



## INTERNATIONAL NETWORK TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (INEVAWG)



San Marino Hotel, 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

A Global South Dialogue on decoloniality of violence against women and girls was organized in Accra, Ghana from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023 by the Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre in collaboration with International Network to end violence against women and girls, INEVAWG. The dialogue was aimed at re-evaluating approaches to violence against women and girls, comparing trends and critiquing current views from a decolonial perspective. It sought to frame a learning question over a year with partners and countries in the south.

## Background

The International Network to End Violence Against Women and Girls (INEVAWG) is a feminist global south led network that focuses on violence against women and girls and elevates the experiences and perspectives of black women and other women experiencing intersectional discrimination.

The Network contributes to Intersectional Feminist Movement building and influencing conceptual clarity related to violence against women and girls through regional and national consultations. In the July 2023 Strategic Consultation, the network emphasized the importance of a decolonial, intersectional, and women's rights-based approach in re-politicizing violence against women and girls in the Global South.

Colonial histories have significantly influenced the lives of women and girls in the South, shaping the judicial, political, and social systems, perpetuating gender inequality and perpetuating patriarchal status, as per members' and partners' experiences. Coloniality continues after colonization, perpetuating power relations. Decoloniality, an ongoing project, acknowledges and undoes coloniality. Decolonial feminists highlight how colonization perpetuates racial and gender-social categorization, discrimination, and inequality. Capitalist economic relations and patriarchal systems contribute to VAWG in the South, affecting individuals, relationships, and societies.

The Global North's dominant approach to violence against women and girls has not adequately incorporated Southern historical experiences into the problem and solutions. Addressing women and girls' rights to self-determination, autonomy, safety, and freedom is crucial for rebuilding the region and celebrating their role in decoloniality.

## Objectives

The objectives of the Decoloniality Dialogue on Violence Against Women and Girls in Africa are:

-  Explore Possibilities
-  Create a space for wide engagement on ways to strengthen the framing of work on EVAWG in the South within a historical and structural analysis of the impact of colonialism on the expressions of violence in the South.

- ✚ Explore ways in which a decolonial lens can deepen the current work that organisations are engaged in with respective partners.
- ✚ Make linkages between decolonial struggles and the inalienable human rights of all women and girls in the South.
- ✚ Provide a space to co-create contributions towards strengthening policy and programming interventions in the region.

Proposed Learning Question for 2024: *“What would it take to decolonize and re-politicize violence against women and girls in a way that is valuable to INEVAWG members and partners and that contributes towards the changes of the lives of women on the ground?”*

### Expected Outcomes

- ✚ A feminist conceptual framing of violence against women and girls from a decoloniality perspective.
- ✚ A collection of case studies on decolonial approaches already being applied in work on VAWG.
- ✚ A strategy for addressing missing data on women’s lives and lived realities.
- ✚ A road map for the ongoing work on INEVAWG on 2024/2025
- ✚ A report on the Global south dialogue on the decoloniality of violence against women and girls

The sessions started with participants identifying what has been good, bad or ugly in their personal lives and organisations in the year. Most participants spoke about the joy of spending time with families, support of friends and family and just being alive as the good. On the other hand, difficulty in accessing funding for organisations, anti- LGBTQ+ laws in some countries were identified as the bad moments of the year. And of course the Israel Palestine war and the thousands of women and children killed was seen as the ugly part of the year.

### Colonialism and Its Impact on Violence Against Women.

Maria Alesi, an experienced Program Manager with a demonstrated history of working in the civil & social organization industry, set the tone for the discussion. Participants were categorized into groups based on national/geographical proximity to analyze Colonialism's policies, laws, traditions, and practices that contribute to violence against women and girls.

Some of the issues identified from the various groups included family laws, (marriage and property rights of spouses, inheritance rights of women), physical abuse of wives, racism, casteism, patriarchy and apartheid, economic rights. For example Criminal laws in the Arab region are often based on British or French laws, with French laws allowing rapists to marry victims and British laws denying women nationality rights.

Maria reiterated some themes from the various presentations:

1. **Cultural alterations and erasure:** customary and traditional practices of our societies before the colonizers came were altered and/or erased.
2. **Marriage** and patriarchy often comes up the most.
3. **Economic Changes:** Women's unpaid labor and how that ceased to be recognized as actual labor within the society. But this came with the introduction of new economic systems. We now run very exploitative economic systems because of colonialism. What used to be available and socially and collectively owned has either become privately owned or has been commodified, so we pay for every single thing that helps or enables human existence.
4. **Racism** has evolved into tribalism or ethnic discrimination, with ethnicity now being more prominent than ever before. In Uganda, people are often asked about their tribe when entering the government system, highlighting the need for cultural understanding.
5. **Transformation of knowledge:** The presentations highlight the transformation of knowledge in society, particularly in relation to religion, which has been institutionalized and influenced by colonizers. This has led to gender-based violence and resistance from religious institutions and the state, as seen in Uganda's Anti-homosexuality law.
6. **Food security and food sovereignty:** Our colonial masters forced us to grow things that were meant for the interest of their businesses.
7. **Redefinition of Social Relations:** The modern concept of family, particularly in Africa, is Eurocentric and individualistic, with husband, wife, and children as the core unit as opposed to the extended family structure of the olden days where family members had a responsibility towards all others, not only their children. While this practice has not completely died out, it has become the exception rather than the norm.
8. **The abuse of alcohol in our communities.** In South Africa, during apartheid, men were allowed to drink alcohol in restricted areas, allowing them to access brewed alcohol from bars. This has led to alcohol abuse, affecting other societies as well.
9. South Africa has two systems: the colonial system and apartheid system. The colonial system is violent and stratifies society based on race, class, and education. It vilifies Africans and continues to do so, affecting women and society through legal, social, economic, and cultural systems. To combat violence, particularly gender-based violence, South Africa must critically examine how it has internalized violence and work on decolonizing the African mind. Public and community education can help break down internalized discrimination.
10. The caste system is a significant issue in India and many South Asian countries. The colonial system in India further exacerbated this division, allowing colonial masters to exploit cheap labor.

In reflecting on the session and the various presentations, a participant stated that the colonial masters destroyed everything that we had, food, medicinal herbs, that our forefathers/mothers

were using. Now we are paying for the same things that were common and free to all. Participants highlighted the deep internalization of colonialism, which disenfranchises women and alienates them from normal aspects of society. Religion and education has been used to further colonize citizens and alienating women. For deeper understanding of colonization and decolonization, introspection is crucial as it allows us to recognize how we perpetuate colonizers' teachings and leads us to address our own actions that perpetuate these lessons. We cannot speak of colonization or decolonization without doing an introspection on how as an individual we are perpetuating the very things that we have learnt from our colonizers. It is about the mind, a need to start with the self and say what am I doing that is perpetuating what I've learnt that I'm supposed to unlearn. A participant added that the words of Bob Marley in his Redemption song when he said, "*emancipate your selves from mental slavery, none but ourselves can free our minds*" captures exactly what we need to do.

### **Session Two: Decoloniality- mapping Contextual Discussions and Aligning it with Theories of Decolonization.**

Dr. Afaf Jabiri, a senior lecturer of Global Development Studies, a co-director of the center for Social Justice and Change and the course leader for M.A programs, Refugees Studies and Conflicts, Displacement and human security moderated the discussion.



The speaker, an activist and academic, discussed the impact of colonization on laws, policies, and societies. She emphasized the need for a feminist approach to justice and equality, highlighting the need to move beyond the western feminist decolonization approach and embrace a more inclusive approach.

She stated that the previous session on decolonization helps to understand what has happened in the past in our societies and how colonization impacted the way we live today and that is why it is not just decolonization, it's '**decoloniality**' which is: acknowledging the continuity of colonization in our lives.

### **Discussion: What does Decoloniality Mean for Feminism**

The moderator stressed that it was important to redefine what feminism is for all of us because we interpret it differently as feminists, and without this definition it makes it so difficult for us to move in unison. It is a process of different steps that we need to take. She also spoke of the social power relations that affects us as different feminists and the dynamics in how we relate to each other based on whether it is finances or success or qualification that makes you see yourself as a better feminist than others. She believes that those core dynamics are very important to also help us to find a way to decolonize as individuals.

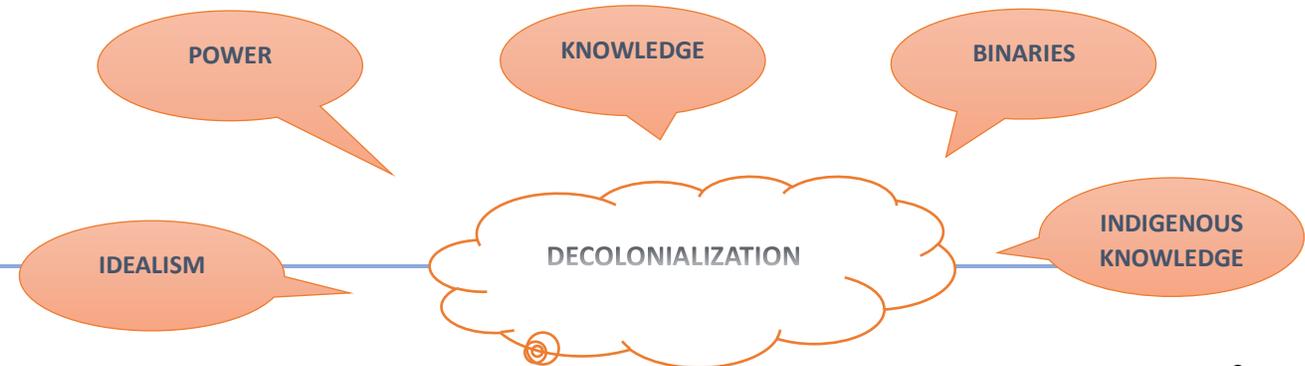
We also discussed questions like, who is the knowing subject, who has the power to have knowledge, who has the authority, who has the right to be accepted, who are the object? This creates binary of knowing. That is what colonialism taught us.

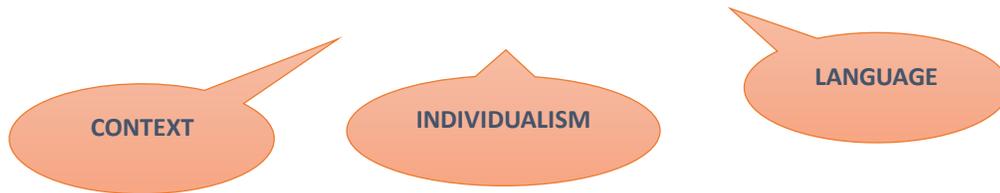
The participant from New Zealand stated, “we don’t have ‘I’ in our language, at least not in the same sense and that is why these conversations are foreign to us. We are non-gender binary. My left is my woman side whereas the right is my other side, together they work in balance, and so in our language we don’t have ‘I’, we say ‘we’.

The discussion by one group was around the concept of feminism and its connection to education. The idea that feminism is associated with educated individuals is a misconception as colonial education led to the belief that those without education are not aligned with feminism. The question is whether feminism should be defined universally, or if there should be an umbrella definition for each individual to align with.

Another group discussed the need to deconstruct the meaning of feminism. It asked the question is there only type of feminism or are there others? It also talked about capitalism, patriarchy and the different systems of oppression which supported the colonial power. It also looked at how women’s bodies became expropriated in relation to the capitalist patriarchal system and the industrial capitalism.

**Dr. Afaf Jabiri, broadened discussions down to certain keywords brought up in the prior discussion:**





- + Idealism: She said, when we talk about feminism, do we mean the same thing or do we have different ideas than others.
- + Power: In terms of authority, in terms of who controls and of who has power and who controls knowledge, and this is what decoloniality with feminism is, that we always have the power to deconstruct and understand knowledge in relation to decoloniality.
- + Knowledge: Understanding feminism requires knowledge about power dynamics, not just Western or imperial feminist ideologies. Feminism encompasses women's struggles, contributions to liberation, and contributions to our memories and tools. While we share cultural similarities, this does not necessarily equate to the same thing.
- + Binaries: Colonialism involves binaries, categorizations, and classifications. To fight colonialization, challenge these binaries by questioning 'them' and 'us', which is crucial for Decolonialisation.
- + Contextualization: Decolonialisation requires contextualization to challenge universal constructs and challenge gender-based violence. It requires challenging colonial mentality and challenging universal constructs, ensuring we are all equal and dismantling colonialization.
- + Indigenous Knowledge: Understanding our community is crucial for feminist Decolonialisation. It provides us with tools from our culture, enabling us to work within decoloniality. Engaging in debates and dialogue helps us create new tools that resonate with our target audience, preventing alienation.
- + Language: Language is crucial for decoloniality, but translations can lose meaning. Challenge translations and work on transcribing to reclaim concepts and knowledge, as using another language may not convey the same meaning.

Individualism: the sense of self, is a crucial aspect of our historical community, and we must question and reclaim this sense to foster a sense of belonging

## REDEFINING FEMINISM

**Our redefining of feminism must take into account the following tools to be able to achieve decoloniality.**

- ✚ Land:** This is to say that feminism isn't just about reclaiming our knowledge but also about the material things like our land.
- ✚ Justice:** The work of feminism is the work of justice; seeking for reclamation of lost humanity, time, etc. through decoloniality, all that coloniality has taken from us.
- ✚ Education:** Our education is from the west. Hence, education itself needs to be decolonialized.
- ✚ Dismantling Norms:** This is also another important area, we need to dismantle institutions, systems, religions, etc., for example: the caste system, religion in the Arab region, race in Africa etc. are ideologies the colonizers used.

**How do we redefine feminism based on our own knowledge, practices, culture, and priorities within our region? What is feminism in the context of decoloniality?**

**The presentations of the three groups are found below.**

### GROUP 1

- There was not a single definition, but words that came up during the discussion on feminism. Words like; liberation, human rights, challenging norms, sharing power, freedom, choice, struggle, work, support, and the knowledge of women. There was a discussion around how feminism sounds like '*white fragility*,' like the fragileness of white people. One participant said it got her thinking about a lot of things because Black women often face challenges fitting into the 'woman description', as they may not fit into a 'feminism of white women' perspective, as they were also slaves in their communities.
  - **The discussion on choice became contradictory, with examples like abortion and prochoice. The question is how to find common ground and navigate the complexity of choice, as we are currently marching against each other.**
  - There was also a debate revolving around the definition of feminism, particularly in Africa, where human rights have become a concept of exclusion. The debate centered on whether to define feminism as a separate term or to use a different term to avoid weaponizing context to marginalize communities.
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## GROUP 2

There was a deep discussion, and a definition was coined as “a diverse range of women, advocating for equality and social justice, through different intersectional strategies that are diverse and inclusive in dismantling patriarchy, giving women power and preserving the rights of bodily autonomy.’

The definition of equity, racism, capitalism, and caste is a process that considers individual contexts. While not a well-rounded definition, it helps us understand how words like choice and women's rights can be integrated into the overall concept of equality.

Feminism should be non-hierarchical, inter-generational, and focus on individuality, not based on roles, and should respect and celebrate diversity.

## GROUP 3

- Discussions were around the importance of changing the system, ethnicity, and women's rights, linking positions, using one's voice, challenging patriarchal ideologies, and reclaiming power. It highlights the concept of 'ubuntu', 'humanity', and the potential to challenge male domination and reclaim power. Society often underestimates women's knowledge and wisdom. A participant used the example of the Mauri Community house as a model of that feminist can use. The model shows that all sides of the house were important to achieving total wellbeing. (Annex II).

## Existing Mechanisms Addressing Decoloniality in the Context of VAWG.

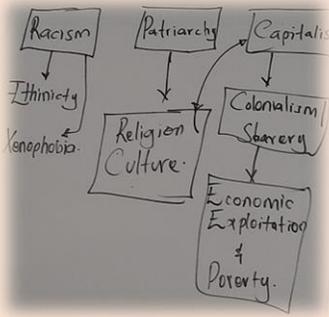
**Understanding feminism in our context requires connecting it to the global system. Connecting to the broader system helps identify issues like discrimination and connects us all in the Global South. Questioning ideologies like patriarchy and the dominant male role can help challenge our understanding of the system and its implications. The method of doing this is referred to as ‘Intersectionality’.**

## INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality connects oppression systems within our context, addressing decoloniality in violence against women and girls. It focuses on how one system affects another, influencing the experience of gender-based violence.

Participants discussed oppression systems and how they are connected.

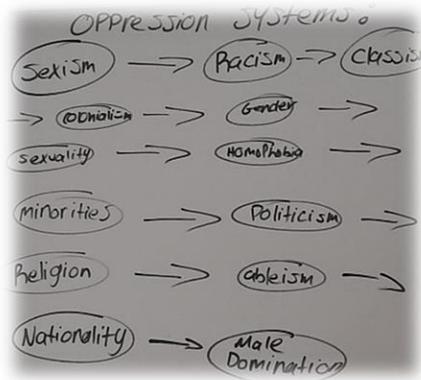
## GROUP 1



For this group, racism, ethnicity, and xenophobia were prevalent issues, with xenophobia requiring migration, while ethnicity is often limited to state borders post-colonialization.

Capitalism, rooted in colonialism, includes slavery and perpetuates economic exploitation and poverty. Rural areas are often associated with poverty, and land ownership is often a family-based decision. Religion and culture also play a role in the colonization system, with missionaries strengthening policies and capturing minds.

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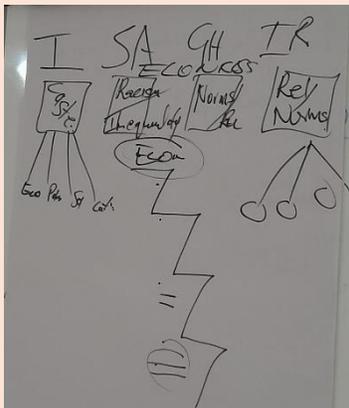


**GROUP 2**

The group discussed various issues such as sexism, racism, classism, colonialism, gender, sexuality, homophobia, minority groups, politicism, religion, ableism, nationality, and male domination. They highlighted how these intersect, leading to increased violence and violence against different groups. Nationalism and gender also intersect, with geographical location affecting violence against women.

They emphasized the need to revisit Vienna's declaration of women's rights as human rights, as society has socialized us to believe we belong to someone else without our own voice.

**GROUP 3**



The group identified oppressive systems in India, South Africa, Ghana, and Iraq, highlighting caste, racism/inequality, religion/norms, and economic issues. Each system led to divisions and categorizations, highlighting the interconnected nature of these systems.

The Global South faces significant violence and oppressive systems, including religion, sexism, and nationalism. Religion was once a form of spirituality, but colonizers used it as a tool for oppression. Decolonizing religion, sexism, and nationalism is crucial. Gender, a system in itself, cuts across all oppression systems, making women the most marginalized. Addressing these issues is essential for a more just and equitable global South.

Intersectionality, a concept rooted in western white feminist movements, highlights the interconnectedness of marginalized groups within the majority and the privileged in the minority, highlighting the shared struggles of all.

On the field of work as feminists, it is important to *identify* marginalized groups and *redistribute* them based on context, rather than using decoloniality approach. Develop *unique models* and use them based on *specific needs*.

There was an open forum for questions:

#### OPEN FORUM

**Question:** Do you think that struggle around redistribution comes from the possibility that the narrative of liberation is very much linked to capitalist consumerism and therefore, when we think about redistribution, we think about losing and someone else gains as opposed to creating justice?

**Answer:** In decoloniality, it's crucial to recognize and redistribute the system's losses and injustices. Recognizing that everyone is a loser is essential for effective redistribution. This includes understanding how nationalism affects others, creating a sense of entitlement, and recognizing the state's abuse in other oppressive systems.

**Submission:** The participant observed that the analysis reveals multiple strategies that are necessary for addressing the issue, considering the societal systems and beneficiaries, and adjusting a redistribution mechanism accordingly.

**Submission:** The participant suggests that consciousness should be encouraged through continuous discussion and debate, familiarizing the masses with concepts and making them adaptable. She mentioned the growing Anti-gender movements in Niger, highlighting the importance of researching and understanding local concerns.

**Submission:** For another participant, feminism is an ideology promoting equality, but it requires continuous connection with others and the people we fight for, fostering knowledge and awareness about women and girls.

**With the oppressive systems identified and duly connected, the facilitator drew attention to the patterns of connectivity. With examples from the presentations of every group, she highlighted how some systems generated others. This was referred to as structural violence.**

### STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

**Gender-based violence is influenced by each system, with intersectionality revealing connected oppressive systems. Structural violence arises when one form of oppression introduces another, influencing other forms of abuse or violence.**

**Groups were asked to identify at least one form of structural violence and how it is connected or has influenced other forms of violence.**

#### GROUP 1

Group one, linked Religion to economic, gender-based violence, sexual violence, and social exclusion, contributing to patriarchy, racism, and class discrimination.



They discussed women's roles as sacrificial lambs in Ghana, discrimination against women in poverty, and the intersection of religion, racism, patriarchy, and classism in South Africa.

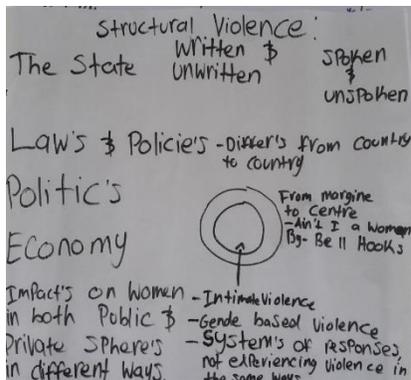
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The discussion delved into the societal issues of women's sacrificial roles in Ghana, discrimination against them in poverty, and the interplay of religion, racism, patriarchy, and classism in South Africa.

Religion, patriarchy, capitalism, and racism contribute to poverty, particularly for women, who often face unpaid care work and are denied sexual and reproductive rights.

## GROUP 2

Group 2 looked at how Economic violence affects GDP by affecting education, standard of living, and health. Black women have a lower standard of living than white males, while white males dominate in education and health. Economic violence affects GDP by affecting black women and males.



## GROUP 3

Structural violence affects everyone and varies across countries, regions, and religions. Factors like state laws and policies, such as South Africa's laws on wills and claims, can impact individuals differently, such as distributing money to husbands.

The politics of power dynamics impact the economy, impacting women in public and private spheres, and varying responses to intimate violence and silence among different groups.

Structural violence can be written or unwritten, but the unwritten ones are the ones that mostly fight against us, and sometimes find their way into the written ones.

**After the group activity, Dr. Afaf Jabiri, brought out some few observations to assist in activism work.**

## OPEN FORUM

ISSUES ARISING

✚ To challenge systemic biases, avoid generalizations about race and gender, analyze and personalize experiences, and acknowledge that systems exist, such as black women in cities and landowners.

✚ As activists, we must strategize to challenge the system when we find ourselves outside the problem, affecting our work and ability to address issues from a distance.

✚ A participant noted that the lack of data in addressing issues hinders effective strategies and requires a deeper understanding of the situation and clear questioning of the provided data.

✚ Another inclusion by a participant was that the class divide makes women to dispense violence against other women. So the categorization for contextualization is very important.

✚ For another participant there was the need to decolonize the justice system, highlighting that certain procedures can be particularly dehumanizing to women.

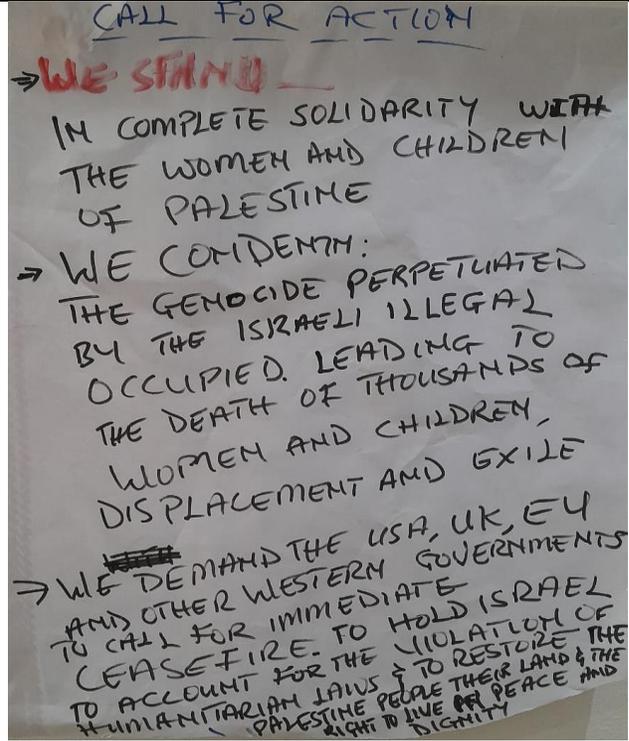
✚ The question arose whether women in parliament represent the state or the state to the women, as they are often seen as the representative of the violent state.

### Session Three

**INEVAWG, in responding to how feminists need to address matters affecting women and children and understanding structural violence decided to put out three (3) actions of solidarity to the people of Palestine in this time of war and injustice.**

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## ACTIONS OF SOLIDARITY

 <p><u>CALL FOR ACTION</u></p> <p>→ <b>WE STAND</b> ...</p> <p>IN COMPLETE SOLIDARITY WITH THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF PALESTINE</p> <p>→ <b>WE CONDEMN</b>:</p> <p>THE GENOCIDE PERPETUATED BY THE ISRAELI ILLEGAL OCCUPIED, LEADING TO THE DEATH OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DISPLACEMENT AND EXILE</p> <p>→ <b>WE DEMAND</b> THE USA, UK, EU AND OTHER WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO CALL FOR IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE, TO HOLD ISRAEL TO ACCOUNT FOR THE VIOLATION OF HUMANITARIAN LAWS &amp; TO RESTORE THE PALESTINE PEOPLE THEIR LAND &amp; THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY</p>	<p><u>CALL FOR ACTION</u></p> <p>→ <b>WE STAND</b> ....</p> <p>IN COMPLETE SOLIDARTIY WITH THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF PALESTINE.</p> <p>→ <b>WE CONDEMN</b> ....</p> <p>THE GENOCIDE PERPETUATED BY THE ISRAELI ILLEGAL OCCUPIERS LEADING TO THE DEATH OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DISPLACEMENT AND EXILE.</p> <p>→ <b>WE DEMAND</b>....</p> <p>THE USA, UK, EU AND OTHER WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO CALL FOR IMMEDIATE CEASE FIRE, TO HOLD ISRAEL TO ACCOUNT FOR THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMANITARIAN LAWS AND TO RESTORE THE PALESTINIANS THEIR LAND AND THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY.</p>
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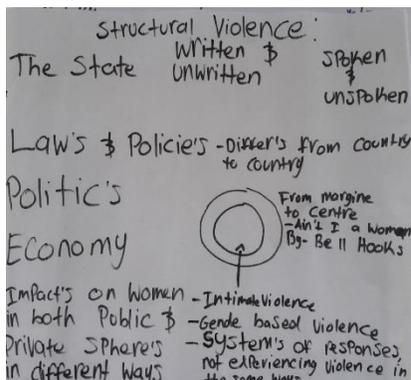
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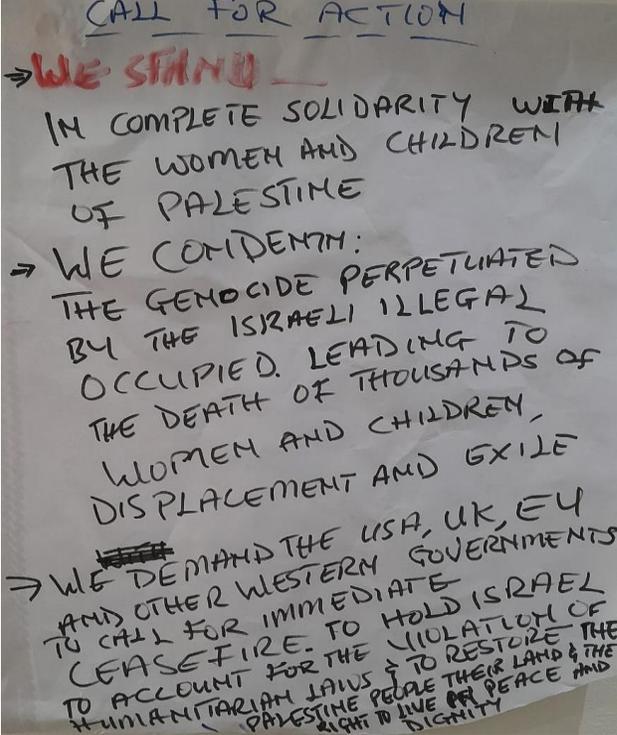
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## ACTIONS OF SOLIDARITY

 <p><u>CALL FOR ACTION</u></p> <p>→ <b>WE STAND</b></p> <p>IN COMPLETE SOLIDARITY WITH THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF PALESTINE</p> <p>→ <b>WE CONDEMN:</b></p> <p>THE GENOCIDE PERPETUATED BY THE ISRAELI ILLEGAL OCCUPIED, LEADING TO THE DEATH OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DISPLACEMENT AND EXILE</p> <p>→ <b>WE DEMAND</b> THE USA, UK, EU AND OTHER WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO CALL FOR IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE, TO HOLD ISRAEL TO ACCOUNT FOR THE VIOLATION OF HUMANITARIAN LAWS &amp; TO RESTORE THE PALESTINE PEOPLE THEIR LAND &amp; THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY</p>	<p><u>CALL FOR ACTION</u></p> <p>→ <b>WE STAND ....</b></p> <p>IN COMPLETE SOLIDARTIY WITH THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF PALESTINE.</p> <p>→ <b>WE CONDEMN ....</b></p> <p>THE GENOCIDE PERPETUATED BY THE ISRAELI ILLEGAL OCCUPIERS LEADING TO THE DEATH OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DISPLACEMENT AND EXILE.</p> <p>→ <b>WE DEMAND....</b></p> <p>THE USA, UK, EU AND OTHER WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO CALL FOR IMMEDIATE CEASE FIRE, TO HOLD ISRAEL TO ACCOUNT FOR THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMANITARIAN LAWS AND TO RESTORE THE PALESTINIANS THEIR LAND AND THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY.</p>
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## IDENTIFYING THE STRATEGIC ISSUES TO CARRY FORWARD INTO 2024/25

The concept of identifying structural violence at the national or local level must be applied globally, linking it to violence in the Global South and local areas.

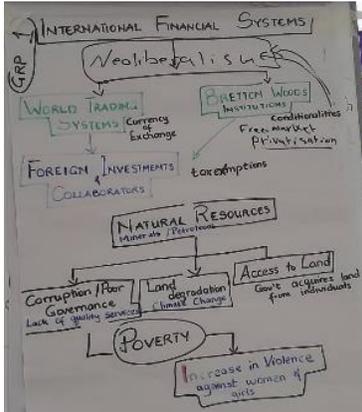
In groups, participants were to identify a structural violence at the global level and trace it down to the local oppressive system and how they influence or create violence against women and girls.

**Topic: What is the Structural Violence Globally? Identify the actors/ institutes/ agencies involved.**

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## GROUP 1

In Ghana, New Zealand, and South Africa, political-dominated economies led to a focus on neoliberalism's International Financial Systems, including Bretton Wood Institutions and World Trading Systems.



World Trading Systems use the dollar as the exchange currency, disadvantaging poor countries and attracting foreign investment, thereby affecting local organizations and reducing their competitiveness in international trades.

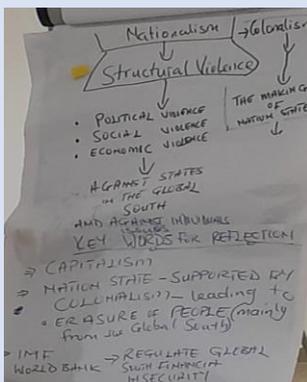
Poor governance, corruption, and cheap state resource distribution lead to poor governance and inability to provide essential services to citizens. Corruption also encourages foreign interventions, such as Bretton Wood Institutions, which perpetuate poverty and cheap natural resource

distribution.

Overexploitation of natural resources leads to land degradation, climate change, and land loss. Land degradation prevents farming, water pollution, and imports. Some lose lands to foreign corporations in exchange for goods due to scarcity and lack.

This Global Structural System leads to poverty, which in turn increases violence against women and girls.

## GROUP 2:



Capitalism, involving free markets, evolved into Racism, a variable of Colonialism, which is maintained through nation-state formation.

The rise of fundamentalism and nationalism has led to structural violence, affecting all, including women, based on class, sexuality, and age, resulting in physical, social, and economic violence.

The discussion highlighted global issues of economic, social, and political violence, especially for women in the Global South, and the impact of capitalism, nationalism, global markets, and colonialism.

### GROUP 3



Racism and capitalism in global trade, intellectual property, have contributed to economic inequality and property ownership issues. The Covid pandemic has highlighted these issues, with trade policies defining poor countries and resulting in financial flaws. Mobility restrictions and societal expectations for beauty, particularly in GBV, further exacerbate these issues. Language erasure and privatization of education, healthcare, and transport have led to high indebtedness and commodification. Cultural imperialism and Eurocentric Christian family structures complicate succession and property access. These factors contribute to high indebtedness and poverty.

**Observations from the group activity presentation, were made by both the facilitator and the participants in the following plenary discussions.**

#### Plenary Discussions

- ✚ Ideologies, such as capitalism and neoliberalism, create systems with conditionalities based on control. Investigating and identifying these ideologies is crucial for understanding our opponents.
- ✚ The focus has shifted from identifying religious and gender issues to identifying the main systems behind violence, a commendable step towards decoloniality.
- ✚ Racism has led to a loss of social and earthly connections, and it is crucial to reestablish these connections to maintain their existence.
- ✚ The third generation is being allowed to use English as their first language without learning their native language, reverting to the colonial era and hindering their independence.

**With all issues concerning decoloniality ironed out, Dr. Afaf threw the question across to the groups to engage themselves on their work so far. To critique their work as feminists.**

## As CSOs/NGOs what are we challenging? Criticisms?

### GROUP 1

*NGOs often follow colonist agendas, making it difficult to challenge the system. We prioritize immediate needs over global systems and require donor funds. It's crucial to consider whether individual or NGO strategies align with the conference's agenda and funding sources.*

### GROUP 2

*Lobbying is crucial for implementing change and disrupting spaces, promoting inclusivity and celebrating diverse knowledge. It calls for accountability from state actors and calls for local lobbying and collaboration with state worker forums and existing networks.*

### GROUP 3

*Racism and tribalism are prevalent in South Africa, causing fear between white and black people. This divide affects language and access, and activism aims to move beyond this, focusing on the bottom rather than the top, with progress made by few women.*

**Open Forum: Issues arising from the group discussion are as follows:**

- + Funders often integrate racist policies into government programs and agreements, despite their perceived oppression and colonization, despite their lack of concern about the situation.**
- + In order to decolonize, the colonizers' methods of doing things must be disrupted, and acceptance, participation, and work habits must alter. NGOs operating in Palestine, for example, are compelled to sign anti-terrorism documents that run against to the goals of Palestinian activity and freedom. As organizations, we must develop our expertise through training and capacity building in order to increase our value.**

## Closing Remarks

In her closing remarks, Lesley-Ann thanked all present for their tremendous contribution, zeal, and enthusiasm during the dialogue. It is her hope that the network will grow stronger to fight against violence against women and girls.

