

“Let the steam rise and the truths bubble as we stir the pot!”: Reflections of the Pioneer AFF Working Group

Hope Chigudu moderates an online conversation among members of the pioneer AFF Working Group¹

Hope Chigudu (HC): This is a conversation among movement warriors, thinkers, and strategists. We gather to reflect on the Charter’s legacy twenty years after the inaugural African Feminist Forum in Accra. We speak not to revise, but to remember, to reckon, to celebrate, and to re-ignite. Let us begin with the collective opening prayer:

All: *For the Charter, the Chaos, and the Collective*

*Oh, Feminist Ancestors with hips that never lied,
Tongues that never trembled, and hearts that never asked permission—
We call you in.
We are gathered here not to behave,
Not to be polite,
But to remember that the Charter was never a PDF—it was a
provocation.
A love letter to our rage.
A blueprint for our mischief.
A manifesto for our refusal to shrink.
Bless this round table, this circle of fire and laughter.
Let every contradiction be named.
Let every silence be broken.
Let every “but what about the men?” be met with a cackle and a clapback.
We invoke the spirit of Bene, Everjoyce, and all our movement warriors—
Who taught us that feminism is not a hobby,
It’s a full-time, full-body, full-spirit revolution.
May this conversation be messy.*

*May it be loud.
May it be tender.
May it be useful.
Let us speak with clarity,
Listen with mischief,
And leave with our strategies sharpened and our spirits fed.
We are not here to agree.
We are here to grow.
To grieve.
To giggle.
To get things done.
Let it be so. Amen. Amin. Amina.*

And if the patriarchy is listening—bless your heart, but we’re busy...

HC: Let us begin by naming what this Charter has meant to our movements, our bodies, our dreams. Each person offers one word, gesture, or image that captures their relationship to the Charter. Let me start... my image is a basket which, metaphorically, represents how I have woven the feminist charter into my work.

Sylvia Tamale (ST): “Dignity-for-all,” or if you’re really looking for a single word, it would be personified in the concept, *Ubuntu*. For me the ultimate vision of the Charter is to afford dignity to all Bantu or people, regardless of status. The Charter is my feminist moral campus in this crazy world that we live in; it helps me step back and re-centre myself and be able to focus on where to invest my energy.

Ayesha Imam (AI): “Ours” or *namu* in Hausa. Ours, because many of us on this call helped to create it, especially Bisi – thank you Bisi – who pushed us to do this, work on it... until the rest of us fell into line. It is ours because every time we share it, women take it as theirs. I love that.

Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi (BAF): Thank you, Ayesha. My word is “voice.” The Feminist Charter is the voice of African feminists, African women. We were able to claim ownership of the politics and context within which we operate.

After so many years of listening to what feminists all around the world had to say, we had our own say through this document. So, voice is so critical.

Shamillah Wilson (SW): “Connection.” I feel like the charter has provided us with a way to come together, share our different experiences, and anchor what it is that we share and to direct that to the struggle that’s important to all of us.

Muthoni Wanyeki (MW): “Affirming.” This is because it mattered very much to find a group of people who were ready to draw the line around issues that we knew were critical. At the time, women’s organising was still focused on gender mainstreaming and women’s associations that had existed from independence, and I feel that the Charter marked a generational shift.

Sarah Mukasa (SM): “Healing” and “Power.” Healing because we had just come out of a very difficult process which necessitated putting down very explicitly what we understood feminism to be as African feminists and that was a remarkably powerful moment. It has gone on to build other waves of power – intergenerational links, intercontinental links – and inspired them either to use the Charter or create their own.

Jessica Horn (JH): “Archive.” I say this because it’s still a document of a time and so what it does is help to orient anybody searching for what African feminisms have meant in a certain period. I think what’s important about that is that when you’re training, for example, around feminisms or having conversations about African feminisms, it provides one place to point to and say this is a conceptualisation that was broadly shared and developed by these people. It is an archive of our politics which is critical because without an archive you can’t have a future.

Mary Rusimbi (MR): “Compass.” This is because it’s not just a document; it reminded us that being a feminist is both a political choice and a personal commitment to collective freedom. It’s something for guiding us.

HC: This is very powerful sharing. We have spoken. Now, each speaker will be invited into the space through a collective recitation of a poetic invocation, followed by my question. Let’s start with Sylvia.

All: *Sylvia – She enters with the fire of feminist ideology and the rhythm of refusal...*

HC: So, Sylvia, tell us... why this roundtable conversation?

ST: It's hard to believe that two decades have zipped by since the launch of AFF and the Feminist Charter. Recently I typed "African Feminist Forum" into Google Scholar and was quite surprised that it returned only 399 results. I expected AFF to be more visible and more integrated into global feminist scholarship. Of course, the relatively few citations by no means reflect the wealth, range, and quality of the African feminist civil society work on the ground. So, I thought this would be an opportune time to have a roundtable discussion to celebrate 20 years of AFF and to reflect on its role in consolidating Pan-African feminism.

And who better to pay such tribute and to take stock of AFF's 20-year journey than the visionary, intelligent, hardworking feminists who constituted its pioneer steering committee and who directly facilitated its birth. I am sure that they are best-placed to reflect, review, and critically analyse its successes... the threats, the diseases or dis-eases it has endured... its future prospects in the face of new global, regional, and national developments.

At the turn of the century, the people sitting around this table shared the common determination to ensure that not only does Pan-African feminism take root, but that it thrives and spreads seedlings. Prior to the birth of AFF, feminists were making significant marks in various African countries without much systematic collaboration across national borderlines. We were working in silos – both at country levels and in the areas or issues of marginalisation. We were also largely seeking liberation within the colonial, modernist frameworks such as the liberal rights-based paradigm. That wasn't bearing much fruit.

AFF ended all that by taking a more critical, more decolonial approach to what was required to dismantle oppressive structures and norms. We became much more sensitive to the power relations within knowledge production. Our vision looked beyond balkanised Africa, beyond our individual nation states to amalgamate our feminist efforts and practice and to build a stronger, more influential movement. Two decades have gone by so quickly. Each of us from the different corners of the continent have worked so hard, observed, organised, learnt, grown, been bruised... I think that the 20-year mark is a good time to stop and collectively reflect on our Pan-African movement and the other movements it has inspired... its processes and where we stand at 20 years old.

As we know, today's world has turned topsy-turvy and faces many more crises than 20 years ago. Since 2006, we have witnessed tremendous shifts in geo-political and geo-economic interests. Today, we live under the unsettling Trumpism/Silicon Valley alliance, and our continent is under a renewed kind of imperialist exploitation and scramble for its strategic resources. Feminism, as an ideology and a political movement, is experiencing an unprecedented backlash from all fronts – sparked by neoliberal capitalism, religious and cultural fundamentalists and other bigots... you know... against gender justice, against sexual and reproductive rights, against pluralistic gender identities, against women and gender studies, and so on and so forth. As African feminists, we must always keep our collective fingers on the pulse of capitalist-patriarchy and strategise on how to meet the crises. Collective discussions with multiple minds are great for bringing out various perspectives and nuances. With your expert guidance, Hope, I'm sure that we'll have a very engaging and memorable conversation.

HC: You know, there was a season in my work when the Charter wasn't just a reference – it was my ritual. Before any organisational development process began, I would sit with the Charter as one might sit with sacred text. It was my compass, my creed, my quiet rebellion against extractive frameworks that claimed neutrality but erased lived experience. When people asked what feminist organisational development looked like, I didn't reach for jargon. I reached for the Charter... and its Organisational Development Tool. Not because it was flawless, but because it was honest. It named power. It named history. It named us. I used to say: "It's not perfect, but it's a powerful place to begin." For individuals and collectives alike, it offered a language for values we often felt but struggled to articulate. It gave shape to the messy, beautiful work of building organisations that could hold both strategy and soul.

Okay, let's now have the collective invocation for Bisi...

All: *Bisi walks with the ancestors and speaks in the language of legacy...*

HC: So, we come to you, Bisi... Ayesha has already thanked you for the work that you put into this Charter, but now tell us, what political and ideological refusals shaped the Charter's creation – and how did it shift the terrain of African feminist movement-building? What foundational urgencies birthed AFF and the Charter – and what lessons remain urgent today?

BAF: Thank you very much, it is exceedingly wonderful to be here. Thank you, Sylvia, for bringing us together, and Hope, for facilitating. I will not go into a whole lot of detail as I have a feature article in the commemorative issue of *Feminist Africa* which goes into the nitty-gritty of that question. Having said that, it's not possible to talk about the Charter without talking about why we needed to have an African Feminist Forum in the first place because one thing happened after the other.

Sometime in March 2001, and I don't know if Sarah Mukasa remembers this, there was a meeting organised by Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA) in Kampala on "Effective Participation in UN Conferences" to prepare African women's organisations for the forthcoming UN Conference on Racism in Durban. And we were also preparing to go to CSW (Commission on the Status of Women) in New York. At the time, I was on my way out of AMwA to join the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and Sarah invited me to be a resource person at this meeting. So, while at this meeting I noted that every time we're called as African women from across the continent to address an issue – outside of the networks having their own convenings like the FEMNETs, Women Living Under Muslim Laws, and WILDAF – it's always on someone else's agenda. If it's not the African Union, it's the United Nations Commission for Africa; if it's not those ones, it's CSW or AWID or Women Deliver. So, we're always being asked to congregate on other people's time, to speak to other people's agendas, our own issues being tucked in there somewhere. But we didn't have our own spaces where we could invite other people to come and listen to what we had to say.

I raised the issue at this particular meeting that it was about time that we as African women had our own spaces. We need to start creating opportunities for us to think about what feminism means to us, about how our work is located, the context within which we are doing all the things we do and the forces that constantly push against us. So, that's how the seed was planted for African women to have their own feminist spaces. A year later, when I had settled down at the AWDF, the board agreed that we could proceed with the idea of having an annual convening. We hadn't given it a name yet, but we agreed that we would have this space where we would be the ones convening as African women.

To cut a long story short, I had a conversation with Tamika (not her real name) in October 2002 when I was on my way to AWID in Guadalajara. We stopped over in the US with Jean Kamau and spoke with Tamika about the idea of having this convening. She said, “Oh that’s a great idea, please keep me informed.” So, you can imagine my shock when three months later, I received an invitation from Tamika that had been addressed to thirty other women across the continent inviting them to Zanzibar for a meeting in preparation of the African Feminist Congress! When I got that email my first reaction was to call Jean and ask her, “Is this the same meeting that you and I were talking to Tamika about?” And Jean said, “Yes, it’s the same meeting and I’ve just got the invitation now, just like you.” I tried to raise the issue with Tamika and she kept arguing that it doesn’t matter whose idea it was; she too had been thinking about it for some time and she’d secured funding for it. That is forgetting the fact that AWDF had offered to fund this preparatory meeting. So, that’s how we found ourselves in Zanzibar. I’d been advised not to go, that it wasn’t going to end well. But I didn’t listen because I felt that it wasn’t about me, not about whose idea it was. It was about African sisters sitting together and claiming space, breaking bread, and sharing ideas together.

But unfortunately, Zanzibar did not work out for a whole range of reasons that we all know. After that process, some of us continued to have the conversation and we gave ourselves a name – “The Zanzibar Survivors”! So, these Zanzibar survivors, that is, everyone on this call, agreed to meet in Bangkok, if you remember, at the AWID forum in 2005 and Hope Chigudu facilitated that meeting. That’s where we decided to proceed and agreed to change the name from “African Feminist Congress” to “African Feminist Forum” because we felt that the AFC had been jinxed. We agreed to have a follow-up meeting at the African Social Forum in Bamako in January 2006.

Just before Bamako, I was thinking to myself: the meeting in Bangkok went well because I was sitting in a room with Zanzibar Survivors; what would happen if we agreed to proceed together with this initiative and we opened it up to many other feminists, and then Zanzibar happened all over again? And what would we do then? And I must admit that I probably had some PTSD carried over from that Zanzibar experience. So, I said to myself, I don’t think it’s wise for us to proceed unless there are rules of engagement and that’s when I started

thinking of something along the lines of a Charter that we would all agree to. So, I raised this at the Bamako conference and people agreed.

After Bamako, I proceeded to draft the Charter and then presented it to the AFF Working Group and it went through several revisions, until it was finally adopted at the first AFF conference. So, for me the Charter was extremely important because, in addition to all that has been said, it did at least four things: first, it provided clarity for all African feminists about our naming, our values, and our context; second, it gave us a voice, enabling us to articulate what feminism means to us as African women in the different ways in which we think and organise our work; third, it provided us with a tool for accountability. At that point we had so many instances of individual feminists and women who'd call themselves feminists, as well as women's rights organisations calling themselves feminist organisations, who were not walking the talk. So, we had certain provisions in the Charter which could be used for accountability with very clear pathways towards safeguarding feminist values and principles at an individual and institutional level. Finally, the Feminist Charter was about autonomy; it enabled us to engage as feminist thinkers, teachers, creators, and so on, in ways that didn't make it necessary to start explaining to the world how we were different from American feminists or European feminists or Asian feminists. It was not a concern; we had claimed our own space and our own platform as African feminists.

Now, in terms of where we are today... do we still have issues around toxicity and negativity and a whole lot of unsavoury things in our movement on the continent? Yes, we do. However, the Feminist Charter is a constant reminder to us that even when those things are present, they are supposed to be temporary, because the Charter presents us with a permanent reference point in terms of what's acceptable thinking and behaviour as an African feminist.

HC: Thanks very much, Bisi, for that historical journey. Demere, are you ready? Join me in welcoming Demere:

All: *Demere brings the ink of memory and the breath of story...*

HC: Demere, tell us, how has feminist publishing helped document and amplify the Charter's legacy – and what stories remain silenced or under-told?

Demere Kitunga (DK): Thank you very much. You'll excuse me for joining a bit late. Let me begin by explaining how I understand publishing... As a publisher I have learnt that publishing is simply the act of making something public. Even though publishers have developed a whole set of mechanisms to create an industry with a chain of mediation between knowledge producers and knowledge consumers, basically, just the act of taking an idea and making it public verbally or otherwise is an act of publishing. So, I'll address publishing from that viewpoint, even though to reach a wider audience you still need to organise knowledge in ways that would reach far and wide. I also look at publishing beyond the confines of print media because the new technologies have blurred the lines between print, electronic, online, physical, oral, performative, and otherwise. And in other instances, all the media – traditional and modern – are collapsing into one when innovating to produce publications that resonate with the taste and interest of new audiences.

So, looking at what has happened in the last twenty years... how much literature did we have? What kind of literature? Which kind of literature existed which could even broach the subject of feminism, let alone *African* feminism? When I look at all of you seated there, most of you have contributed more than one published article since the Charter was launched, even those who hadn't released a single publication before... and here I limit the range to textual publishing. If we extend this to knowledge produced in other forms that lend themselves to wider dissemination and/or are shared within a specific audience, within a single organisation, or a closed set of communities, the contribution is enormous even if we have not taken stock in an intentional and comprehensive manner, which we should. The second type is commercial publishing whereby a company or a group of individuals (e.g. writers' guild) pool resources to publish for a profit and at least in ways that yield a return on investment and pay the author a royalty. I place publishing and dissemination of the Charter in the first category.

Let me begin with the Charter itself. As our prayer pointed out, the Charter refused to be confined to a PDF document or the language of its origination. The fact that it is widely disseminated around the continent and has been translated into seven languages is in itself a big contribution to its publishing. But who is the publisher in this particular case? I distinguish two types of publishers: the package publishers who are basically we as

organisations or individuals who self-publish and produce non-commercial works purposely crafted to meet a target. In Tanzania, the Kiswahili version was supported by AWDF, and this was an investment into making the Charter available as a tool to push forward our commitment to build a Pan-African feminist movement.

When it comes to traditional publishing in the scholarly genre, I would single out *Feminist Africa*, which functions as a publishing house and a publication. It carries articles that amplify and deepen the understanding of, and engagement with the Charter. There are some other publications by other, often small publishers, the majority of which are not indigenous to Africa because the publishing industry in several countries on the continent has remained stunted for various reasons. Feminist work which does not necessarily attract large audiences, therefore, needs to be subsidised. In the meantime, creative writing and scholarly works need to continue to package relatable feminist knowledge in ways that is fascinating to the audience who would otherwise be reluctant.

Another way to render feminist literature visible is citation. Using Jessica Horn's book, *African Feminist Praxis*, as an example, you can see how citation makes sense as a feminist political tool for affirming, amplifying, and celebrating feminist scholarship by feminist authors. In that 120-page book, Jessica cited no less than 280 feminists. In doing this, the author not only espouses the feminist principles of acknowledging others, but the book provides statistics on available African (and other) feminist literature. It also makes it easy for readers and those who wish to engage with African feminist literature to navigate and search for references.

What hasn't been done and could be done as a celebration of 20 years of the Charter is to do a bibliographic study of how much information we have generated over time and assess what gaps remain as a strategic guide for feminist scholars, researchers, and authors to focus on in the coming years. For me, even if gaps remain, at least in scholarly publishing, feminist scholars and researchers have navigated hitherto neglected terrains and unearthed forgotten and/or erased herstories.

The second genre that has multiplied quite a bit are the books, both fiction and non-fiction. As feminists, we also need to put our focus on

educational and children's books because that's where we nurture the minds when children are at an impressionable age. If other ideological institutions such as religious bodies and political parties begin to expose children to their ideals before the primary education level, why should feminists look at universities and adult communities as their catchment?

Another area where knowledge and ideas proliferate without our sufficient contribution is multimedia and digital forms, particularly creative and social media content. This is an area where most young people are, and feminist content from Africa is still not matching up with patriarchal voice and push back in the mainstream arena. My experience in experimenting with some of these platforms, co-creating with children, young people, and upcoming artists, has shown their potential for popularity and accessibility and their creative capacity to research and produce works that appeal to mainstream audiences, if only we give them guided time and resources.

My final comment concerns funding. Knowledge production and publishing are not cheap. A lot of energy, time, and intellectual labour go into it from individual writers but also its midwifery, i.e. the process of mediating between the idea and the audience, which is costly. AWDF and WFT have contributed significantly to that area, but a concerted effort to curate a coordinated, systematic, and sustainable process should be explored as we appraise 20 years since the launch of the AFF and plan how African feminists and feminist institutions navigate the next 20 years.

HC: *Asante sana*, Demere! What is WFT?

DK: Women's Fund for Tanzania, which is a young fund based in Tanzania and Mary Rusimbi is the founder.

HC: Okay, now let me turn to Mary and invite you to welcome her into the space.

All: *Mary is the architect of movement soil...*

HC: Thank you. So, Mary, how did the Charter support leadership transitions and movement sustainability – and what lessons remain urgent for today's organising?

MR: Thank you. This is a healing space for me to talk about issues that really matter to us. Let me start by saying that in my many years of feminist

organising in Tanzania and across Africa, from the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme which I co-founded to the Women's Fund of Tanzania, which Demere mentioned – a young fund focusing on grassroots women – the Charter guided me, and many of us, to re-imagine leadership as shared feminist practice. It helped me to confront fears of letting go.

I've been in several leadership roles in the movement, and I have learnt that leadership is not a personal issue; it is about providing stewardship and not ownership. Leadership is about care and continuity. In that sense, the idea of feminist transition is one important legacy of the Charter. Bisi left AWDF which she helped build and it is still going strong. She and other great feminists who have transitioned from big leadership taught us that leadership is not something to which you hold on for decades. This breaks the monotony of power... models which feminists question everyday – from the household level to the office and the political level. Indeed, the Charter gave feminists the courage to retire, transit, and rotate with dignity; to believe in others, listen, and welcome new voices without erasing the foundational wisdom. For younger ones who join in, it's not about condemning everything Mary did; rather, they ask, "how can I support this process for the organisation to move forward?" The Charter also enabled us to encourage inter-generational dialogue so that we can sustain our feminist vision. We might have challenges, but I think that we all believe that young feminists entering our spaces should not come as followers but as co-leaders and co-authors of our story.

At the movement-building level, the Charter taught us that movement sustainability is not only about funding or structures but also about the spirit and ideology you carry forward. It's about giving us the emotional sustenance, ethical grounding, and ideological health... for both the agenda and leaders of the movement.

After my retirement, I went on to start an initiative with some colleagues through the Nendiwe Feminist Wellness and Coaching Centre, of which I'm happy to say that Hope and Demere played a big role in its conception and affiliation with the feminist movement as part of leadership transition and mutual sustainability through our collective energy.

Finally, I want to highlight two legacies of the Charter: first, to reiterate leadership transition within our feminist agenda and second, to reclaim

ideological clarity. But we need to be very careful because there's a trend for co-optation and a threat of being swallowed by neoliberal colonialism.

At the same time, we need the Charter to constantly remind us to practise solidarity and intergenerational humility as daily labour. We must centre care, healing, and justice in all our political work as the Charter asks us to do. We have to build self-renewing movements that maintain their soul. I want to end by saying that for me the Charter is still very relevant and we need to document its legacies... legacies that have transformed us as feminists and our movements. *Asante sana!*

HC: *Asante sana* Mary. Your centre is huge and I hope we can talk about it later. We now move to Alice.

All: *Alice drums the Charter's civic pulse...*

HC: Alice, tell us how the Charter engaged with questions of governance and civic agency – and what tensions did it expose or resolve across borders?

Alice Karekezi (AK): Thank you so much. First, allow me to embrace all of you. I speak as one who was there in the beginning but also watched the movement grow from a little further away. The Charter was our collective heartbeat and though my own rhythm sometimes played in different arenas, that beat never left me. I've continued to hear it in governance spaces, in civic struggles, and in the everyday breaths of our sisters. When we conceived the Charter, we were asserting not only feminist principles but also civic imagination. We were saying that African women have the right not only to participate in governance but also to shape governance itself.

The Charter stripped the idea that civic agency belonged to the state alone or to the NGOs. It reminded us that governance begins in how we organise, how we hold power accountable, and how we refuse silence in our communities, movements, and institutions. In my own journey, I've seen glimpses of this feminist governance emerging in unexpected places. One is within one of the most patriarchal spaces on our continent – the governance of peace and security. Over the last twelve years, I've had the opportunity to engage in multidimensional forces, command posts, and field training exercises in Eastern Africa, as part of the African peace and security architecture. This space – deeply militarised, often resistant to feminist thought – has also been a

frontier where we have quietly broken ground for feminist praxis. It is a space where feminist principles must not only inspire but materialise.

Another space that holds my commitment is the world of knowledge, specifically amplifying women, young and old, within Rwandan academia through digital storytelling for empowerment, visibility, and solidarity. This work responds to the systemic under-representation of women in higher education and research by building digital literacy, enhancing visibility, and nurturing Pan-African feminist solidarity among women. It's another form of governance, knowledge, memory, and voice.

Speaking to the legacy and sustainability of this movement, I'm deeply moved to witness how the Charter's spirit lives on, not only in our collective work but also in the next generation. Seeing my daughter, Isis – born in 2005, embrace the ideas of the African Feminist Charter and live them, from her high school years to the foreign spaces she has navigated and in her personal life, has been profoundly gratifying. It's a reminder that the Charter was not only a manifesto for our time but a seed that continues to germinate in new soil. In Rwanda too, I see younger women reclaiming feminism with courage and creativity, grounding their realities in it, giving it new language, new rhythm, and new relevance.

Although I was not always in the rooms where the Charter evolved, I was always in the rooms where its spirit was needed – in universities, in policy debates, in peace and security spaces. The Charter accompanied me there as a quiet reminder to ask, “Who’s being silenced?” “Who decides?”, and “How are we going to leave our feminism when the spotlight fades?”

So, what do I want the Charter to carry forward? A simple vow... that governance for African feminists will never die again or be dormant. May we continue to govern ourselves with integrity, decency, and joy. Thank you very much for giving me this time.

HC: Thanks very much, Alice. The next great feminist that we're going to hear from is Jessica Horn. Invocation for Jessica please...

All: *Jessica – she carries the medicine...*

HC: Yes, so Akiiki, what forms of decolonial healing and sustainability did the Charter make visible – and how have these shaped feminist funding and movement care?

JH: Thank you. It is interesting to think about the Charter as a healing document or a medium of healing. If we look at it that way, then what did it help to heal? I think one of the most critical things that it did was to challenge our epistemic erasure. You would think that African feminists never existed in history. If we are mentioned in feminist history, it is just in a short paragraph about the Nairobi or Beijing conferences. In the Charter, there is very strong framing language to stake a claim to our longstanding presence. I appreciate the poetic and true ways that the Charter begins by honouring historic energies that existed as long as African societies have, resisting forms of oppression. So, African feminists, we are here, we've always been here in as much as the concepts of Africa and patriarchy have existed. To me that is critical because there's no way that you can ground yourself if you haven't affirmed that you even exist.

The second thing is trying to open up space against the obligation to conform. The Charter was clear about the capacity that we have to be the architects and authors of culture. And we know that since colonisation, culture (and later religion) has continued to be the discourse and tool to limit us. Whatever autonomy or maverick existence we affirm, whatever difference we want to assert and embrace, is framed by our detractors as somehow not acceptable and deeply un-African. So, I feel that that is the second healing – the healing against these oppressive and very narrow definitions of what it means to be alive in an African body. And that heals all of us, regardless of gender.

Thirdly, what I've seen in practice is that for a lot of people, the way that the Charter defines how we should treat each other has also been very important. So has its acknowledgement that power also exists between us and that the work is not just about changing power in structures or in the face of the patriarchy out there, but also about changing the ways that we relate to each other. What we do in our organisations, movement spaces, our collectives... can't be something that just replicates oppression. There is deep concern within movements about how power is handled between us and this is true for African

feminist movements too. In this regard, those lines in the Charter are read like a provocation to think about how we're relating to everything we do – to be consistent in the ethics and principles of what we do.

The Charter has been very important to affirm that this work of African feminisms exists and is rooted and relevant, which in turn has informed everything that has come out. There are now many different spaces where feminist care is articulated and, Hope, you've actually been one of the key sparks for us to create all of the thinking and practice we have around healing and care... the Feminist Republiks, Flourish Retreats, all of that has a through line back to the foundational work that you have done. It was Hope who pushed and pushed and pushed us to consider the questions of care in our movements. And again, the Charter then helps as a kind of anchoring, a reminder, and a kind of revalidation of who we are, but also to dignify the work that we've done over centuries.

So yes, I think it's very interesting to think of text as healing. Can words heal you? In many traditions we claim that they can. In fact, in Western psychology it's all about talk therapy with the idea that words can heal, so why not for us too and the words we speak in this text? Our Charter can heal us, and this is a beautiful thing that we'll carry. The Charter exists in the world in multiple languages because we have also translated it into many, including five African languages so far. We have some of the words to support our healing.

HC: Thank you, Akiiki. Is there anything you wish to add?

JH: Well, it's just that I found it interesting, Sylvia's comments about citation... that's partly because we ourselves need to write those texts, to put our own work into citation for others to cite it. How much are we documenting in ways that can be cited and how much are we circulating the Charter as a kind of anchor for feminist thinking? So, it's also us, in terms of our knowledge production... and how we do it and whether or not we produce it in citable format. It's also about needing to hold our archive... we're the museum, so we also need to spruce it up, open the doors, and invite people in to understand our history.

HC: Thank you very much, Akiiki. Next, please welcome Ayesha Imam.

All: *Ayesha brings the law to life...*

HC: Tell us, Ayesha... how did the Charter legitimise feminist resistance to legal and cultural norms – and what impact did this have on movement strategy? What research was invoked by the Charter?

AI: Thank you, sisters. What is the law? Law is the stuff that is written on paper – whether as statutory law or formally recognised as customary law – but even more important is how things are lived: the social practices, the cultures, the norms, the customs that support or subvert the formal laws. In Nigeria, we’ve had a law against bigamy for more than 50 years but the practice... whoa... it might as well not exist! So, what we sometimes call the informal law may actually be stronger in people’s lives than the formal laws.

In effect, rights are substantially real only to the extent that they are part of the mundane, everyday lives of rights-holders. If your right is only a piece of paper in the law books somewhere, it is not a right you have in practice. So, it’s important to note that we could look at the text of the laws that were inspired by the Charter, or were written and inspired by people who were themselves inspired by the Charter, and find good examples of those. We could also look at the often unrecognised part of law – the institutions, funding, and policies that enable laws to be implemented; and again we could look at many, many countries to see how the existence of the Charter helped to promote those laws, practices, and policies. Which is wonderful.

But even much more difficult to quantify... the Charter didn’t simply legitimise feminist resistance to patriarchal legal and cultural norms; it worked on how to create and live feminist norms. It helped us not simply to provide a challenge to formal laws or an alternative draft on paper, but to create, live, and develop social practices amongst ourselves as individuals in our lives, with our families and with our colleagues in feminist organisations. The Charter also offers perspectives in other institutions – thus we could see how power was working or not. And I think the Charter was an important tool amongst others that helped us to do that.

We can say that it was most influential in challenging and helping to generate alternative discourses about women’s rights, which sometimes we referred to as “shifting mindsets” (although these days it’s often called “shifting the Overton window,” which I think is a lot narrower than shifting an actual discourse); but how did it do that? I think it did that by explicitly stating for us

in many ways that feminisms are always intersectional; that we're always concerned with all forms of discrimination and exclusions – whether it's patriarchy, economic exploitation, heterosexism, anti-diverse sexualities... It also reminded us that self-definition is a part of the struggle locally, but also of contributing globally. It was ours, but we also helped other people make it theirs, whether they were outside our immediate locality, our country, or our continent, and we also looked at what was good about what they were doing.

It was a document that was a reference; it was clear in explaining and helping to set contexts on how to guide access. It provided the means for accountability: a self-accountability, not an imposed one, which is important. It was collective; it provided us with a defense against so much of the labelling that was intended to put down those of us who were fighting for women's rights: "Feminism is Western." No, it's not! We see the roots of feminism everywhere, including on our continent and in all our countries; "Feminism is middle class." Not exclusively! We see it amongst peasant women, urban working-class women who may not know the term because they don't speak English, but who are doing actions that define and fight for collective women's rights; "Feminism is new." Sorry! We have a long history and we're going to recover it; "African feminism is pro-government, is pro-natal, heterosexual..." All of those... the Charter helped us put up a defense against negative slurs and move forward from, create from wherever people were at the time.

In those days, at least in West Africa, when we first talked about African feminism and our Charter, it was particularly useful for women's rights to control our own bodies – abortion, sexual orientations and gender identity – but also for championing other struggles, working on different issues, supporting each other across issues. A lot of that is included in the Charter or particularly in the Organisational Development Tool that was necessary for us to start translating feminist visions into everyday concrete life practices. So, it's a training tool, an accountability tool, a legitimacy tool.

Another thing I like about it is that it was a tool, not an empire-building project... We didn't demand that there should be feminist forums in every country or locality. We demanded only that we name ourselves feminists: no ifs, no buts. We could take the principles and use them in whatever work we were doing at home.

What I found particularly affirming was, for example, the Francophone conference organised in Mali where some of the women participants had spent two days shuttling backwards and forwards on the roads, trying to avoid Islamist terrorists in order to get to the meeting – literally putting their lives at risk to join us. That event was one of the first I'd seen of any international and local meetings conducted in three different languages, two of them indigenous and the third French. We also spent one whole day there just having interactive discussions on issues such as: What does the Charter mean? Or... "I don't want to have an abortion." "But you don't have to want to have an abortion yourself to support somebody else's right to do so if they want to." And what was so encouraging about it was that at the end of that meeting, those women who had risked their lives to be there said it was worth the risks they took, the danger in their lives: "We are going home with something that will help our struggle; it was worth it."

So, in this current decade of right-wing racism, it's hard to hold on to remembering that there was a time when issues of violence against women, women's rights to abortion, rights of gender and sexual orientation, and so on, were not even part of public discussions. But I'm old enough to remember when that was the case. There are still contestations, obviously, laws and policies are being taken back daily and reversed, but they are not unchallenged. They are no longer uncontested. We can no longer be easily silenced. We fought before to achieve those gains; we can and must do it again and take it even further this time. We go on. We go strong. Thank you, ladies.

HC: Thanks very much, Ayesha. Thank you. We now turn to Muthoni.

All: *Muthoni taps the drum of governance...*

HC: Good. Muthoni, tell us, how did the Charter's explicit naming of sexual orientation and choice mark a rupture from gender mainstreaming, and why was this politically necessary at the time?

MW: Ayesha has spoken to why choice and bodily autonomy were important, but I'll add to what she's said. I want to speak to five things. The first is why including choice and bodily autonomy within the principles of the Charter was important. At that moment in time, women's movements in Africa and globally had come from a series of important UN convenings in which practices were aggregating up, trying to advance women's rights through emerging norms and

policies. There was Beijing, of course, but also Vienna, Copenhagen, social development, “women’s rights are human rights,” and Cairo, reproductive rights, in which there was an upwards aggregation and a downwards taking of the outcome documents of those convenings into national contexts to fight the necessary battles.

At the time the Feminist Charter came into being, we were not at the beginning, but a few years into the first backlash, which came from the Catholic church, Opus Dei, unlike the present situation where the opposition is from Evangelicals, Pentecostals and much more radical or stern, strict Islamic interpretations. They’d started infiltrating the rooms in which those meetings were happening. So, the gains that had been made in Cairo, for women’s reproductive and sexual health and rights, and particularly the right to choice, were being challenged daily. And the infiltration of these religious groups had given national governments the language and the ways to challenge these rights too. So, it was important to spell out the dividing line between supposedly... gender-mainstreaming types, who were prepared to sacrifice women’s rights to work on every other kind of right, and the smaller, but growing group of people who were not prepared to do so.

Similarly, with SOGIE rights – rights related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression – we had just taken some steps forward. Even at the African level, one of the vice-chairs [of the African Commission] had been involved in the process of spelling out the range of ways through which African queer people could advance their rights and freedoms. And there was the backlash against that as well. Their movement was just coming above board and they needed protection. I think the Charter provided that protection for African queer people and also within the women’s rights and feminist space to say, “Here, there’s a group of people and institutions who have drawn the line and said clearly that if you want to call yourself a feminist, you have to be prepared to stand up for these issues.” That was very important.

That was the first point I wanted to make. I’ll be faster with the other points. I went back and read the Charter... it’s funny how, sometimes, in the telling of the story, you can start to believe things even when they are not necessarily true. For instance, when we were all together in Mauritius, we were made aware of the agitation among, ironically, trans activists who felt that the

Charter needed to be updated, and there was a lot of talk around the Charter being dated... maybe I'm a dinosaur... anyhow, I said, let me check... as Jessica said, the Charter was a product of its time and definitely, some of the things it was resisting or taking a stance on, we now take for granted.

There are new issues obviously. But re-reading it through the lens of what is going on today, I was surprised by how much it's still completely relevant and alive to the challenges of our time. Its opening statement says, "We're spelling out values, what we want to change, and how we want to change it; what we want is to dismantle patriarchy." And patriarchy was defined as patriarchy-plus. There were whole sections of the Charter on race, class, imperialism, and other systemic forms of repression – very much what people nowadays would call intersectional organising. That's there. What the struggle is against is clearly defined. "How" it should be conducted is also clearly defined, as individuals have the responsibility to live according to these values and principles and to organise collectively in this kind of ethical manner. So, the Charter functions as an organising tool and, as Bisi said, an accountability mechanism. It's actually not that dated. Maybe the idea of having a Charter and a Manifesto is dated because we're in the age of post-parties. But I still find it very much alive.

The third thing that struck me was the importance of naming and people have already mentioned how important it is to name ourselves as feminists and reclaim the term from being a bad word. But saying what an African was, and still is, was a very large debate. The Charter is clear: if you're from the continent, if you live here, if you work here, you're an African feminist. Which is huge. I mean now, even more than in our time, you see the divide between the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. The joke has become the African Union and the idea of African solutions to African problems. A Sudanese friend of mine remarked, "Yeah, yeah, now we're in the age of Arab solutions to African problems!" Then there is Egypt constantly being on the wrong side of history. Yet we made the point that Africa is one and the struggles are continental; they are for everyone who lives on this whole big land mass. So, the struggle was not just about naming ourselves as feminists but also as Africans, which was one of the big dividing points in Zanzibar. Many of us who don't come from southern Africa were quite shocked at the huge debate around White people.

The fourth point is about how the Charter called for our struggles to be seen within the context of global struggles and solidarity. We're seeing that now with the organising, for instance, around Palestine. In some ways, Africa has failed the Palestinians, but in other ways, it's been extraordinary... the organising that's happened among people, the South African government. I know Shamillah has reasons to be upset with the South African government, but on that issue, they've been wonderful... in a field of not so wondrous things.

The last point is what Sylvia talked about at the beginning... we're in such bad times. There are succession issues we're going to be facing in Rwanda. There's conflict between a tiny country like Rwanda and a huge country like the DRC that's inexplicable. [There are] succession issues also in the form of electoral crises. What's happening in Tanzania... the youth revolts, which are amazing. The dying off of people or those who are going into power when they can't even campaign, like in Cameroon, and having life-sized puppets campaigning for them! Or... in Uganda's case, sticking to power when, for all intents and purposes, they're incapacitated. We're in such bad times globally and on the continent. But reading the Charter again... it's not as dated as we were starting to suggest. It's actually very relevant and I think it still provides a means to articulate what the struggle is and how we want to engage it. Thank you.

HC: Thanks very much, Muthoni. We go to Sarah Mukasa.

All: *Sarah pours water for the movements that came before...*

HC: So, Sarah, can you enlighten us on how the Charter helped to surface silences in our movements – and what truths did it allow us to finally speak aloud?

SM: Thank you so much, and it's been wonderful listening to everybody. The challenge of coming near the end is that everybody has more or less said what needs to be said. So, I'm going to focus on the silences which the Charter blew apart. There were several silences and conspiracies that really dissipated the energies of women's movements at the time. In Uganda, for example, we had tried to stage the play, "Vagina Monologues," which had been successfully staged in Kenya to raise resources and public awareness about violence against women, and it was the very movements that we were working with that shot it down.

The Charter marked a generational shift from women's organisations that had started at independence. At that time, we had reached a point in the women's movement where the older generations were arguing, "We have worked so hard to get to Beijing, Cairo, and so on... we've never had it so good and we should try to be polite in order to be acceptable and to safeguard the gains we have made." The idea was that we should remain silent about some issues even though they were critical to the points we were trying to put forward as women's rights activists. There was space for issues like education for girls and harmful traditional practices, but none for conversations about structural issues that were critical to the subjugation of African women's bodies, which were considered "impolite." Those of us who pushed that agenda were "Othered" as somehow not being African. We were accused of imposing ideas from Western feminists that detracted from the "real" issues that affected African women.

The women's movement had got to the point where we were thanking the world and our governments for giving us space, for setting up Gender Ministries, and so on, even though many women remained shut out – lesbians, younger women, those living with HIV, those living with disabilities – exclusions which were accepted by the mainstream women's rights movement. The structural issues that we felt were critical: violence and how it was used to control our sexuality, our labour, our safety and security, were considered too controversial and strategically unwise to pursue. Those of us who found this unacceptable created spaces through a series of processes, including the Charter, as an alternative to these old spaces that exclude and dissipate our energies, and in which we're confined by cultural, religious, and other colonial institutions to shy away from certain conversations. The Charter not only gave us power to set up spaces in which those conversations could be advanced but also created room for activists to address many of the contradictions that we were living as feminist practitioners.

Many of us can remember the silence and the shame that came from having to admit that we were living in very abusive relationships; we were leading feminist organisations with that contradiction and exercising power in unacceptable ways. This Charter gave a framework for solidarity, analysis, and practice in which we could come together to support one another through some of those contradictions – the personal lives we were living against what we were

trying to do in our activism. We could suddenly talk about the contradiction openly, understanding it not as a personal failure but as a critical site of struggle for justice and equality. The Charter gave us the permission to address issues of bodily integrity, even sexual pleasure, the right to love, who we choose, and the right to do with our bodies as we see fit, including terminating unwanted pregnancies. These were fairly revolutionary conversations at the time, and I think what the Charter helped to do was to give those of us in the younger generation the opportunity to take leadership and push this agenda in partnership with women from other countries, on our own terms. But it also gave a language to people from the earlier generations for whom these issues were not considerations to engage and gain greater understanding about why these issues were important.

The silence in the global space was from the assumption that the West was the global and Africa was this little place. Now, what did that connote? It connoted that knowledge, ideas, and policy engagement at every level were all spearheaded by Western feminists, to speak on behalf of feminists and decide on behalf of African feminists. The Charter gave us courage to challenge that hegemony and to say that Africa is part of the global, what we know is important, our lived experiences are important, and we create our own knowledge and ideas – in philanthropy, feminist theorising, and analysis. Much of what we see came out of that fighting in the global feminist space; it was to say, “You cannot take up space and speak on our behalf.” In the Charter, we developed a joint position from which we could strategically engage in that global space.

Many of us were in the business of building institutions. The tone of how we engaged with our international donors totally shifted with this Charter. The donors knew what to do with us when they saw us as these helpless victims seeking assistance (read “White saviourism”) whose concerns were very much ghettoised to issues such as harmful cultural practices. They understood this, were comfortable with it, and devoted endless resources to it. In other words, if we were fighting one another as Africans, they were comfortable with that. But the Charter, as Muthoni said, broke the silence into which we stated explicitly, “No, actually, we’re connecting what happens in our lives with what’s happening with the global structures that replicate and reinforce our historical experience as Africans. And therefore, our struggle is not just confined to what

happens at this micro level of engagement; it's a global struggle for autonomy from all forms of oppression and we're leaders, thinkers, and shapers in that regard."

In telling the story, the Charter doesn't capture kinds of contestations and arguments that we had to make. I mean, in the West, we were accused of not representing the vast majority of African women; we were considered "too elite" to be supported. But also, within our own local contexts, we were accused of being led by Western feminists. So, we were caught in that "No person's land" and the Charter very clearly set the ground on which we were going to walk, shaping the arguments that we were going to use in navigating those worlds. We positioned the struggles that we have as political, economic, and social, and therefore, we, as African feminists, saw it as our right and our duty to engage in all those fields. We were not going to be confined to the micro-level engagements that were so popular at the time, nor be ghettoised to small lives at any level. We understood the need to come together in solidarity as Pan-African feminists in order to give visibility to our lived experiences, but more importantly, to shape solutions. I remember people asking, "What do structural adjustment programmes have to do with whether women should have access to education? Or what does building women's leadership have to do with supporting rural women who have no access to water?" Today, we don't have those conversations anymore because the Charter and collective engagement changed the tone, texture, and kind of conversations that we were having as African feminists.

To wrap this up: when I speak to younger generations of feminist activists, they are absolutely impressed by the depth of the analysis and engagement, and the way the Charter pieced together, not just how we saw the world and engaged with it, but also how we are accountable to ourselves and to one another in the movement, which has been really critical. What I hear from them is that it gives them a language, framework, and understanding of the history or herstory of organising, and therefore, for them, the pathway has been laid that they can build on.

So, in terms of silences and conspiracies that we broke, I think it's very important that we recognise that the spaces that we have for feminist organising on the continent are speaking very differently now about the issues of structural

barriers to gender justice, the colonial frameworks we were working with, the exclusions that we were expected to live with... there's a deep appreciation. I think we've laid a great framework for which future silences can be torn apart with courage, love, affirmation, and healing. Thank you.

HC: Thanks very much, SM. Okay, the last speaker for this session is Shamillah Wilson. Please welcome her with a poetic invocation...

All: *Shamillah listens with her whole body...*

HC: So, Shams, how did the Organizational Development Tool help embed lived truth and body-memory into feminist evaluation – and what remains to be reimagined?

SW: I agree with Sarah: going last is really difficult when so much has been said, but I want to share a little anecdote regarding the feminist OD tool and how it embodied feminist evaluation. Many years ago, I was invited by AWDF to do a feminist evaluation for the donor, Comic Relief. The funder had picked a mainstream M&E agency to evaluate this project, and I think it was AWDF and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund that were part of that evaluation. And part of the challenge was the way the evaluation had been approached as a very technical exercise by the evaluators who had pitched for the job. I remember that Bisi and Sarah had put their foot down and said that they would not proceed with the evaluation unless they had an African feminist doing the evaluation. I feel that the OD tool in many ways speaks to that.

The first thing the tool helps us do is acknowledge individual and personal ethics of the person doing the evaluation. In other words, if the evaluator does not have a feminist worldview, their lens may not necessarily be able to accommodate what they are evaluating. Thus, at the outset, we have to accept that the person conducting the evaluation has power and a worldview that, in many ways, can shape the narrative and outcomes that emerge from the evaluation.

The second principle highlighted by the OD tool is centring a feminist analysis that can view the data through a lens that analyses the distinct ways that patriarchal social relations, structures, and systems occur. If you don't have that analysis, it is difficult to place what happens in the contexts and realities for women and girls and relate it to the interventions that have been

implemented. So, the OD tool speaks to that lens and allows you to make sense of the transformation that has occurred.

As a person who has used the OD tool, it is also important that a feminist evaluator does not start an evaluation with a set of pre-determined views of possible findings. It requires a genuine curiosity, and an evaluation approach that is both empowering and transformative... and responsive to what is emerging as a result of the work that has happened. The OD tool in many ways makes provision for that as we can interpret what we see and should be willing to have our own views challenged.

Not only does the OD tool look at interventions, but also it speaks to the importance of solidarity and mutual support. It highlights that social change is complex, not necessarily by saying this organisation or movement did this thing and that resulted in the change. In other words, it is to acknowledge the complexity of the ways in which multiple strategies come together in a particular context and multiple actors contribute to shape outcomes and emerging narratives. In this, the OD tool also advocates that we document feminist agency and really question whose narratives and stories we leave out by asking ourselves, “Where are the silences?” The stories we’re not hearing, the questions we’re not asking, so that we allow a more nuanced picture to emerge through a process of African feminist evaluation. By doing that, I think we acknowledge power and also make sure that the evaluation is as inclusive as possible. And, thinking back now, we were way ahead of ourselves as the OD tool was an amalgamation of our lessons in experiencing and conducting different processes. Now when I see documents with people talking about “feminist evaluation” I go back to our OD tool, much of it is there.

There are two more principles that are at the centre of a feminist evaluation as you approach it. There’s this piece concerning accountability and thinking about who are we accountable to as we conduct an evaluation. And I think it addresses the pieces in the tool that speak to acknowledging power, institutional ethics, generations... so, all of the different pieces of really thinking deeply about what accountability means in the context of that evaluation; in terms of the questions we’re asking, the answers that we’re seeking and who’s accountable to whom. And then [there is] the piece about care, which some of you spoke about. Whenever you read any guide on evaluation, care is not

necessarily included in it. In the last few years, I've begun to see more feminist evaluators name the principle of care. From an African feminist perspective, and how we thought about it when putting together the Charter and the OD tool, was that care was making sure that people were safe and that the process of evaluation is not necessarily extractive; that it offers something to everybody who is part of the actual evaluation.

Something that we kept coming back to in the process of the AFF: what does knowledge-generation look like for us as African feminists? And I think that at the core of the OD tool is anchoring the idea of co-creation of knowledge; that there isn't only one architect of a narrative or a way of seeing or making sense of what it is that is emerging, but that it's co-created. There are always multiple voices, perspectives, ways of seeing and understanding to make sure that we retain a form of integrity to an evaluation process that allows a nuanced narrative to emerge. When I think about co-creation, it's also about saying, "What are we doing in order to make sure that not only certain people are driving, holding, and resourcing an evaluation process and that we're not necessarily doing it for the donors but that it is for the people who are involved in the front ways of the evaluation process.

The last thing, which is anchored throughout the Charter but also in the OD tool: that is a learning mind-set... which is that we're willing to learn and challenge ourselves on what we know and what we don't, and really about how we understand what is happening to African women and what they need in order to transform their realities. So, for me, in terms of what else needs to be re-imagined... when I think of all the evaluations that I've done, I feel that it's all there. But maybe what I feel has happened to the OD tool is that we haven't necessarily brought it alive to as many people, such as the new generations coming in. I think we can be much more in conversation with the tool in the ways in which we were already quite at the cutting-edge of thinking, because we have lived through times in which our knowledges, perspectives, and voices were co-opted and manipulated to push forward particular ideas of change. The OD tool gives us an opportunity to say, "Hey, there are different ways; we want you to look at what is happening to us, and we want to be part of that process." And we're also learning as we're doing that. I'll stop there.

HC: Hey, thanks, Shams... you know you're one of the few people that have used the OD tool, so thanks for your insights. Those who haven't used it will now be forced to go and find it. Okay, Sylvia, has this roundtable met your expectations?

ST: Wow, wow, wow! My heart is overflowing with song, gratitude, love, awe, and orgasmic joy! Thank you, comrades; this has exceeded my expectations... your memories, scope, and depth of analysis, insightfulness... And Hope, your skilful moderation... I'm extremely excited.

HC: Thanks very much for organising this and thanks everyone for this powerful conversation and for being present. We have quickly run out of time, so now it's time to stir the pot. Let the steam rise. Let the truths bubble. This is not a summary – it is a reckoning... Let's seal this offering with a word, a breath, a vow. We close this roundtable not with silence, but with a proverb that walks beside us into the next twenty years...

All: *The lioness does not turn when the small dogs bark! We are not here to be liked. We are here to lead. To roar. To rise. To remember that African feminists are not just dreamers – we are warriors. And we do not flinch.*

Notes

1. All eleven participants on this call were part of the original AFF working group of 14. Codou Bop was incapacitated and unable to participate. Bene Madunagu and Everjoice Win (EJ) transitioned to join our feminist ancestors in November 2024 and March 2025, respectively.



Pioneer AFF Working Group - Front, L-R: S. Tamaale, B.Madunagu, C. Bop, D. Kitunga. Middle L-R: J. Horn, S. Wilson, E.J. Win, S. Mukasa, A. Karekezi. Back L-R: H. Chigudu, M. Rusimbi, B. Adeleye-Fayemi, M. Wanyeki, A. Imam



Convenings of the AFF & various National Feminist Forums over the years