been built by WROs/CSOs in collaboration with women, girls, survivors and other stakeholders, and the EAWG outcomes in areas such as prevention, services and law/policy. It is recognizedly challenging to evaluate movement-building work, as it is a multifaceted, dynamic, collective/collaborative and long-term endeavour (e.g., Batliwala and Pittman 2010; Batliwala 2011) — and, as grantees point out, is both a means and an end in itself. It would thus be helpful for research to further explore and develop adaptable monitoring and evaluation approaches that could help feminist/women's organizations, working at different levels, to assess and learn from the progress, outcomes and longer-term impacts of their movement-building work for EAWG.
- 4. Conduct further research on cross-regional experiences in building feminist/women's EAWG movements.** A 2015 study by Raising Voices that sought to understand EAWG movements in the global South found that 'the regional and national strength of movements and conversation around what constitutes a movement are very different, for example, in Latin America, than in sub-Saharan Africa. The formation of movements in each region has been highly influenced by unique histories and contexts as well as country and region-specific issues such as language barriers, technology and political hostilities' (page 21). Gaining an increased understanding of national and regional contexts of feminist/women's EAWG movements can provide valuable insights that can inform movement-building efforts in different settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DONORS:

1. **Use the power framework presented in this paper as a strategy resource when creating plans for EVAWG grant-making and technical assistance.** This paper organizes different forms of EVAWG movement-building work into a seven-point feminist/women's power framework. Donors can use the framework (or context-specific adaptations) to consider how they might aim to support EVAWG work that is building one or more of the types of movement power described therein.
2. **Provide long-term, core and flexible funding for movement work.** Building and advancing feminist/women's EVAWG movements is a long-term endeavour that requires organizations to be resilient and responsive to changing and challenging realities. Long-term, core and flexible funding can enable movement organizations to focus on doing their work over the long term, while continually strengthening their capacities and adapting to evolving circumstances.
3. **In addition to financial resources, offer technical support to accelerate the building of specific types of power in feminist/women's EVAWG movements.** For example, if a donor has the ability to convene movement stakeholders and accelerate the building of networks (e.g., via conferences, gatherings and online platforms for grantees to connect), the finding in this paper regarding the game-changing importance of network power suggests that it would be valuable for donors to be all the more intentional in facilitating the growth of networks, via both funding and convening.
4. **Support further research on feminist/women's movement-building for EVAWG.** The findings of this paper point to several exciting avenues for further learning. It would be beneficial for donors to support research in such areas, including the processes and outcomes of building and exercising the forms of movement power outlined in this paper.

Overall, this paper has aimed to advance understanding of the key forms of power being built by WROs/CSOs in feminist/women's movements to end VAWG, based on analysis of the work and perspectives of diverse UN Trust Fund grantee organizations. It is hoped that the practice-based insights and the power framework presented here will be useful for practitioners, researchers and donors involved in planning, implementing, evaluating and funding initiatives aimed at building feminist/women's EVAWG movements. Building feminist/women's movement power, in its different forms, is key to fostering collective action that will bring about a more equitable, healthy and non-violent world for all people.

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FURTHER INFORMATION


About the UN Trust Fund: The UN Trust Fund is the only global grant-making mechanism dedicated to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls. Managed by UN Women on behalf of the United Nations system since its establishment in 1996 by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/166, the UN Trust Fund has awarded \$215 million to 646 initiatives in 140 countries and territories.

This paper is part of a series of working papers and knowledge products produced by the UN Trust Fund. Visit the [UN Trust Fund Learning Hub](#) for more knowledge products and the [UN Trust Fund evaluation library](#) for access to over 100 final external evaluations of projects supported by the UN Trust Fund. The library is searchable by country and theme. For more information or to give feedback on this working paper, please contact the UN Trust Fund at untf-evaw@unwomen.org.

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Member of the Nueva Vida Women's Group

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Construir una vida libre de violencia, es compromiso de todos y todas

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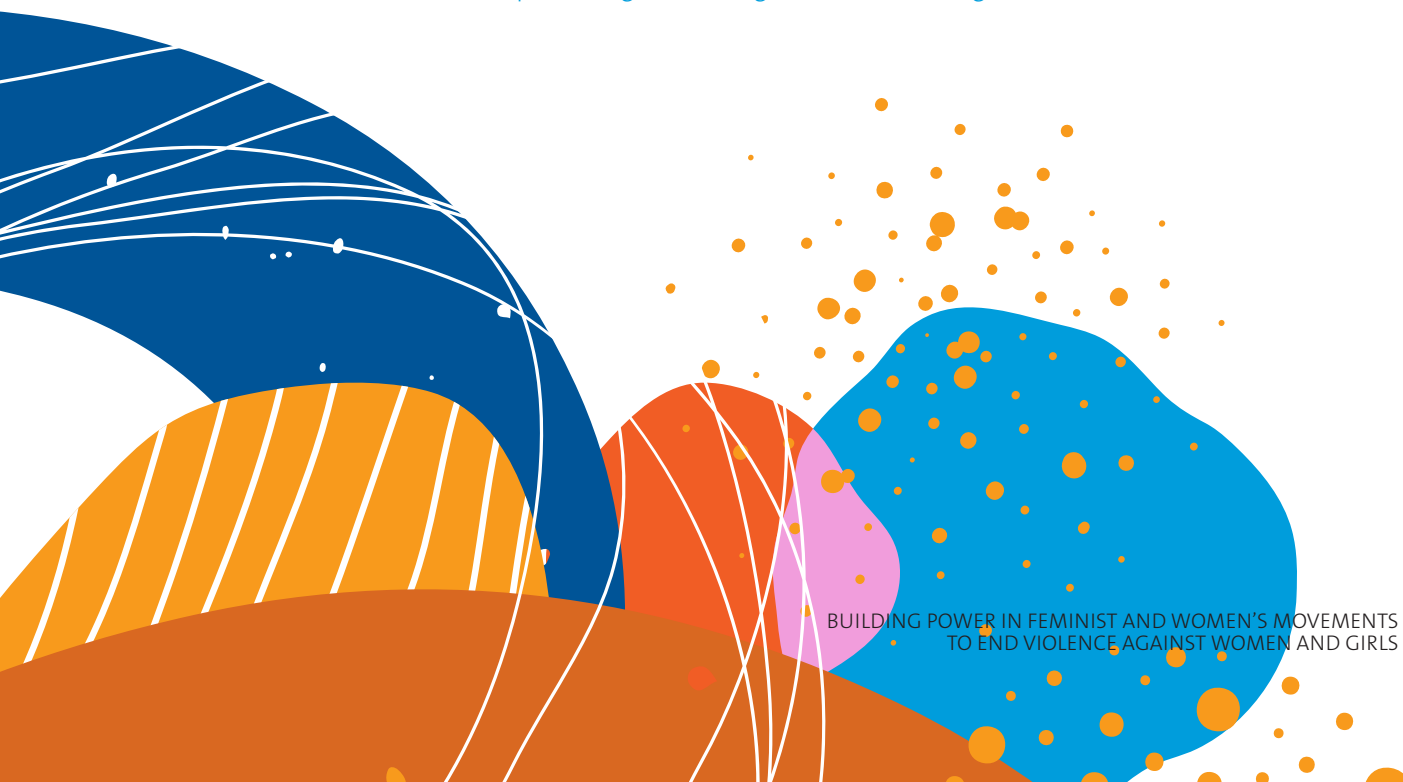
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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Names and websites of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women grantee organizations included in this paper

Organization	Country	Website
Abogados y Abogadas del Noroeste Argentino en Derechos Humanos y Estudios Sociales (Andhes)	Argentina	https://andhes.org.ar/
Alliances for Africa (AfA)	Nigeria	https://alliancesforafrica.org/
Art & Global Health Center Africa (ArtGlo)	Malawi	https://artgloafrica.org/
Asociación Colectiva de Mujeres para el Desarrollo Local (ACMDL)	El Salvador	https://mujeresforjadorasdedesarrollo.wordpress.com/colectiva-feminista/
Asociación Mujeres Transformando (AMT)	El Salvador	https://mujerestransformando.org/
The Bethany Project	Zimbabwe	http://thebethanyproject.org.zw/
Cameroon Association for the Protection and Education of the Child (CAPEC)	Cameroon	https://capecam.org/
Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir A.C. (CDD)	Mexico	https://catolicasmexico.org/
Centre for Women Studies and Intervention (CWSI)	Nigeria	https://cwsing.org/
Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (CDM)	Honduras	https://derechosdelamujer.org/
Centro de Estudios de la Mujer — Honduras (CEM-H)	Honduras	http://cemh.org.hn/http://www.cemh.org.hn/
Centro de Intercambio Subregional Cono Sur Alahua (CISCSA)	Argentina	https://ciscsa.org.ar/
Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT)	Zimbabwe	https://fact.org.zw/
Fundación para la Promoción de la Economía Social y Cooperativa (FUNDECO)	Argentina	https://fundeco.org.ar/
Fund for Congolese Women (FFC)	DRC	https://ffcrdc.org/

Organization	Country	Website
Gender Links (GL)	South Africa, Eswatini and Madagascar	https://genderlinks.org.za/
HACEY Health Initiative (HACEY)	Nigeria	https://hacey.org/
Institute for Young Women Development (IYWD)	Zimbabwe	https://awdf.org/institute-for-young-women-development-iywd/
Integrated Disabled Women Activities (IDIWA)	Uganda	https://idiwaug.org/
International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA)	Cameroon	https://fida-cameroon.org/
International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (INERELA+)	South Africa, Burundi and Ghana	https://inerela.org/
Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas — TZUNUNIA/IXTZUNUN (MMITZ/IXTZ'UNUN)	Guatemala	https://mmitzununija.org/
ONG Dignité et Droits pour les Enfants en Côte d'Ivoire (DDE-CI)	Côte d'Ivoire	http://ongddeci.org/
Public Interest Law Center (PILC)	Chad	https://pilchad.org/
Scripture Union West Africa (SUWA)	Nigeria	https://suwa.org.ng/
Sonke Gender Justice (Sonke)	South Africa and Eswatini	https://genderjustice.org.za/
United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers (UFDUM)	Liberia	https://ufduminc.org/
Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)	Zimbabwe	https://vsousa.org/our-work/where-we-work/zimbabwe
Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL)	Zambia	https://womenslobby.org.zm/

Annex 2: Sample reflection questions on feminist movement-building work

The findings of this paper indicate that it may be helpful for organizations involved in EAWG work to consider what it means to them to conduct their work using a **feminist/women’s movement-building approach**, and/or how they might do so even further. Reflection questions for organizations could help them to hone the overall aims of their work and their strategies in terms of the forms of movement power they want to build and exercise.

Overall, if organizations explicitly name and consider the forms of feminist/women’s movement power they are aiming to help build and use (probably as part of a broader movement ecosystem), and if they engage with reflection questions on what they are currently doing or want to do to build movement power, it may be useful in the strategic planning, implementation and/or evaluation of their EAWG movement work. Examples of reflection questions are below.

THE AIMS

1. Overall, is our aim to promote equitable attitudes, beliefs, norms, structures and/or systems that can help end VAWG and advance gender justice?
2. Overall, are we aiming to mobilize people for a specific, time-limited EAWG campaign or policy win, or are we also aiming to build feminist/women’s movement power for a long-term EAWG movement that can address many issues over time?
3. In addition to building and strengthening the feminist/women’s EAWG movement itself, which key EAWG outcome area(s) are we focused on in our movement work — for example, VAWG prevention, improving survivor services, improving laws/policies and their implementation, or another area?

THE STRATEGIES

1. Are we working to build power for the feminist/women’s EAWG movement in our setting?
2. Which types of movement power (e.g., people, inner and leadership power) are we building, and how?
3. In what ways are we specifically building **feminist/women’s** power in these categories? For example:
 - a. **In building people power, inner power, leadership power and narrative power:**
 - i. Are people gaining critical awareness as to how patriarchal norms, practices and systems/structures, and intersecting forms of oppression (e.g., homo/transphobia, ableism and HIV stigma), are root causes of VAWG and other harms?
 - ii. Are people’s critical feminist analysis skills being strengthened?
 - b. **In building inner power:**
 - i. Are we helping women, girls and survivors, particularly those who have faced multiple forms of discrimination, to unburden themselves of internalized oppression?
 - ii. Are we helping survivors to situate and interpret their experiences of VAWG within a broader feminist social analysis (thus averting victim-blaming and promoting survivor empowerment)?

c. In building people power and leadership power:

- i. How are we working to boost people's capacities and drive to challenge patriarchal and intersecting oppressive norms, practices and systems, and take action for EVAWG and gender/social justice?
- ii. How are we engaging people across society — including women, girls, survivors, allies of all genders, service providers and leaders — as agents of change for EVAWG?

d. In building network power:

- i. Are we helping to build and strengthen networks and alliances that will work to advance EVAWG and intersecting gender/social justice movements?
- ii. As we build networks, are we making a point of inviting activists and movement groups/organizations (including small and nascent groups) that represent groups that have experienced multiple forms of discrimination?
- iii. Are we building collaborative relationships with actors and entities that have formal/institutional authority so we can then work with them to increase their capacity and will to act for EVAWG?

e. In building narrative power:

- i. In our work with the media, VAWG prevention initiatives, survivor services and advocacy campaigns, etc., what narratives are we sharing about EVAWG, and how feminist or transformative (e.g., in terms of empowering women, girls and survivors, challenging patriarchal norms, demanding accountability, and promoting EVAWG and gender equality) are they in the given context?
- ii. In describing what is needed to end VAWG, are we emphasizing the need to advance gender equity and respect of the human rights of women, girls and people of all genders and identities?

f. In building knowledge power:

- i. Is research being conducted in accordance with the principles of feminist ethics in research on VAWG?
- ii. Does research highlight the realities and voices of women, girls and people of diverse genders and expressions, particularly those facing multiple intersecting forms of discrimination?
- iii. Are different forms of PBK and documentation of lived experience being shared, as part of valued knowledge on VAWG and ways to address and end it?
- iv. Are women, girls and survivors being engaged across all phases of the research process, and as activists, advocates and leaders in initiatives based on the research findings?

g. In building organizational power:

- i. Are we seeking and advocating for opportunities to receive long-term, flexible and core funding, to help our organization focus on long-term movement-building work?
- ii. Is our organization feminist internally? That is, are the structures, policies, practices and leadership of our organization consistent with feminist principles? (For example, does our organization have policies and practices in place to support staff members' personal and collective well-being?)

ENDNOTES

- 1 Important distinctions between feminist movements and women's movements are made in the literature (e.g., Batliwala 2012; Horn 2013) and in the grantees' work. Feminist movements challenge and aim to transform patriarchal and intersecting oppressive ideologies, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, practices, norms, systems and structures that are the root causes of various forms of gender-based/social injustice (such as VAWG) — and to foster the active presence of gender/social justice. In contrast, women's movements tend to focus less on fostering societal transformations in patriarchal gender power relations, and more on addressing specific outcomes related to women (such as VAWG) — often with a less political, root cause-oriented or actively intersectional approach. The women's movement approach is sometimes used in contexts in which this more instrumental or specific issue-focused approach is necessitated, for example, for the safety of movement actors and to facilitate women's participation. Certain movements may also avoid calling themselves 'feminist' in name so as to reduce potential resistance or backlash in their contexts, but still be feminist in practice, aiming to transform patriarchal power dynamics in some regard. For inclusivity and efficiency, the rest of this paper joins the terms 'feminist' and 'women's' in one phrase — 'feminist/women's' — but mainly describes work involved in the building of movements that are feminist in their principles, practice and aims, if not also in name. (For a further discussion of characteristics that make movements feminist, see Batliwala 2012 and Karim 2022.)
- 2 Hereafter referred to as 'grantee organizations' or 'grantees.'
- 3 The main criterion determining organizations' eligibility to apply for large versus small grants was the organization size, in terms of the annual operational budget.
- 4 The grantees' annual reports included a financial report and a result and activity (RA) report; this study analysed the latter. The RA reports began with an outline of the overall project goals and the planned outcomes, outputs and activities. Subsequent sections outlined the work and progress made to date in relation to each project outcome (with quantitative and qualitative information), listed groups of beneficiaries who were engaged by the work (e.g., women/girl survivors of violence, lesbian, bisexual and trans (LBT) participants, women/girls in general, uniformed personnel, the general public/community at large, CSOs, faith/traditional leaders and men/boys), discussed the expected situation by the end of the project (i.e., what was envisioned for given groups of beneficiaries in relation to specific goals, outcomes and outputs); described changes observed in the lives of beneficiaries during the reporting period (qualitative data); and presented output indicators (target and actual). The rationale for selecting the strategies was also discussed qualitatively. This content was followed by a narrative report in which the grantees qualitatively described the societal contexts in which their work was taking place and discussed the progress of their work and the lessons learned. Also analysed for this paper were report sections in which the grantees qualitatively discussed innovative methods used in their work; challenges and opportunities faced; any safety or ethical risks at hand; project partnerships undertaken; uses and impacts of funding received for organizational resilience; and a section entitled 'Voices from the Field,' which shared personal testimonies, quotes and human interest stories regarding project impacts.
- 5 Grounded theory is a qualitative research method that involves systematically analysing data to develop theories directly from the data itself. It emphasizes inductive learning, whereby concepts and theories emerge from data that reflect the input and experiences of study participants — rather than being imposed externally from the outset by the researcher. Researchers analyse the rich and detailed data, looking for salient themes, concepts and relationships within the data. Through an iterative process of analysis and reflection, the researcher develops a conceptual framework that aims to organize and explain the key themes and relationships observed in the data. Grounded theory research methods thus allow for the development of contextually relevant theories that are rooted in 'real-world evidence' — in this case, the data and inputs of the grantee organizations involved in this project.
- 6 PBK has been defined as 'the cumulative knowledge and learning acquired by practitioners from designing and implementing diverse programmes in different contexts, including insights gained from observations, conversations, direct experiences, and programme monitoring' (The Prevention Collaborative 2019, inspired by Raising Voices — www.raisingvoices.org). In emphasizing the insights and learning gained by practitioners through their context-specific work, the sharing of PBK helps to decolonize and democratize global knowledge.
- 7 Two people, from two different organizations, attended both an FG and the validation workshop.
- 8 The grantees used various terms to refer to their public education and prevention work regarding VAWG, such as 'sensitization,' 'awareness-raising,' 'consciousness-raising,' 'conscientization' and 'politicization.' Although there is diversity of use and opinion among practitioners, the last four terms seem to imply a political element more often in the work — i.e., of supporting learners in developing a critical feminist perspective on patriarchal power dynamics and the related VAWG, health and gender/social justice outcomes. This paper thus uses diverse terms as well, but the intended focus is on how the grantees are working to enhance people's critical feminist consciousness.
- 9 The UN Trust Fund has programme theme areas of VAWG prevention, improving survivor services, and improving VAWG laws/policies and their implementation/enforcement. Although the Spotlight Initiative grantees were funded specifically to conduct EAWG movement-building work, the call for proposals was open-ended and did not require that grantees conduct their work

within the aforementioned UN Trust Fund programme theme areas. This paper's finding that the grantees' funded movement work falls largely within these three areas is thus not due to a requirement of the grant they received. The UN Trust Fund had also previously developed this set of thematic areas in collaboration with grantees, to help ensure the thematic areas were consistent with EVAWG practitioners' own main areas of focus.

- 10 As noted in the Methodology section, the forms of power discussed in this paper emerged as salient themes in the grantee data. The naming and description of each form of power is grounded in the analysis of the grantees' annual reports, FG discussions about the grantees' EVAWG movement-building work, and the FG participants' responses to a draft list of forms of power presented to them during the FGs (which was created based on an initial review of the annual reports), in addition to consideration of how the forms of power are described in the broader movement literature. In the data, the grantees often described conducting work that corresponded to building a given form of power, without explicitly naming or categorizing it as such. An FG participant noted: 'For my own organization, I know that inasmuch as we have not directly called it movement-building, the nature of the work so far makes it [so].' The identification of themes and development of this power framework are thus a finding of this paper.
- 11 In Section 3 of this paper, the discussion of each type of movement power includes examples of how some of the grantee organizations are building that form of power. Most of the organizations are building several or all of the forms of power discussed in this paper; the selection of examples does not imply the salience of any organization's work over that of others. Annex 1 provides links to all of the organizations' websites.
- 12 The grantee organizations work to prevent and respond to diverse forms of VAWG. Examples of forms of VAWG addressed include intimate partner violence (including physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and economic violence); non-partner sexual violence; FGM; child, early and forced marriage; school-based GBV; sexual assault and harassment in workplaces and public spaces; femicide; feminicide; political violence against women candidates and human rights defenders; and VAWG specifically against adolescent girls and young women, FSWs, LGBTQI+ individuals, indigenous women, women with disabilities and members of other groups facing multiple intersecting forms of discrimination.
- 13 See Viswanathan (2021) for more discussion on how WROs/CSOs face and mitigate backlash and resistance when implementing EVAWG projects.
- 14 For a helpful discussion of complementary forms of power such as 'power with', 'power over' and 'power to', see Batliwala (2019).
- 15 For more information on Social and Behavior Change Communication, see <https://healthcommcapacity.org/about/why-social-and-behavior-change-communication/>
- 16 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lp0YUQRSNHc>
- 17 For a thorough discussion of feminist knowledge creation and evidence generation, please see the linked paper by the African Women's Development Fund (2020). The paper notes that key elements of a feminist approach to knowledge production include that the research is 'grounded in realities of women and girls' experiences and lives; fosters activism; is accountable to women and girls; is committed to transformation and improving the lives of women and girls; is action-oriented, focusing on individuals, systemic and institutional change; uses gender-power analysis; is intersectional; and strives to do no harm' (p. 6).
- 18 The grantees were not asked to define characteristics of feminist organizational practice/leadership in their annual monitoring reports nor in the FGs conducted for this paper. Given the inductive focus of this paper, defining such characteristics is thus beyond the paper's scope. However, it would be helpful to learn more about how EVAWG movement organizations define feminist organizational practice and leadership, and how they have worked to make their organizations increasingly feminist. As fodder for dialogue, it could be noted that Batliwala (2012) posits that feminist organizations are ones that 'create more transparent systems and structures, consciously address the distribution of power and responsibility across roles, build a feminist practice of leadership, . . . [have] strong accountability and learning systems, and actively experiment with change within their own structures' (p. 6).
- 19 In a separate upcoming paper commissioned by the UN Trust Fund, the relationships among the concepts of institutional strengthening, organizational resilience and organizational power will be explored.
- 20 The grantee data indicate that substantial instalments or segments of feminist/women's movement-building work can be conducted even within the context of time-limited, grant-funded projects, although long-term, flexible and core funding is of course ideal for this work. The grantee data also emphasize the importance of strategizing around building these forms of power over longer movement timeframes, even if they are funded to do only segments of this work at a time, as planning beyond the grant cycle is essential.
- 21 <https://beautifultrouble.org>
- 22 <https://yesmagazine.org/opinion/2023/01/31/ngo-social-movements>
- 23 For a helpful complementary discussion on building feminist movements and feminist movement-building, see Batliwala (2012).
- 24 A follow-on analysis has already been commissioned by the UN Trust Fund to further validate this framework with nine organizations in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, mainly smaller grass-roots CSOs, that received small grants (i.e., under \$150,000) from the Spotlight Initiative between 2019 and 2022.

