



The Women Movement in Uganda

Women's Organizing & Mobilizing is a Force for Change | 2018



Women listeners club from Kijayo who are members of the movement

Introduction

Recognizing that rural women in particular are disproportionately experiencing the compounded and interlinked impacts of investment in land, extraction of natural resources, climate change, restrictions to civic space and patriarchal social norms, in October 2016 the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) and National Association of Women's Action in Development (NAWAD) initiated a movement for women to have a say on energy, fossils and climate justice issues in addition to agribusiness and extractive industries.

To date, NAPE, NAWAD and Community women groups have identified 1,500 Ugandan women who are passionate about building a vibrant eco-feminist movement.

Over the next two years, our goal is to mobilise 5,000 rural women to influence decision making in national development processes as well as promote the adoption of feminist development alternatives in communities affected by resource extraction and large development projects.



“ The world is because we are, women can drive change! ”

Our Goal



To build an Eco-feminist movement in Africa in general, and Uganda in particular for democratised renewable energy, women's rights, climate and environmental justice.

With an eco-feminist perspective, we will challenge foreign imposed destructive development models and patriarchal systems that impact negatively on our natural resources, our bodies and health, take away our food sovereignty, expose us to undesirable climate phenomena, subject us to extreme poverty, deny us a space in decision-making and maintain us as subordinates.

Our Objectives

Together with the National Steering Committee, and in close collaboration with our alliances regionally and globally we will work towards:

Together with the National Steering Committee, and in close collaboration with our alliances regionally and globally we are working towards:

- Developing women's position and strengthening their power in the family, community and society.
- Ensuring women's social and economic rights and control over resources.
- Ensuring women's equal influence in decision-making and ability to exercise political power at different levels.
- Promoting and drawing from women's lived experiences, alternatives and demands to develop our desired interventions.
- Ensuring women's control over their bodies.
- Putting an end to all forms of violence against women.
- Organising and building a women movement to advance social justice.



Members Kaiso Tonya women's group who are part of the women movement

Why the Women Movement now?

In developing countries like Uganda and emerging economies, women and girls do not have adequate access to their rights to food, clean healthy and/or safe environment and rights, to participate in policies decisions, and to resist violence & inequality.

The situation is worsening by the entry of large-scale extractives & plantation industries in rural areas which is inevitably accompanied by mega 'infrastructure' investments such as roads, crude oil pipelines and energy projects like dam that brings great hardship to peasants, indigenous peoples, rural dwellers and women. The main cause of this violation is the unequal relations of power based on gender.

Women disproportionately lose or are displaced from land as a side effect of large-scale infrastructure, mining or land conversion projects. Women are also more likely to suffer than men in natural disasters, such as those induced by climate change.

Yet women play vital roles in the management of natural resources, and fight to preserve access to resources for

their families and communities. However, this work by women, at the grassroots level, is often not recognised or valued.

The Women Movement is seizing space to organize and mobilize women to collectively make the change we have been thinking of, imagining and desiring.

The women Movement is practicing a change in the thinking, approaches and practices of development away from the 'unsustainable models' that create injustices and feeds the social and environmental crisis we face.

“ Women represent the most obvious group to lead effective responses to these effects and also nurture amongst themselves leaders of social struggles ”



Photo credit: NAPE

“ There is nothing for us without us ”

Penina Ruhindi, a member of the Women Movement



“ We have eco-feminist development alternatives to energy poverty, food sovereignty, leadership and sustainable solutions to manage natural resources ”

Esther Abigaba, member of the Women Movement

How Change Will Happen

The women movement is focusing on long-lasting change and transformational change in the lives of women. To do this, we are using the following approaches to realize the changes we desire



- ◀ **Power - sharing**
- ◀ **Non - hierachy**
- ◀ **Inclusiveness**
- ◀ **Collective accountability**
- ◀ **Diversity**
- ◀ **Transparency**
- ◀ **African Sisterhood collective Leadership**
- ◀ **African Sisterhood Movement Building**
- ◀ **Feminist Political & Popular Education**
- ◀ **Propose Eco - Feminist Development Alternatives**
- ◀ **Lift Women's Voices, Aspirations, Demands**
- ◀ **Regional Narrative & Solidarity Actions**

“ Women are the real architects of society. We are working to shape the world we want. We will not get there by wishing for it. Because we have a voice and we are strong there is no limit to what we as women can accomplish ”

Photo credit: Womankind

Esther Abigaba and Blandina Tumwebaze of the Women Movement discussing their challenges



Where we are working

The movement is working with rural women in Uganda to demand and promote women's rights.



Photo credit: Womankind

The Eco-feminist Movement of Uganda is here:

To walk alongside you as you organize and change your world.

Walk along side you as you confront multiple oppressions.

Walk along side you as you make and take the alternatives in your homes, organisations and the space that you go into.

Walk along side you as you colour and paint the world you want.

We cannot walk for you, nor should we try.

We cannot pretend to walk in your shoes.

But we can work to understand your terrain.

We can struggle alongside you to craft and co-create a new me, a new society and new place to call home.

This Poem was developed by Ugandan Sisters during the Feminist School held in Ghana, 2017

Our Core Values

1> Unity in sisterhood to turn women's tears into triumph



Image source: Google

The movement promotes and strengthens the feeling of oneness, togetherness and harmony for common goals.

No leaving any woman behind in the struggle for Justice.

2> Respect for each woman's view because it counts



Image source: Google

The movement emphasizes positive feelings or actions shown towards each other, considering or held in high esteem for the contributions they make.

This conveys a sense of admiration for good qualities of everyone and is the process of honoring each other by exhibiting care, concern, or consideration for all women's feelings.

3> Inclusiveness because our struggles do not discriminate against class, colour, religion, or sexual orientation



Image source: Google

The movement accommodates women from diverse backgrounds and orientations. The movement values the perspectives and contributions of all women, and incorporates their perspectives into the actions and activities of the movement.

4> Solidarity as we stand with each other through thick and thin



Image source: Google

Standing with each other is the only way to resist all forms of oppression. The movement fosters collaboration within its members to help deconstruct oppression by recognizing that every woman experiences oppression differently.

The Movement is made-up of the following NGOs, CBOs & Women Groups and it is growing



Kakindo Orphans Care
Helping communities Achieve their full potential



Photo credit: NAPE

Songs and plays that inspire women struggles are key to our organising

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