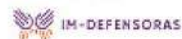


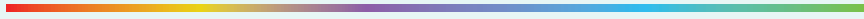
OUR VOICES OUR FUTURES

**GLOBAL PARTNERS SUMMIT
2025 REPORT**
2nd - 4th April, Kenya



consortium strategic partner





Attributions

You are free to share, copy and redistribute this publication in any medium or format under the following terms: You must give appropriate credit and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests that the publisher endorses you or your use.

Non-commercial: You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

No derivatives: If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not distribute the modified material.

Our Voices Our Futures (OVOF) Global Partners Summit 2025 Report
2nd – 4th April, Kenya
Copyright 2025

Published by: OVOF

Editors: Annette Atieno, Zema Z

Layout and designed by: OV Media



Table of Contents

- IV Executive Summary
- V Background and Context

Day 1

Community Spaces.

- 2 Opening and Context Setting
- 5 Panel 1: Movement Shifts, Resilience, and Political Realities
- 9 Deep Dive 1: Social-Economic Empowerment
- 13 Strategy Lab: Securing Our Movements – Strategies from the Frontlines

Day 2

Our Voices

- 23 Morning Grounding and Artistic Presentation
- 24 Panel 2: Power of Voice
- 31 Panel 3: Activism as Resistance
- 39 Mapping Lessons, Shaping Futures

Day 3

Our Futures

- 51 Panel 4: Feminist Holistic Protection Approach
- 56 Session: Feminist Money Laundering
- 61 Closing Panel: Envisioning Queer Futures
- 68 Key Recommendations
- 71 Conclusion and Next Steps
- 73 Acknowledgments
- 74 Gala Photos



Executive Summary

The Our Voices, Our Futures (OVOF) Global Partners Summit brought together 77 activists, strategic partners, and allies representing structurally silenced communities from across the Global South. For three days, participants engaged in deep reflection, knowledge sharing, and strategic planning focused on building resilience, fostering collective care, and strengthening movements in increasingly challenging political contexts. The summit took place against a backdrop of significant global and regional challenges, including shrinking civic space, the rise of anti-gender movements, increasing surveillance of activists, and funding restrictions following the 2024 U.S. presidential election. Participants from Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Sudan, and Uganda shared experiences of navigating authoritarian governments, armed conflicts, and conservative backlash targeting marginalised communities.

Despite these challenges, the summit highlighted the movements' remarkable resilience and creativity across the Global South. Participants shared innovative sustainability, protection, and advocacy strategies, emphasising the importance of cross-movement solidarity and mutual support.

Key themes

Key themes that emerged throughout the summit included:

1. **Resilience and Adaptation:** Movements finding ways to continue their work despite increasing restrictions and threats, developing innovative approaches to navigate hostile environments.
2. **Collective Care and Protection:** Recognition of the importance of feminist holistic protection, mental health support, and sustainable approaches to security that centre wellbeing.
3. **Sustainable Resourcing:** Critical reflections on funding models and power dynamics in philanthropy, with calls for more flexible, responsive, and dignifying approaches.
4. **Cross-Movement Solidarity:** The strengthening of connections across different movements and regions, recognising shared struggles and the power of collective action.
5. **Creative Resistance:** The vital role of art, storytelling, and cultural expression in movement building, healing, and advocacy.

The summit concluded with a collective visioning exercise on the future of movements for gender justice and human rights in the Global South, emphasising the need for transformed funding models, increased movement autonomy, and continued solidarity across borders. This report documents the rich discussions, strategies, and insights shared during the summit, offering a resource for activists, organisations, and funders committed to supporting the rights and well-being of structurally silenced communities globally.

Background and Context

About OVOF

The Our Voices, Our Futures (OVOF) Programme is a Global South initiative focused on enhancing the voice, increasing the visibility, and securing the civic participation of structurally silenced women and communities in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Sudan, and Uganda.

OVOF works with women who are historically silenced, stigmatised, and criminalised due to their identity, form of labour, or activism, such as lesbian, bisexual, transgender women, female sex workers, and women human rights defenders (WHRDS). The program's interpretation of gender is non-binary, including people of other genders in their work across focus regions. The consortium is steered by CREA, a Global Feminist and Human Rights organisation based in New Delhi, in collaboration with four partner organisations:

- * Association for Progressive Communication (APC): An organisation that aims to make digital technologies serve global civil society, focusing on women's rights, gender justice, and digital inclusion.
- * UHAI-EASHRI: Africa's first indigenous activist-led fund supporting sexual and gender minorities and sex worker rights organisations in Eastern Africa.



-
- * WO=MEN: A Dutch advocacy platform that works to advance gender equality and the rights of women, girls, and gender non-conforming persons, both domestically in the Netherlands and internationally.
 - * IM-Defensoras: A Mesoamerican women's human rights defenders (WHRDs) organisation, serving as a strategic partner focusing on feminist holistic protection approaches.

At the heart of OVOF's multifaceted strategy is movement building, securing meaningful and active participation, and re-creating inclusive spaces co-created and curated with revolutionary love and radical hope.



Summit Objectives

The OVOF Global Partners Summit was convened as a networking and exchange platform to facilitate cross-movement dialogue and collaboration among diverse partners from six countries across the Global South. The summit aimed to create a dynamic, inclusive, and interactive space bringing together feminist, women's rights, and sexual and gender rights activists, human rights defenders, and civil society organisations representing and working alongside structurally silenced women and communities from the Global South.

Specific objectives included:

1. Creating a space for reflection on the work accomplished throughout the OVOF program's lifespan.
2. Building new connections and strengthening existing ones across movements and regions.
3. Sharing impactful insights and key learnings from different contexts and approaches.
4. Strengthen collaborative efforts and develop strategies for sustainability beyond the program period.

The summit sought to produce several key outcomes:

- * A comprehensive context update and analysis of organising in all six focus countries, shedding light on the changing landscape.
- * An assessment of achievements and progress made by OVOF partners and their target communities. Celebration of the work OVOF partners have done in all six focus countries and providing opportunities for peer-to-peer exchanges amongst target communities.





Methodology and Approach

The summit was designed based on several key methodological principles inspired by feminist holistic protection approaches:

- * **Self-care and collective care at the centre:** The summit recognised that the well-being and energies of participants were a priority. It included time and spaces for individual and collective healing, upholding traditional knowledge and practices, using arts and physical activities as tools, and intentionally creating space for bonding and celebration.
- * **Learning in theory and practice:** The methodology aimed for a mix of theoretical discussions and hands-on sessions in which participants could put into practice ideas they had been working on or had been exposed to in the summit space.
- * **Flexibility and accessibility:** Centring participants in the methodology required providing space for change and adjustments in both the program agenda and logistics. This included reasonable accommodations for language, physical and emotional needs, and time limitations. Accessibility was considered in the physical space, and the methodology and materials were developed in diverse formats and languages.
- * **Mutual learning and co-creation:** Recognising that OVOF partners operate in different geographical locations with different contexts and realities, a collective approach to structuring the event's sessions and conversations was employed to encourage participants to learn from each other.

Throughout the summit, mind, body, and spirit wellness were centred, with efforts to co-create an environment of mutual respect and understanding. Each day began with grounding exercises led by healers, and opportunities for artistic expression, movement, and reflection were integrated throughout the program




Day 1 Community Spaces.



Opening and Context Setting

Welcome and Grounding

The summit opened with a grounding exercise conducted outdoors, led by healers who invited participants to connect with the earth and with each other. This set the tone for the gathering, emphasising the importance of being present, mindful, and connected to purpose throughout the discussions.



The opening emphasised the significance of creating a space where diverse voices from structurally silenced communities could come together, share experiences, and build strategies for collective action.

The grounding exercises included breathwork, movement, and affirmations that acknowledged both the challenges faced by participants in their activism and the strength found in coming together. Participants were invited to bring their whole selves into the space, recognising that personal wellbeing and collective action are deeply interconnected.

Cleo, representing the host organisation, welcomed participants and provided an overview of the program. The opening emphasised the significance of creating a space where diverse voices from structurally silenced communities could come together, share experiences, and build strategies for collective action.



State of Partner Countries

The opening session provided a crucial opportunity to understand the different contexts in which OVOF partners operate. Representatives from the six focus countries shared updates on their political and social environments, highlighting challenges and opportunities.

Uganda

Participants described a context of shrinking civic space, with the **Anti-Homosexuality Act** creating significant dangers for LGBTQ+ communities and those who support them. The law has led to increased surveillance, threats, and discrimination. Additionally, the USAID funding freeze following the 2024 U.S. election has resulted in the closure of many drop-in centres, job losses, and service disruptions for marginalised communities.



Image 1. We Exist, We Resist, We Rise.

Kenya

Activists reported increasing anti-gender mobilisation, including proposed legislation targeting LGBTQ+ rights. They noted that while Kenya's civic space was relatively open compared to some neighbouring countries, conservative religious movements

were gaining influence.

The funding freeze also affected service provision, particularly for key populations in HIV programs.



Image 2. We are not fighting for our rights, but negotiating for our safety.

Sudan

Representatives shared the devastating impact of the ongoing war, which has caused displacement, sexual violence, and humanitarian crises. Women and gender-diverse people face particular risks in conflict areas. Despite these challenges, feminist organising continues, remotely and in-person where possible, with emergency response rooms supporting affected communities and young feminist leaders being trained despite significant personal risks.

Bangladesh

Participants described the aftermath of the student uprising and subsequent political changes, noting that while there had been hopes for increased civic space, extremist groups were targeting indigenous communities and sexual and gender minorities.

The withdrawal of international funding had left many community-based organisations without support.

India

Activists highlighted the increasingly nationalistic political environment, with restrictions on civil society organisations and targeting of Muslim and other minority communities. Digital surveillance and internet shutdowns were used to suppress dissent, while anti-conversion laws were being weaponised against interfaith relationships and religious minorities.

Lebanon

Representatives described the impacts of ongoing conflicts, economic crisis, and political instability. Two of their feminist centres had been bombed during the war, forcing relocation to alternative sites. Despite these challenges, they continued to advance policy advocacy on online gender-based violence and to support refugee and migrant communities.

This landscape analysis provided crucial context for the following discussions, highlighting the common challenges faced across regions and the specific circumstances of each country. It underscored the importance of adaptive, context-specific approaches while identifying cross-regional solidarity and learning opportunities.



Panel 1: Movement Shifts, Resilience, and Political Realities

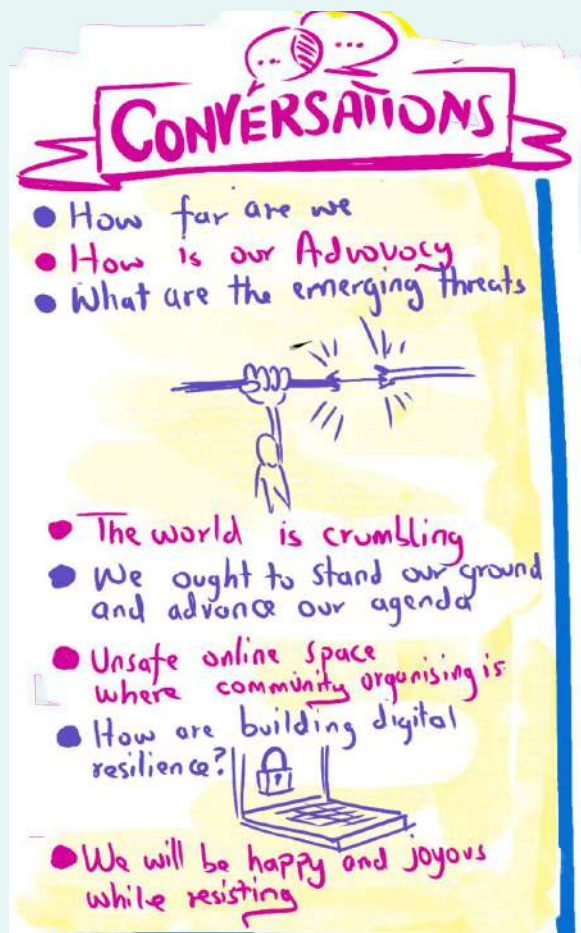


Image 3. Opening conversation highlights.

The opening panel set the stage for deep reflection on the evolving landscape of communities of structurally silenced women and organising. Featuring activists from across the OVOF focus regions, the discussion explored key shifts in movement-building, the impact of emerging threats, and the strategies communities use to sustain and strengthen resistance. Rather than a traditional panel format with speakers at the front, the session was designed as an open conversation where panellists remained in their places among the participants, creating a more inclusive dialogue.

The discussion was moderated by **Tiffany Mugo**, who invited panellists to share from their hearts and experiences.

Political Context and Global Challenges

Participants reflected on the significant impacts of the return of the Trump administration in the United States, noting that its policies were having ripple effects globally.

A participant from Kenya shared concern about the impacts on mental health and advocacy work, noting that the funding freeze had revealed significant gaps, particularly around employment opportunities for queer communities.

A representative from Uganda described the world as **“crumbling and upside down,”** with hatred no longer hiding behind **“beautiful names.”** They noted the increased threats to trans women and the broader impacts of anti-gender movements: **“If you think this just affects trans people, think again. Access to hormones also affects cis people who need treatments.”**

They reported an increase in human rights violations following the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda, but emphasised that **“just as we are dancing on the ashes of the revolution, we have been here before; we are strong as a movement.”**



Image 4. De-center Trump.

The discussion highlighted how authoritarian regimes globally were using similar tactics, with participants noting that statements from the U.S. about recognising only two genders had emboldened leaders in East Africa to take similar positions. The termination of USAID funding has led to job losses and the closure of drop-in centres, creating urgent challenges for service provision and community support.

Digital Security and Online Organising

Several speakers addressed the increasing importance and challenges of online organising. A participant from *Her Internet Uganda* noted that “online spaces are now becoming more unsafe because in offline spaces we can curate who comes into our spaces.

“ They highlighted that platform owners like Elon Musk make decisions based on business interests rather than human rights considerations.”

The discussion challenged the false binary between online and offline organising, with one participant noting:

“The offline-online binary no longer exists. How we exist offline and online is the same. If we think of them as separate, things will slip through the cracks.”

Participants emphasised the need to deepen understanding of digital platforms, navigate them strategically, and consider alternatives.

A representative from APC highlighted the importance of joy and pleasure in online spaces, noting that **“when we talk about community organising, more often than not, we talk about online GBV. Where is the joy and pleasure?”**

They reminded participants of historical resilience in LGBTQ+ movements, quoting Dan Savage’s reflection on the AIDS crisis: **“During the darkest days of the AIDS crisis, we buried our friends in the morning, we protested in the afternoon, and we danced all night.”**

Digital Storytelling and Counter-Narratives

A participant from Point of View in India spoke about their work enabling women, girls, and gender minorities to navigate online spaces freely. They described their approach to digital storytelling, which collects stories and creates counter-narratives from people themselves.



Image 5. Stories should be told by their originators.

“When people tell stories in a very refined way, the power dynamic shifts to them,”

they explained. They emphasised the importance of making digital storytelling accessible regardless of technical expertise: **“If I come from a place that doesn’t allow for more sophisticated tech tools, then we need to use what we have as tools.”**

Their work includes creating a digital archive of stories that challenge stereotypes, particularly about sex workers: **“When we talk of sex workers, we think in a certain way, and when we speak to them, our focus and images shift to their personhood.”**

Resilience and Solidarity

The panel’s participants emphasised the importance of resilience, solidarity, and finding joy despite challenges. A participant currently based in Egypt who works with Jeem, a feminist media organisation publishing knowledge about gender, sexuality, and the body in Arabic, reflected on the impact of conflicts on their work. They had planned a workshop on feminist solidarity in times of conflict, but when war broke out, they had to adapt to producing a podcast instead.



Image 6. We will stand our ground.

They described this adaptation as **“another form of resilience, but it’s soft, it’s kind, and it still keeps the story going.”**

Their work focuses on feminist leadership, movement building, and sexual reproductive health and rights for women and LGBTQI displaced communities in Lebanon, producing knowledge through podcasts, videos, comics, illustrations, and written articles.

The panel concluded with reflections on collective resistance and solidarity. A participant from Uganda encouraged cooperation across different focus areas: **“Despite our different focus areas, how do we work together and enhance each other’s capacities?”**

Others emphasised the importance of telling stories, with one participant noting that

“when we hear stories from other parts of the world, we get hope and continue to survive.”



Deep Dive 1: Social-Economic Empowerment

This cross-regional strategy lab brought together activists working on economic justice for structurally silenced communities. The session explored the intersecting challenges faced by sex workers, trans labourers, and other marginalised groups in accessing economic security. Participants engaged in collective strategy-building to advance economic empowerment, labour rights, and resource mobilisation.



Image 7. Expectations towards the Social-Economic Empowerment conversation.

Economic Vulnerabilities and Strategic Responses

A representative from Uganda shared experiences from operating a drop-in centre since 2014, focusing on health advocacy and economic empowerment of sex workers. She emphasised the importance of financial literacy training, noting that **“sex workers make a lot of money but are not planning well.”**

Her organisation established **Village Savings and Loan Associations (VOSLA)**, creating groups of 15–20 participants who save weekly and share out funds every six months.

15-20

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VOSLA), creating groups of 15-20 participants who save weekly and share out funds every six months.



The impact of the funding pause following the U.S. election had significantly affected their operations. In response, they had established enterprises such as liquid soap production to help sustain their organisation beyond donor funding. Najjuko highlighted the broader consequences of economic exclusion:

“When you are economically not well, you are at risk of putting yourself in risky situations.”

She emphasised that sex workers' economic wellbeing affects their children and families, with economic stress increasing vulnerability to HIV and other health risks.

Digital Storytelling and Economic Narratives

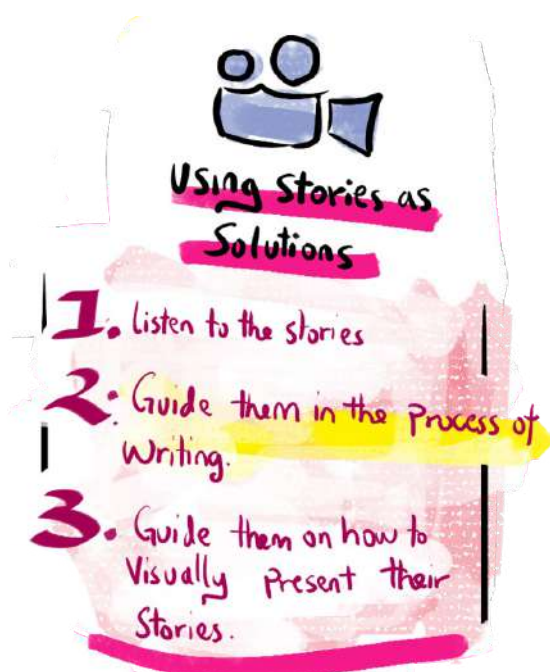


Image 7. Using stories as solutions.

A representative from India discussed how digital storytelling could be used to transform economic narratives about marginalised communities. Their approach involves a five-day workshop process that begins by building rapport with community members, exploring their stories, providing technical assistance, developing visual representations, and finally bringing these elements together. Throughout this process, they emphasised the importance of ensuring community members lead decision-making: **“In the decision-making process, how involved are the community members we are working with?”**

The discussion highlighted how these skills could build economic opportunities. The participant shared the example of a young woman who gained confidence in photography through a workshop and is now a celebrated videographer.

Participants also explored the complex relationship with artificial intelligence (AI), noting that while it could be useful for those lacking confidence, there were significant concerns about how AI systems are trained and which communities are excluded from datasets.



Sex Workers Economic Realities and Strategies

A representative from the Golden Centre for Women's Rights in Uganda shared insights on the challenges faced by sex workers in peri-urban and rural areas. She described how sex workers are highly profiled in rural Uganda, facing sexual, economic, and physical violence. **"In rural areas, you are already seen as a disgrace,"** she explained, highlighting the intersecting stigmas faced by sex workers.



Image 8. Sex workers in Uganda.

Their organisation had developed several economic empowerment initiatives, including the Golden Women's Savings Club, which has 70 sex worker women saving through peer-to-peer systems and bank accounts.

They provided financial literacy training and supported income-generating activities such as lip gloss production ("**Gloss Boss**"), which they marketed through Instagram and other internet platforms.

70

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VOSLA), creating groups of 15-20 participants who save weekly and share out funds every six months.



Another participant shared their work on building exit plans for ageing sex workers, helping them transition to alternative livelihoods through agricultural projects, particularly coffee growing and eggplant cultivation.



Image 9. *Alternative livelihoods for sexworkers.*

They had leased land and developed savings groups where members could accumulate funds for vetted projects. This approach recognised the importance of long-term financial resilience for communities facing multiple forms of exclusion and criminalisation.



Strategy Lab: Securing Our Movements – Strategies from the Frontlines

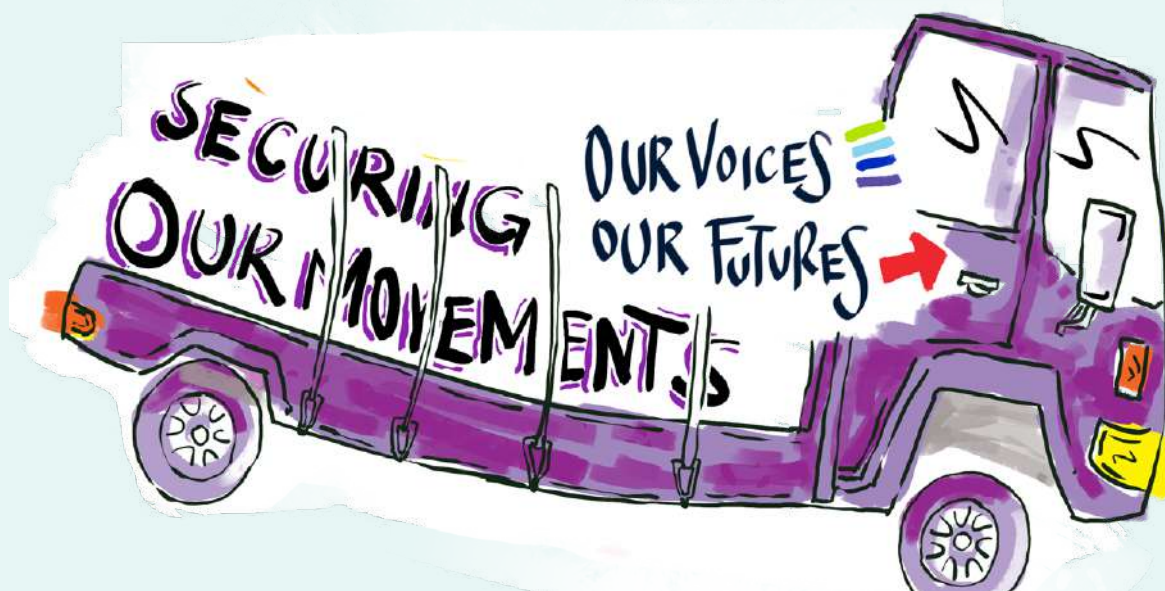


Image 10. Securing our movements.

This lab convened organisers working in high-risk environments to share digital and physical security strategies.

Through interactive discussions, participants explored ways to counter surveillance, prevent infiltration, and build community-led safety structures that ensure the sustainability of their work.

The session began with a grounding energiser led by the facilitator, inviting participants to tap their bodies whilst affirming: **“I’m part of what we are creating here.”**

Participants were encouraged to connect with a partner and share: **“I appreciate the energy you are bringing, and I promise to keep bringing it.”**

Conflict and Gendered Resistance

A representative from **SWRC** in Sudan, shared powerful insights about women’s historical leadership in Sudanese society, including queens who have played pivotal roles throughout the nation’s history. She highlighted women’s crucial contributions to the December 2018 revolution, where despite familial restrictions, women led protests and remained at the frontlines.

“This is not just your right,” she quoted a famous feminist slogan from the revolution, **“it is your rights and the rights of future generations.”** She described how the situation dramatically shifted after 2023, with women now facing sexual violence, forced migration, forced marriage, limited educational access, and female genital mutilation.

Despite these challenges, women continue to organise at the frontlines, creating peace initiatives and emergency response groups. Throughout Sudanese history, **Fatima** emphasised, women have consistently driven the push for peace.

Safe Spaces and Protection Strategies

The representative from **Fe-Male** organisation in Lebanon shared their work since 2013 as one of the few feminist organisations in a country that, despite its relatively liberal reputation, still maintains discriminatory laws and social norms targeting women. In 2018, they established three feminist centres in conservative areas to raise political awareness on feminist issues.



Image 11. Progress in Lebanon.

“Two of our centres were bombed during the war,” **Mariam** explained, describing how they had to establish an alternative centre in a relatively safer area to continue their work while expanding outreach to refugee and migrant worker communities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Fe-Male became the first organisation in the MENA region to address cyber gender-based violence, launching campaigns on online safety for women, girls, and marginalised groups. They are currently drafting legislation to protect women and girls against online GBV and preparing a campaign to gain government support for the law.

The representative from **KISLEB** in Kenya addressed the constant security risks faced by LGBTIQ+ people. They described a comprehensive security response system including hotlines, relocation services for those ousted from their homes, and mental health support through dedicated therapists who understand the trauma queer people experience in their relationships and communities.

2018

The Year Fe-Male established three feminist centres in conservative areas in Lebanon to raise political awareness on feminist issues.



“There were two girls who were chased out of home for being lesbians and had to work in a bar where they were being violated by the bar owner,” Elly shared, highlighting the vulnerabilities that necessitate their protection work.

KISLEB has implemented several innovative strategies:

- * PFLAG sessions for familial reconciliation
- * Community sessions with chiefs and elders as preventive measures
- * Spirituality and sexuality reconciliation through pilgrimage sessions
- * Self-defence training
- * Mapping of high-risk areas

Facing shrinking funding, they've developed collaborative networks like the Western Kenya LBQ Collective to continue providing vital services.

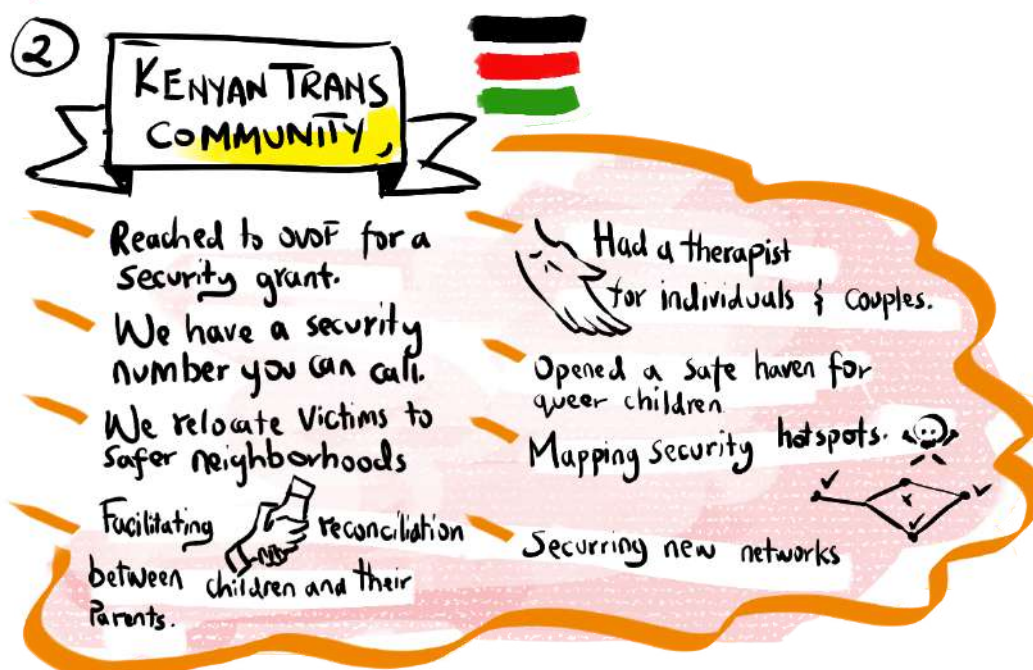


Image 12. Innovative strategies in Kenya.

Digital Security and Countering Misinformation

Sandra Kwikiriza from **Her Internet** Uganda shared their digital security strategies and approaches to countering misinformation. Her organisation creates targeted social media content on various themes:

- * "Motivation Monday"
- * "Tech Tuesday" for awareness of digital threats
- * "Q Tech Up" supporting queer communities in online spaces
- * "Facts and Statistics" on Thursdays
- * "Digital Detox" Fridays encouraging self-care practices online

“Digital security is not just about tools and apps but also attitudes, “

Sandra emphasised. “How do we show up for others and ourselves online?” She noted that digital security extends beyond professional work to personal online presence.

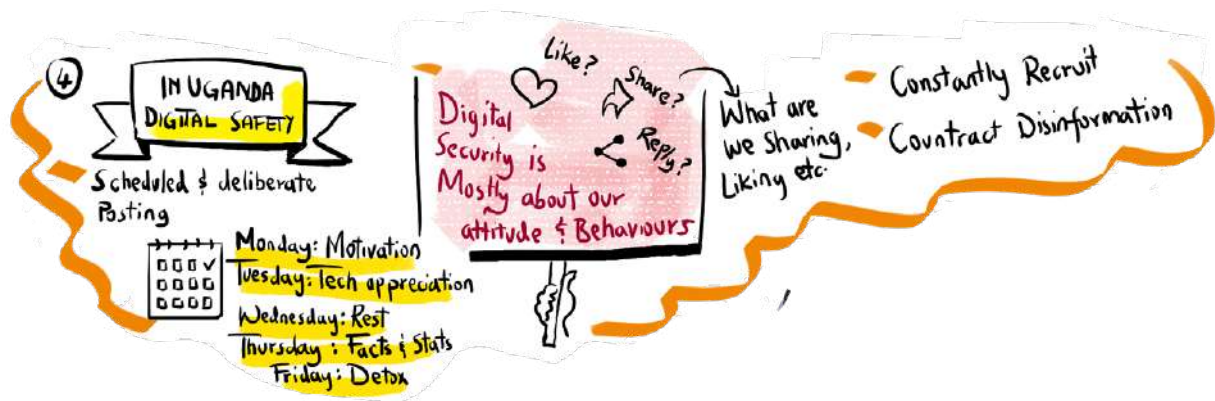


Image 13. Digital safety in Uganda.

The discussion highlighted how disinformation has directly shaped harmful policies, with the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda being a prime example.

Sandra described how an unverified story about a young boy allegedly being sexually assaulted generated moral panic that fueled anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment. “When journalists went digging into this story, they were arrested for trespassing on school property. The story was thus incomplete,” she explained.

“Disinformation shapes policies. We see how disinformation shapes our lives.”

Sandra detailed how false narratives create moral panic around family values and “gender ideology” that distracts activists and fragments movements. “When the AHA was being discussed, it made me think about the work I was doing. We start questioning our work, distracted by the morality of our work,” she reflected.

“Disinformation discredits our progress. Without actors, there’s no movement, no work.”

Mental Health and Resilience

Nasuuna Stellah from the Uganda Network of Sex Worker Organisations addressed the essential but often overlooked importance of mental health support for movement leaders.

“We sit and program for members on the ground, working around stigma, but we also have lives with stressors,” she observed.

“Who takes care of our leaders? We give a lot to the work we do.”

The organisation developed an Executive Directors’ Forum for sex work leaders to prioritise their mental wellbeing. Initially self-funded, the initiative later expanded to include rural and hard-to-reach leaders. Activities include physical exercise, collective healing discussions, and bonding opportunities that help people learn more about each other.

“The sex work movement in Uganda is solid and strong, and they know where their issues are,” she explained, attributing this strength partly to their investment in leaders’ wellbeing.

The forum provides a safe space to discuss personal and organisational challenges, serving as a crucial support system with conflict resolution mechanisms, talking sessions on sustainability, and expert guidance.

Stellah emphasised the importance of funding mental health initiatives at all levels and expressed appreciation for feminist movements that have embraced and stood with sex worker movements during difficult times.

Safe Houses and Feminist Protection

Jelena Dordevic from *IM-Defensoras* shared their experience developing safe houses as a feminist protection strategy. Having left Serbia due to lesbophobia, she presented a publication documenting the experiences of seven healing houses across Latin America and Spain.

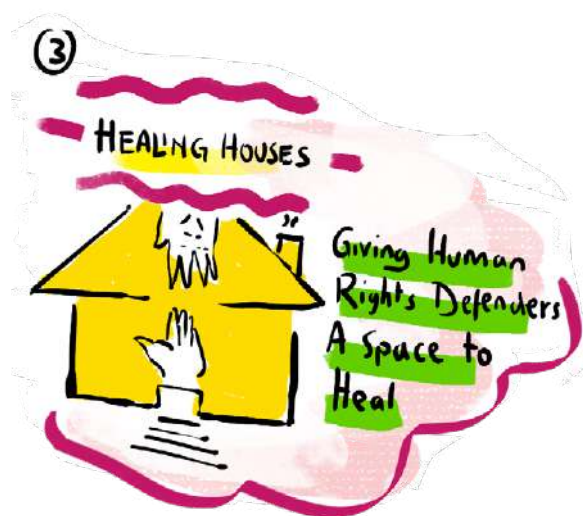


Image 14. Healing houses across Latin America and Spain.

“We need to create strategies of care and protection,” Jelena emphasised. **“These spaces were created in response to the impacts of racism, patriarchy, colonialism, and other systemic oppressions on activists. This cannot be fixed by therapists.”**

She described the healing houses as part of their political vision: **“Care is political.”**

Through a video presentation, participants glimpsed these **“utopian”** environments where activists can gather, pause, and support each other across generations.

Jelena shared powerful testimonials from those who had benefited from these spaces: **“Casa Serana allowed me a space of stillness, as a woman, girl, and as a victim of my brother’s murder,”** read one quote, highlighting the profound healing impact of these environments.

Collective Strategies and Insights

The discussion that followed revealed additional approaches and reflections: A grassroots organiser from Nairobi, emphasised:

“Care is central to the work we do. What good is it if people are burnt out? How can you reimagine your worlds if you are not very dependent on donor funding?”



Image 15. Care is in the little things not the big things.

She recommended reading **“Silences in NGO Discourse”** for a deep analytical critique of the NGO industrial complex, adding:

“We can abolish the NGO industrial complex, not everything has to be monetised. The most important thing we can do is build communities of care.”

Monalisa from Uganda raised questions about leadership development and succession planning: **“Are you able to co-lead with individuals in your organisation? If I step back, will my organisation crumble?”** She emphasised the need to capacitate colleagues so leaders can truly rest and organisations can sustain beyond individuals.

Sara from *Elite LBQ*, who provides safe housing for queer people at the Kenya-Uganda border, reflected: **“We are humans first before we are human rights defenders. We need to take seriously the importance of staying sane.”**

The moderator challenged participants to consider financial solidarity: **“It is important that we represent the people that matter the most. You have a duty as a member of the community to give some money to smaller initiatives.”**

She questioned how movements might sustain themselves without external funding, suggesting collective resource pooling. The representative from *Afrinalia*, working with queer survivors of modern-day slavery, described their **“Shadow Model”** where people shadow established leaders in areas they aspire to work in:

“We should look beyond a three-day training. It is not enough to become a leader; we need more time to actually evolve and learn.”

Others emphasised the importance of decolonising mental health support and care, recognising that different approaches work for different contexts. One participant advocated for reclaiming ancestral healing practices that were stigmatised as **“witchcraft”** during colonisation:

“Why not go back to these practices and not shame people for this type of healing?”

A participant with expertise in digital rights noted how technology access often follows gendered patterns: **“The first phones are usually given to men. We didn’t become trainers because we were experts, but because it was what the community needed.”** they advocated for meeting people where they are with digital security practices, gradually building understanding to make technology less intimidating. The session concluded with the moderator emphasising:

“Part of healing is also having the money to continue healing. Let us also make money so that we continue healing.”





Image 16. More strategies and insights.

Artistic Expressions and Performances

The day concluded with a curated selection of films, documentaries, and performances that amplified stories of resilience, defiance, and joy from across the regions represented at the summit.

Film screenings included:

- * **“Story Beings”** from India, presenting digital storytelling that explored the lived realities of marginalised South Asian communities
- * **“Transitions”** from Uganda, sharing a personal story of gender and becoming, exploring the resilience of trans communities

- * Additional works by **Chambal Media** from India, showcasing creative approaches to documenting social justice issues and community resilience

Exhibitions

Dorothy Awuor Agalla from Kenya presented the **“River of Life”** exhibition, using visual storytelling to trace the journey of sex worker organising in Kenya. The exhibition used rocks to represent obstacles, fish to symbolise strengths, and leaves to show achievements, creating a powerful visual metaphor for movement building despite systemic challenges.

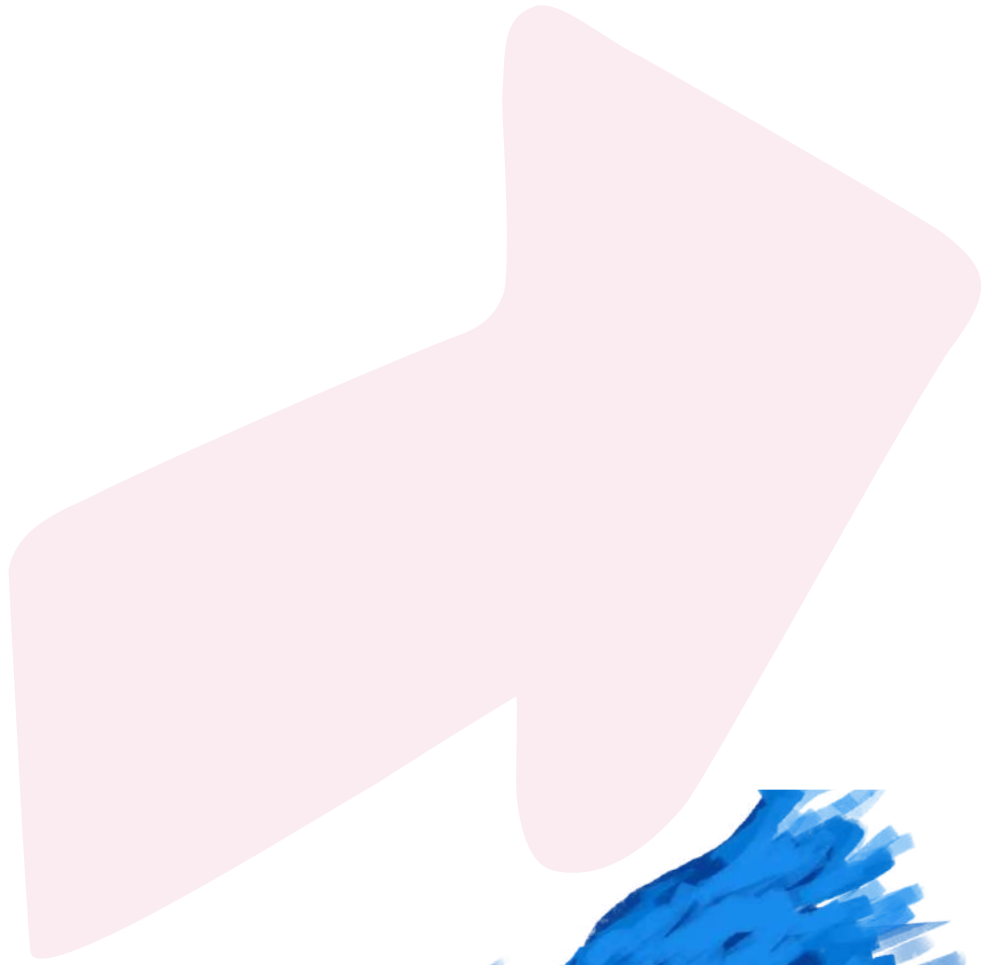
Qarol Wanjugu from **LEHA** presented grassroots sexual and reproductive health rights materials tailored for rural LBQ women in Central Kenya, demonstrating innovative approaches to making information accessible and culturally relevant.

The evening also featured **“Queer Kinship Mural”** by **Shivan Pavin Alungnat**, a vibrant visual dialogue about chosen families, ancestral resistance, and collective healing in queer organising spaces. These artistic presentations created space for emotional connection and reflection, complementing the strategic discussions of the day with embodied, creative expressions of the movement’s values and visions. Participants were encouraged to engage with the exhibitions throughout the gathering.



DAY 2

Our Voices



Morning Grounding and Artistic Presentation


The second day began with a breath and movement session led by Makgati Mokwena, creating space for participants to centre themselves and prepare for the day's discussions.

Following this grounding, several artists shared their work to connect emotionally with the summit's themes.

One participant from Uganda read an excerpt from a short story titled ***"This Tomorrow Was Christmas,"*** about a young woman coming out to her family during Christmas, exploring the tensions and revelations that emerge when she brings her female partner home to meet her mother, who was expecting a man.

A participant from Kenya presented a poem in Kiswahili addressing the experiences of LBQ women finding community despite challenges.

The poem emphasised that; ***"Love is calm, precious, love them for who they are,"*** while also addressing homophobia, urging people not to "let them come in between us because we are bound by love" despite criminalisation and laws designed to instil fear. A participant from Uganda performed a song and dance titled ***"Welcome to Shivanah's Dream,"*** addressing human trafficking, modern-day slavery, and exploitation. The performance involved audience participation, creating a collective expression and solidarity moment.




These artistic presentations set the tone for the day's discussions, grounding intellectual and strategic conversations in lived experiences and emotional realities.



Panel 2: Power of Voice

This session brought together organisers and activists from across geographies to reflect on how feminist, queer, and sex worker movements are resisting erasure and claiming space. The panel examined how storytelling, legal advocacy, and collective care sustain movements in hostile environments.



Many community kitchens had been affected by the USAID freeze, resulting in hundreds of deaths from hunger. Volunteers who previously received monetary support were now working without compensation.

Women in Conflict and Feminist Storytelling

The participant from SWRC in Sudan shared the devastating impacts of war on women in her country. Speaking through a translator, she described how the conflict had affected women through sexual violence, including children who have not been spared. She explained that women's protection is a priority for the movement, yet women who have been raped cannot access abortion services.

2%



Less than 2% reached by feminist emergency response.

Feminist emergency response rooms had been established to provide support in conflict areas. Still, these had only been able to reach less than 2% of those affected, indicating the vast scope of the crisis. In 2024 alone, 221 infants were subjected to sexual violence, with 174 being female. Young girls affected by the war numbered anywhere from 6,000 to 60,000, though these figures were likely underestimates.

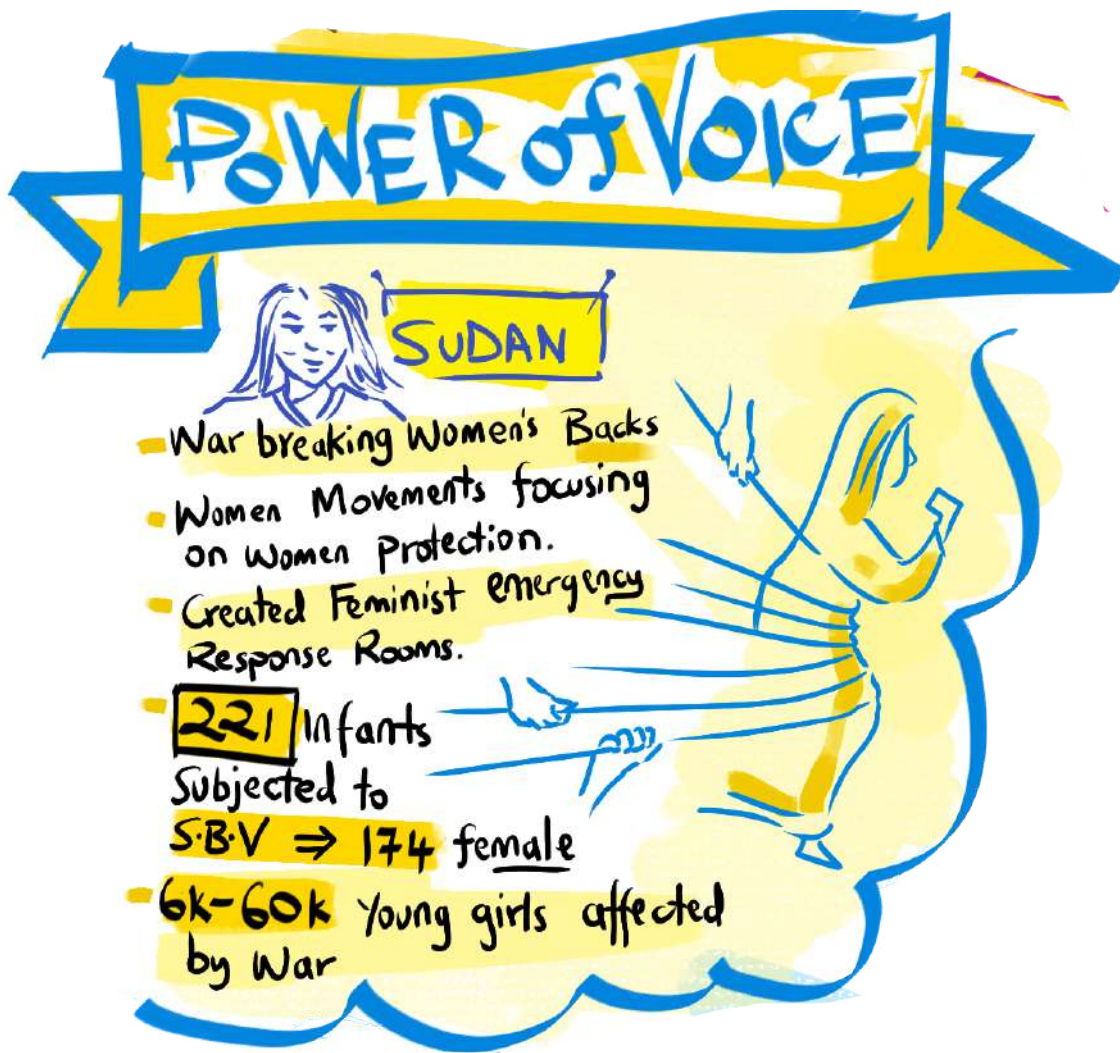


Image 17. Power of Voice.

The emergency response rooms provided food and medical supplies and operated community kitchens offering at least one meal a day before humanitarian aid was stopped. Many community kitchens had been affected by the USAID freeze, resulting in hundreds of deaths from hunger. Volunteers who previously received monetary support were now working without compensation.

Despite these immense challenges, the participant described how women had found innovative ways to support communities, such as creating agricultural cooperatives to fill gaps and support their families.

“There is a lot of feminine solidarity to ensure women are supported,”

she affirmed, thanking countries that had welcomed Sudanese refugees.

In addition to the discussion, the participant later shared that before the war, they had trained 75 young women in feminist schools on feminist methodologies.

This work continued in different ways after the war began, primarily online despite blackouts and connectivity challenges. The young women showed remarkable determination, with some risking capital charges simply for participating in the sessions. These young leaders were being trained to take part in peace processes and to offer psychosocial support to survivors of violence.

Under OVOF, they produced publications and research on technology spaces and platforms, acknowledging the digital divide in their work areas. They had conducted community engagements and digital security training for women in **Kampala, Jinja, and Mbale**.

The participant emphasised the importance of legal advocacy and identifying genuine allies in government spaces:

Digital Rights and Gender Justice

A Women of Uganda Network representative reflected on five years of OVOF programming, noting that Uganda was experiencing “loud and silent conflicts” regarding shrinking civic space. **“It is okay to start over and over again,”** she affirmed, describing how their 25-year-old organisation had evolved to leverage technology for women and girls. Their work had redefined inclusion to encompass LGBTQ+ communities, policymakers, feminists, and people with disabilities.

“We may not move without allies in government spaces, and the tactic is identifying the actual allies and not just fairweather allies but strong allies.”

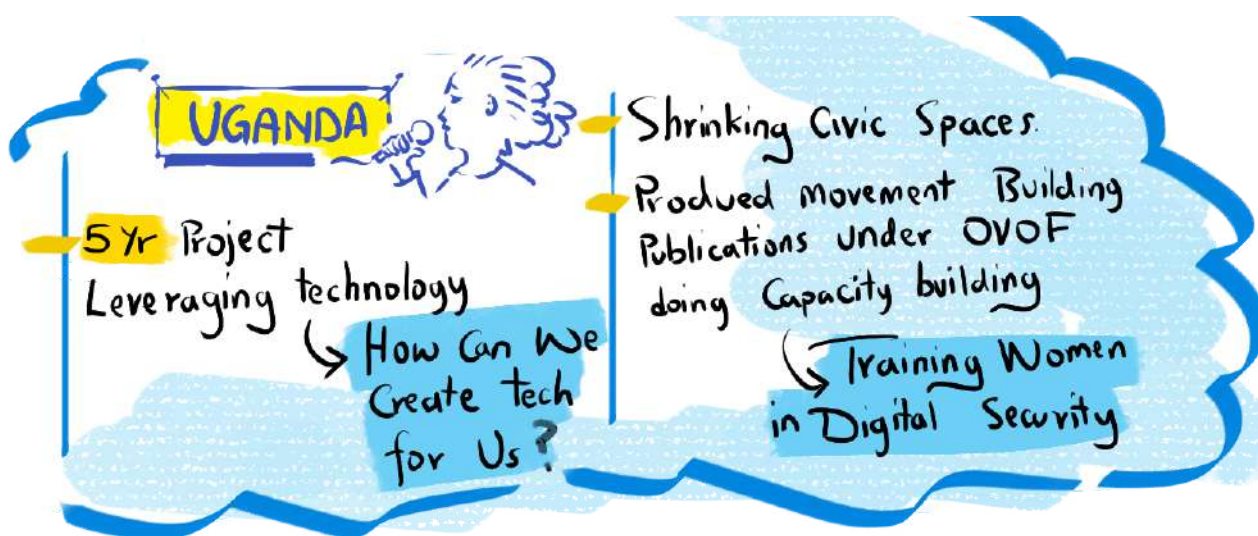


Image 18. Developments in Uganda.



Image 19. Government is made up of people who can be influenced to initiate change.

She observed that while the **“men’s movement”** had a clear ideology they adhered to,

“the women’s movement needs an ideology we stick to through thick and thin.”

The organisation created **“Feminist Tech Pop Ups”** to invite women to develop technology solutions, particularly for people with disabilities. They also focused on risk management tailored to different communities they worked with, citing the example of a woman who feared for her life due to online stalking.

Legal Support for Marginalised Communities

A representative from Bangladesh described her organisation’s work providing legal support to hard-to-reach and marginalised communities. Working with over 2,600 pro bono lawyers and volunteer **“change makers,”** they addressed the unique needs of different communities.

- * **For fisherwoman communities,** they advocated for social safety nets, working with the government to develop appropriate policies.
- * **For sex workers,** they successfully advocated for changes allowing mothers’ names on birth certificates to be sufficient for identity documents.
- * **For people with disabilities,** they focused on accessibility and inclusivity rights.

Their approach emphasised sustainability by working with community-based organisations through a new project focused on creating a safe cyberspace for women and children, responding to increasing technology-facilitated gender-based violence. They also worked with police and policymakers on reforms to cyber laws.

2600

2,600 pro bono lawyers and volunteer change makers.



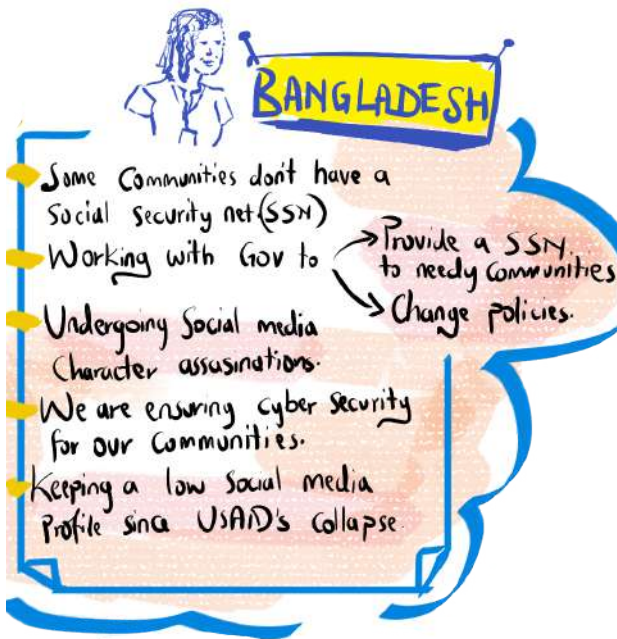


Image 20. Progress in Bangladesh.

One attendee noted that the USAID freeze had significantly impacted their work. Additionally, after recent political upheaval, extremism has increased, requiring greater caution in sharing work online.



Image 21. We need a globally connected outcry.



Sex Worker Movement Building

A representative from Kenya shared the evolution of the sex worker movement in her country. Originally comprising just 2-4 sex worker organisations primarily in Nairobi and Western Kenya, the movement now encompasses 75 organisations able to fundraise and report nationwide. Sex worker organisations were now present even in far-flung areas.



The movement was working on legislation to repeal parts of the laws that criminalise sex work and had identified allied legislators to support these efforts.

She highlighted significant achievements in representation, with sex workers now holding spaces in key decision-making bodies. The chair of the Key Population consortium was a sex worker, and sex workers were represented in both the Kenya Global Fund Mechanism and Kenya PEPFAR. Sex workers had also participated as co-researchers in a national survey on HIV prevalence.



Image 22. Progress in Kenya.

Dorothy described coordinated efforts around violence response, with the Kenya Sex Workers Alliance establishing a hotline and a unified recording tool. The movement had built alliances with others, such as the End Femicide movement.

They were also working on decriminalisation through nationally coordinated efforts, with systems in place, including communications and security strategies for data collection.

She shared an example of discrimination during COVID-19, when a government official found partying after curfew was merely escorted home, while a sex worker found after curfew was taken to forced quarantine.

The movement was working on legislation to repeal parts of the laws that criminalise sex work and had identified allied legislators to support these efforts. The participant acknowledged that internal conflicts had been a significant challenge, describing how **“most of last year this was a big issue.”** The movement had engaged in conflict resolution processes, collective healing, and developing strategies to prevent similar issues in the future.



Panel 3: Artivism as Resistance

This panel showcased the ways queer and feminist artists use creative expression to challenge power structures, build solidarity, and cultivate new possibilities for liberation. Through music, visual storytelling, and performance, the discussion explored how artistic activism strengthens movements and fosters radical imagination.



Image 23. The discussion explored how artistic activism strengthens movements and fosters radical imagination.

Indigenous Women's Poetry and Representation

A speaker from Bangladesh shared work with marginalised communities, including indigenous women from the Chakma Community in the southwest part of the country. They had interviewed over 13 different indigenous communities, working with partners like **Supporting People and Rebuilding Communities (SPARK)**, who guided cultural sensitivities.

Their project offered art fellowships for young people aged 15-19, integrating advocacy and art to address the structural silencing of women both within and outside their communities.

The speaker shared two poems written by indigenous women in the Chakma language, noting that students kept asking about one author who had been abducted

in 1996 for being vocal about rights issues and had not been found since. They described how successive governments had neglected indigenous people despite ongoing protests.

4000

Number of Queer artwork archived by Mondro



13

Number of indigenous communities interviewed.



Following recent political changes, there had been hopes for greater inclusion. Still, when a government publication included a logo depicting various marginalised groups, extremists protested the inclusion of indigenous people, and that branch was removed from the image.

15-19

Age of young people offered art fellowships where they integrated art advocacy and art to address the structural silencing of Women both within and outside their communities.



This symbolic erasure was followed by physical violence, with indigenous students who protested this exclusion being brutally attacked. One female student required 16 stitches. The speaker described this as part of a pattern of targeted violence against indigenous communities, which had intensified since a settlement program in the 1960s that relocated Bengalis to the hilly areas traditionally occupied by the Chakma, leading to cultural clashes and sexual violence.

Through their art fellowships, they were

working to share the struggles that indigenous people were experiencing.



Image 24. Progress in Bangladesh.

Queer Archiving and Protection

A participant from Bangladesh, speaking through a translator, described the work of **Mondro**, a queer archive focused on decolonisation and radical thinking. Initially, they had limited knowledge of archiving techniques but developed approaches to document queer histories from across Bangladesh.

They assessed the political climate's impact on queer people and used art to maintain visibility:

“If we did not do this, we would be invisibilised further.”

Their archive now contained over 4,000 works. Their approach prioritised the safety of artists, using pseudonyms to protect them from extremist targeting despite the archive’s popularity. **“This way we keep our communities safe,”** they explained.

In public exhibitions not explicitly labeled as queer, they included abstract queer artwork accessible to general audiences, subtly conveying messages while avoiding direct attacks.

The Mondro team participated in recent political protests but developed strategies to remain anonymous and safe. OVOF support had helped them implement Feminist Principles around Protection and Safety, enabling them to stay engaged in volatile movements while minimising risks.

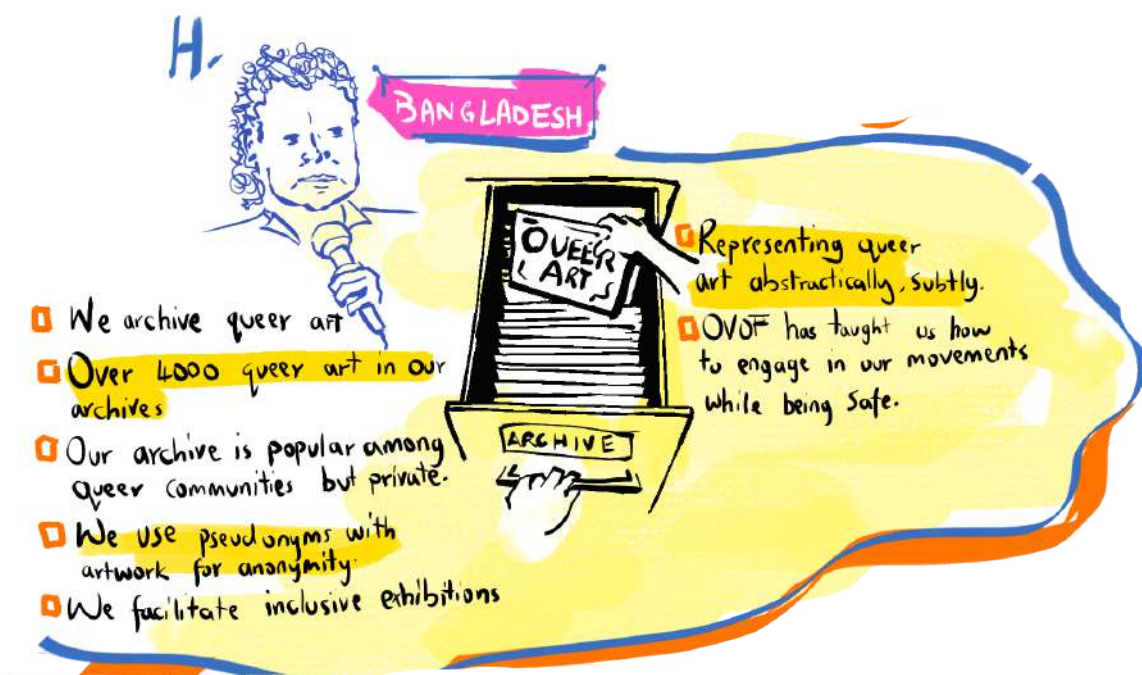


Image 25. Queer archiving and protection.

Mondro’s work expanded under OVOF support, which helped them formalise their operations and support different collectives in activism activities. When conducting public-facing work, they operated under partner organisations’ names rather than their own:

“For safety, we do not use Mondro; we use the partners’ names to keep our community space.”

Art for Community Building and Healing

Multiple participants shared how activism was integrated into their organisational approaches: A representative from **Rela** described creating artistic office spaces that **“feel like home”** and hosting movie nights, followed by discussions.

When the film *“Rafiki”* was released, they observed **“heightened organising and self-acceptance”** in their communities. Their social enterprises produced t-shirts with provocative messages like **“I’m a lesbian, so what?”** and advocacy bracelets worn by community members and allies alike. They created products using African designs to celebrate cultural heritage while supporting economic sustainability.

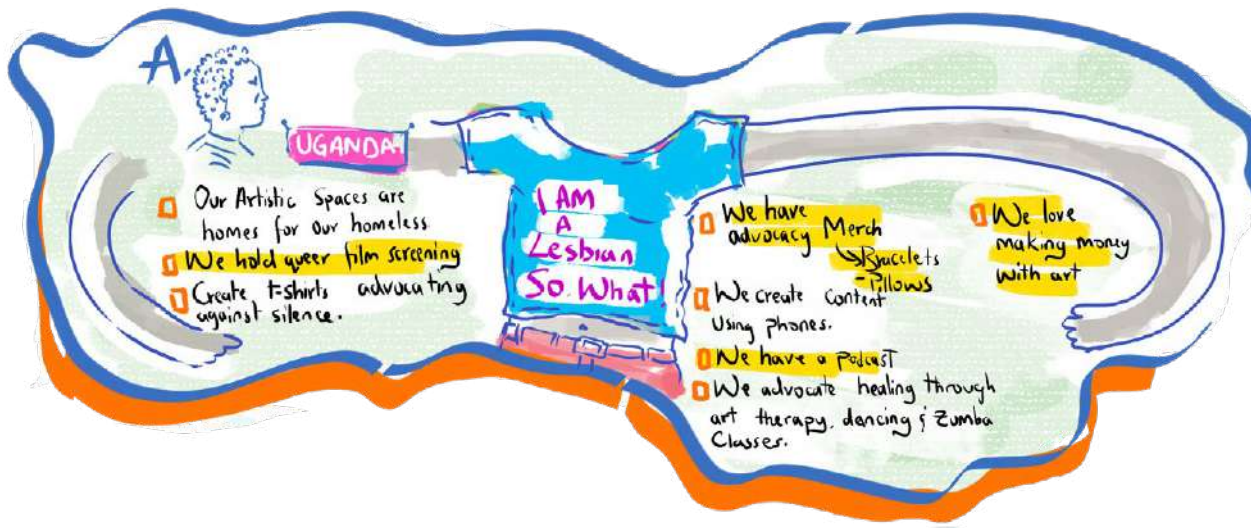


Image 26. *Rela progress in Uganda.*

A participant from Uganda described their organisation, which uses **“Art for social justice for LBQ women.”** They engaged in various forms of artistic expression, from crafts to painting and crocheting.

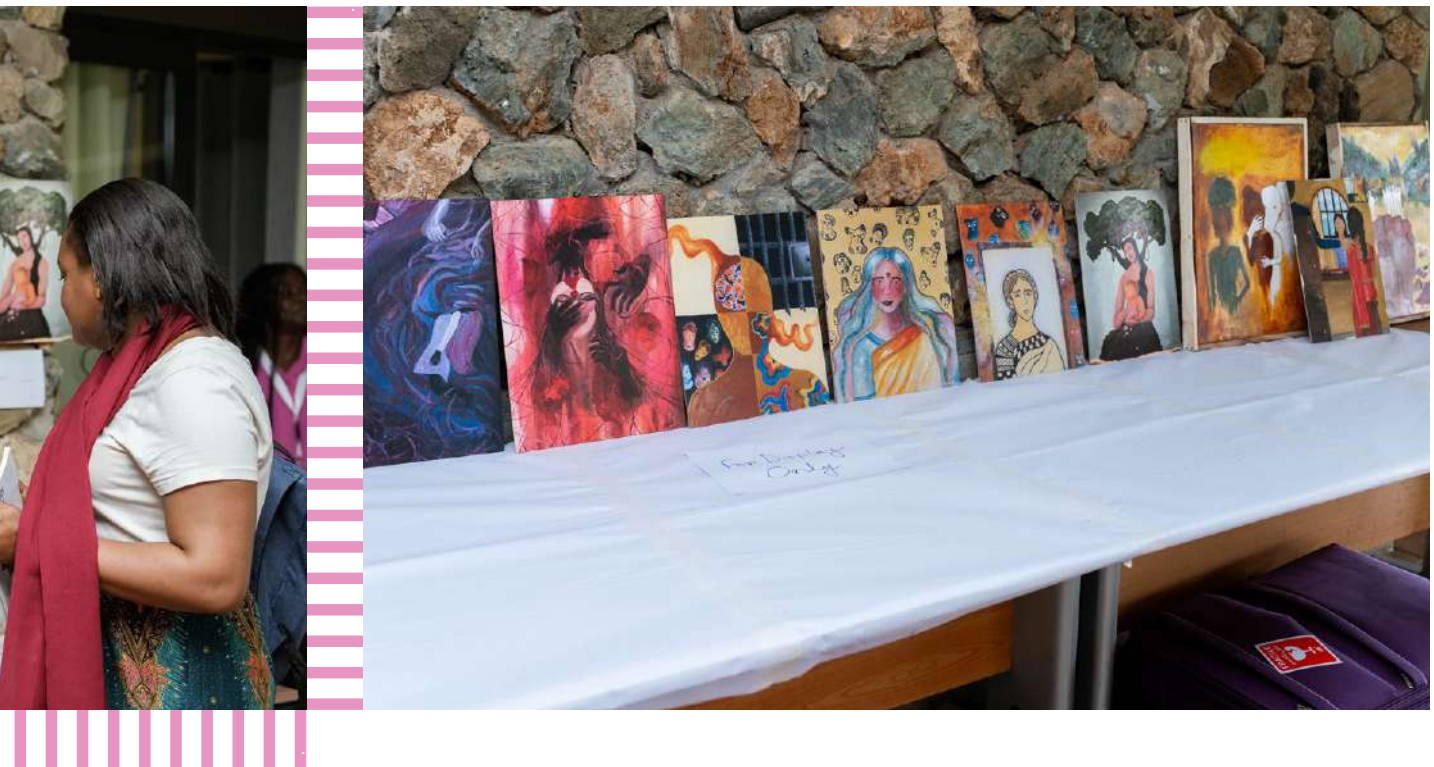
Beyond art’s therapeutic benefits, they emphasised its **“powerful role in bringing the work we do come to life”** and its ability to **“touch people’s hearts and make them think of subjects considered taboo in other spaces.”**

They had developed projects addressing gender-based violence through poems and paintings, noting that, **“(Art) allows people to tell stories that may be painful to relive in ways that are less painful and open up spaces for broader conversation.”**





Image 27. Art can take your story beyond queer spaces.



One project created an e-book pairing paintings with poems based on lived experiences. They advocated for seeing art as central to movement building rather than supplementary:

“These are experiences and real issues that we bring into other rooms. Let us make art central to the work we do.”

A representative from Kenya explained the **“River of Life”** exhibition displayed outside the meeting room, which used visual metaphors to represent the sex workers’ movement in Kenya:



Image 28. The visual metaphor ‘River of life’ represents the sex workers movement in Kenya.

“The river sex workers’ movement has a river which is flowing despite the obstacles, which are represented by the rocks. We have strengths represented by the fish that will always swim along the river, and then we have leaves that show our achievements.”

She described how this visualisation helped participants map challenges and achievements, focusing on strengths rather than obstacles:

“We are not dwelling a lot on our obstacles; we are looking at our strengths, and we are working towards gaining our achievements.”

The visual metaphor had been particularly useful during periods of internal conflict within the movement, helping leaders reconnect with their shared purpose.

A representative from a feminist disability organisation in Uganda described using art to explore experiences of psychosocial disability. They had created archives of queer people with disabilities’ lives and developed programs like wheelchair yoga accessible to everyone.

They organised a fashion show called **“Fashionability”** featuring adaptive clothing designs.

They created spaces for participants to express experiences through drawing when verbal communication felt too difficult, particularly around sexual violence.



Image 28. Adopt Art into your activism.

Participants emphasised that art should not be seen as an add-on but integrated into core movement strategies. A representative who began activism through art at 16 in Uganda urged:

“There are a lot of conversations around artivism, and we should think of integrating artivists in organising as well.”

She noted that **“activism spaces are growing in Uganda”** and encouraged people to,

“Invite artists into our spaces. Artists are not just an add-on but should be integrated into our work.”

Exhibition Viewings

Following the panel discussions, participants could engage directly with the artistic works displayed at the summit. These exhibitions provided tangible examples of how creative expression could function as documentation, healing, advocacy, and community building. The **“Queer Kinship Mural”** by Shivan Pavin Alungnat offered a vibrant visual dialogue about chosen families, ancestral resistance, and collective

healing in queer organising spaces. The colourful piece invited viewers to consider alternative forms of kinship and support beyond traditional family structures.

The **“LEHA Exhibition”** presented by **Qarol Wanjugu** showcased grassroots **SRHR** materials tailored for rural LBQ women in Central Kenya, reimagining access and justice. These resources demonstrated how information could be made accessible and culturally relevant through creative design and careful attention to context.

The **“River of Life”** exhibition by Dorothy Awuor Agalla used visual metaphors to represent the journey of sex worker organising in Kenya, with rocks symbolising obstacles, fish representing strengths, and leaves showing achievements. This interactive display allowed participants to visualise movement building as a flowing process with challenges and triumphs.

These exhibitions created opportunities for informal discussions and connections among participants, complementing the more structured conversations of the formal sessions.



Mapping Lessons, Shaping Futures

This interactive session provided a reflective space to assess key learnings, gaps, and forward-looking strategies from OVOF. Led by the Singizi evaluation team, the session aimed to engage participants in shaping the forthcoming end-term evaluation of the program.



Image 29. Mapping lessons, shaping futures.



Dreams for Evaluation

The Singizi team opened by inviting participants to share their **“hopeful dreams”** for the evaluation process. Participants wrote their aspirations on cards, which included:

- ★ Capturing “tangibles around the work we do that do not make it to the report”
- ★ “Challenging the system of measuring what we think impact is and what we think it is. Not just what we plan, but the unseen ways we make progress”

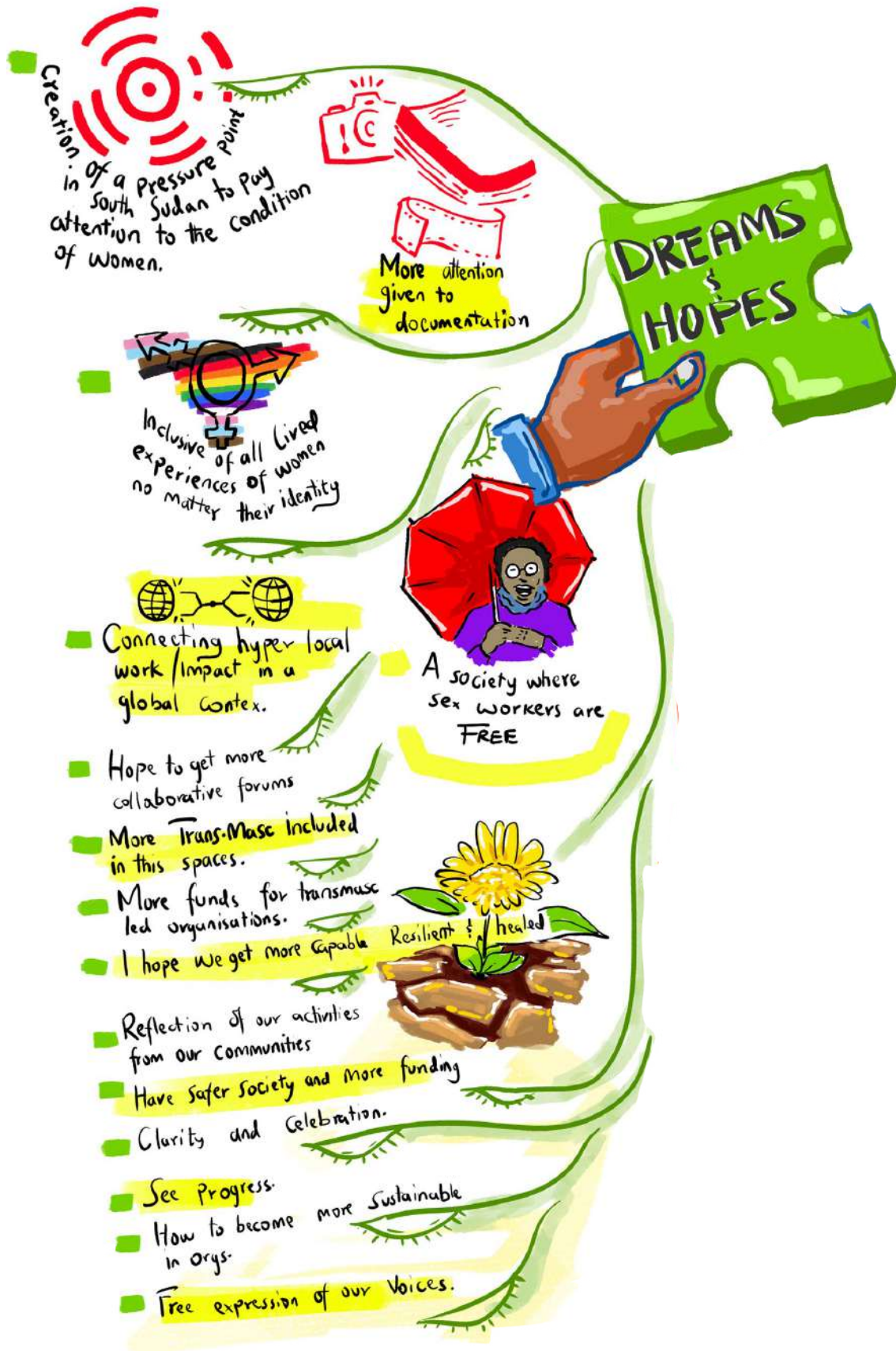


Image 30. Dream and hopes.

-
- * “Continuation of OVOF,” noting that “this whole project was around inclusivity, and this fund was flexible to allow the inclusion of more and more voices that were quite marginalised”
 - * Recognition that “change happens. Sometimes what we are measuring leaves out what actually happens. A lot of work is not captured in evaluation, and it is key we acknowledge the work that goes in, even though there are not many tangible outcomes”

The exercise also surfaced concerns about evaluation, including fears that some voices would be left out and questions about how the evaluation would relate to sustainability.

Evaluation Process Overview

The Singizi team then presented an overview of the evaluation methodology, combining outcome harvesting, realist evaluation, organisational review, and funding/expenditure analysis. The process would look both inward at organisational effectiveness and outward at contextual impacts.



The lower numbers in Lebanon and Sudan likely reflected the impact of wars that had affected organising work.

The team had already begun harvesting outcomes from reports and engagements with partner organisations, identifying 51 key outcomes across the six countries: 8 in Bangladesh, 7 in India, 6 in Kenya, 2 in Lebanon, 4 in Sudan, 11 in Uganda, and 13 global outcomes. The team noted that the lower numbers in Lebanon and Sudan likely reflected the impact of wars that had affected organising work.

Analysis showed that outcomes had increased over time, with fewer in 2021 and the most in 2024-25. The outcomes spanned legal/policy space (18), physical/public space (20), and online space (17), with variations in focus areas between countries.

The evaluation timeline showed the process continuing through February 2026, with key engagement points including inception, realist evaluation, and analysis/writing phases. The process would involve country-level conversations and sense-making workshops in July 2025.



Harvesting Outcomes

Participants engaged in a vibrant, market-style activity to document the myriad changes they've achieved through five pivotal strategies:

1. Arts Media Culture,
2. Movement Building,
3. Technology,
4. Advocacy, and
5. Feminist Holistic Protection (FHP).

Moving between stations with energy and purpose, they meticulously recorded outcomes and engaged in rich discussions with evaluation team members about their impacts across different regions.

Arts Media & Culture: Reshaping Narratives Through Creative Expression

Throughout Uganda, Kenya, and India, creative platforms have given voice to the previously silenced.



Image 31. Shifting perspectives caused by the arts..

Anonymous storytelling through podcasts has created safe spaces for expression, whilst personal narratives have flourished through diverse artistic mediums.

Uganda

In Uganda, significant shifts have emerged through initiatives like 'Ubuntu Tales', with language evolving from stigmatising terminology such as 'malaya' (prostitute) to more dignified terms like 'Neko'. Media training has gradually transformed reporting practices around transgender persons, moving from reductive labels to more accurate and respectful terminology. The 'Looking In Looking Out' project has amplified the lived realities of LBQ women in Mbale, whilst radio programming has raised awareness about sex workers' rights.

Kenya

Kenyan LBQ organisations have witnessed remarkable progress, with community members increasingly open to discussing challenging issues and seeking therapy. Art pieces created by LBQ communities are now being commercially recognised and sold.

Trans and gender-diverse individuals are celebrating bodily autonomy through art and fashion, challenging societal norms and reducing body dysphoria. Creative performances like spoken word and poetry have empowered LBQT womxn regarding issues like gender-based violence and intimate partner violence, resulting in behavioural shifts and fewer reported GBV cases.

India

In India, programming has gradually shifted towards challenging entrenched gender stereotypes.

Movement Building: Strengthening Networks and Solidarity

The movement-building landscape has flourished across regions, with particularly notable developments in Uganda, Kenya, and Lebanon.

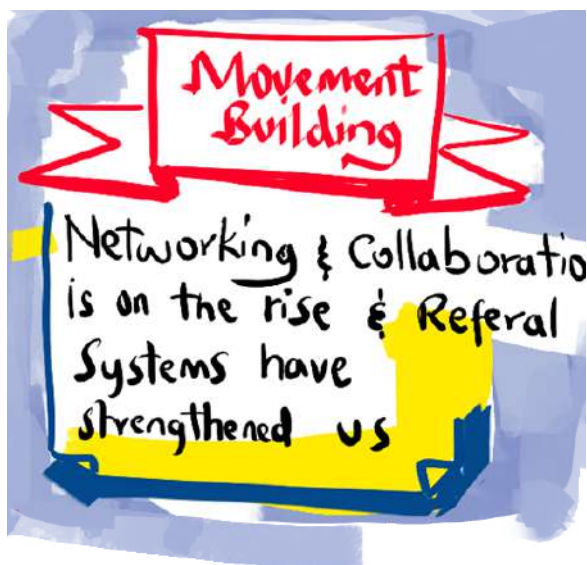


Image 32. Rising networking and collaborations.

Uganda

Uganda has seen a strengthening of referral systems, the formation of consortia, and fiscal hosting support for organisations within the trans movement. Collaborations and networks have been reinforced, whilst capacity building has increased organising capabilities among sex workers, who are now penetrating feminist spaces.

Strong, unified national coordinating bodies for key populations have emerged, including **UNESCO, UKPC, SMUG, TNU**, and **Transform**. Sex worker leaders demonstrate increased resilience and solidarity.

Kenya

In Kenya, 2024 marked a significant shift in resource mobilisation following the **Finance Bill Protest**, with grassroots feminist groups and queer organisations mobilising substantial funds through mutual aid.

Templates for mobilising resources and fiscal hosting initiatives, consortia, and leadership academies have been established. Organisational structures have become more defined, whilst networks, collaborations, and referral systems have strengthened considerably.

Lebanon

Lebanon's **Jeem** has driven engagement with online content and facilitated open, reflective discussions between different generations on feminist transformative leadership. Organisations like **Transat** and **Takatat** have come together in a regional, transnational movement. Online discussions have addressed lost faith in feminist organising during conflict, whilst feminist journalism and writing workshops support young and aspiring women and queer journalists in post-regime Syria. Podcast production in queer communities in conflict zones has received crucial support.

Sudan

Political shifts and conflict have necessitated new approaches and relocations within restricted political environments in Sudan.

Feminist hubs have emerged as safe spaces, with care becoming central to the movement both online and in Egypt. The documentation of women's voices and knowledge production has become an essential tool, and feminist training has facilitated a shift in discourse from exclusivity to inclusivity.

Technology: Digital Empowerment and Protection

Technological advancements have empowered communities across Bangladesh, India, Uganda, and Kenya.



Image 33. Building capacity with technology.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, training on digital literacy and mis/disinformation has equipped queer individuals with skills needed for job opportunities and community change. The OVOF project has built a queer tech community whilst enhancing digital security awareness, exploring technology's role in driving social change. Community members can now critically analyse cybersecurity legislation, information technology policies, and data protection regulations.

India

India has witnessed sex workers successfully transitioning their service platforms online. The PST programme has bolstered community members' confidence in sharing their stories, with some launching careers in photography, technology, and storytelling. Regular participants have initiated advocacy efforts within their communities.

Uganda

Uganda has seen increased appreciation for technology's role in amplifying trans voices in challenging spaces, alongside a narrative shift towards appreciating all forms of womxn in tech spaces. Organisations now effectively use data collection and storage technology, with increased digital security knowledge, more meaningful use of social media for advocacy, and improved digital literacy levels. Awareness about technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) and risk mitigation strategies has grown, alongside improved knowledge in organisational data collection.

Kenya

In Kenya, community members engage more actively on organisational social media platforms to raise awareness and share critical information. Technology has facilitated global understanding and streamlined processes, particularly in data storage and protection. Women have been empowered to use technology while protecting themselves.

Feminist Holistic Protection: Safety, Healing, and Resilience

Feminist Holistic Protection initiatives have significantly enhanced well-being across communities, particularly in Uganda and Kenya.

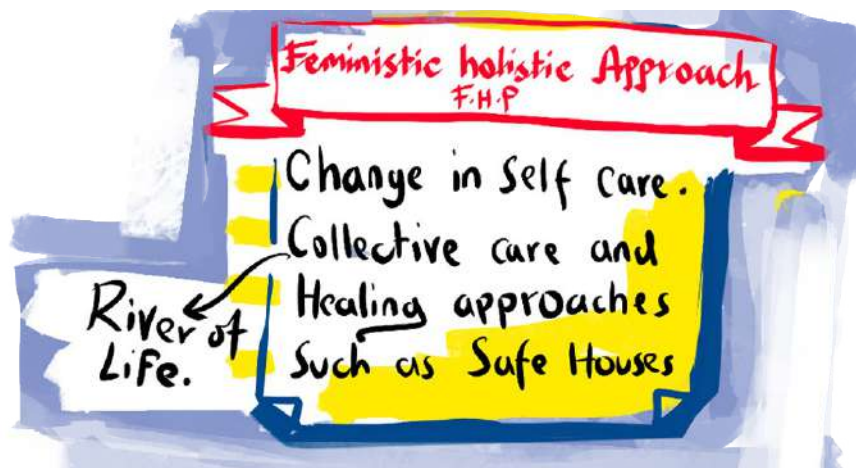


Image 34. Change in self care.

Uganda

Uganda's sex worker movement has challenged policies effectively, with increased women's involvement in parliament and enhanced protection measures. Self-care, collective care, and healing have been integrated into organisations' daily operations and individual levels. An assessment of non-traditional therapy has established a 'safe village' with speed-dial healers and modern therapy approaches.

Queer people with disabilities now access non-traditional healing methods. Safety and security incidents are documented and inform holistic programming. Leaders are better informed about the needs of rural trans and queer communities. Police and healthcare providers demonstrate greater openness and consultation regarding community support, even proactively calling to learn how to assist community members.

Intentionally planned retreats encourage care and healing, transferring wellness practices to beneficiaries. Community Watch groups formed during the AHA 2023 monitor and protect rural trans and gender-diverse individuals, resulting in reduced human rights violations. The Sex Worker's Director's forum on collective self-care and wellbeing has improved attitudes and mental health-seeking behaviours. The Women's Intersection Coalition for Resilience consortium formed during the AHA crisis enabled collective healing and resilience.

Kenya

In Kenya, a visit to the Mexican safe house provided knowledge about requirements for starting and running similar facilities, with mobilisation underway to establish a safe house in Western Kenya.

The 'River of Life' methodology helps the Sex Worker Movement identify obstacles, strengths, and achievements, whilst documenting and planning programmes, mobilising resources, and enhancing safety and security.

Across regions, there have been positive changes in self-care, collective care, and organisational healing.

Risk assessment and protection plans have been developed following training. Monthly online and offline mental health support groups have increased access to mental health awareness and support among rural trans and gender-diverse communities, changing perceptions and leading to improved quality of life.

Advocacy: Rights, Representation, and Reduced Discrimination

Advocacy efforts have yielded tangible results in Kenya and Uganda.




Image 35. Key stakeholders.

Kenya

In Kenya, Boda Boda riders have been trained in human rights issues, with ten becoming Trainers of Trainers and others functioning as security response teams. Strong referral pathways between healthcare workers and communities have improved sexual and reproductive health services for **Intersex, Trans, and Gender Non-Conforming** (ITGNC) individuals, with reduced reports of stigma and discrimination.

Crisis response teams comprising Boda Boda riders and security team members now rescue sex workers in Busia. Community sensitisation has reduced Female Genital Mutilation incidents in Murang'a and increased reporting and prosecution of cases. Law enforcers in Kisumu no longer arrest sex workers, who now meaningfully engage in decision-making spaces.



Thika has established security response teams, security training, and referral systems, resulting in increased reporting of violence cases. Available data has helped structure advocacy messaging, contributing to decreased discrimination from service providers.

Uganda

In Uganda, the SW Director's Forum has facilitated more LBQ womxn participating meaningfully in civic and decision-making spaces. Sex workers are included in the National Strategic Plan for the Uganda AIDS Commission and are part of decision-making bodies. Communities are meaningfully involved in designing and implementing programmes tailored to sex workers' needs. Engagement with local leaders, police, and health workers has fostered collaboration and partnership. Sex workers have been empowered to report cases and defend their rights, though they continue to face stigmatisation as "promoters of immorality and anti-government."

Some have received government funding to boost economic empowerment projects. A disability inclusion assessment has created awareness, whilst LBQT+ organisations use a disability inclusion toolkit to ensure inclusivity in shelter and advocacy spaces, facilitating access to the GPS summit. Dialogues with key stakeholders, law enforcement, and local leaders concerning sex worker issues have been productive, and sex workers have received human rights training.

The session concluded with thoughtful table discussions on implications for the evaluation process. Participants expressed deep appreciation for the community-centred approach, with one noting that

“This evaluation is community-centred from the beginning, and the voice of the community is involved from inception.”

Others valued seeing their collective impact across regions and strategies: **“Oftentimes the work is siloed, but seeing what we have achieved, what we have done on the wall shows all our wins.”**

Perhaps most powerfully, the exercise revealed the remarkable breadth and depth of achievements, eliciting surprise and pride among participants at how much had been accomplished collectively. As one participant eloquently stated,

“This shows that we are doing a lot of work, we are resourceful, and we are experts.”



Image 36. *I hope we become more capable, resilient and healed.*

Country Deep Dives

Following the collective reflection on OVOF's overall impact, participants broke into country-specific groups to explore lessons, gaps, and collective actions from their national contexts. These deep dives allowed for more detailed discussion of country-specific challenges and achievements, facilitated by country-based activists and the **Singizi** team.

Each country group examined their movement journeys, identified key cultural shifts, and articulated national-level strategies for advocacy, resourcing, and sustainability. This session created space for planning concrete next steps relevant to each national context while maintaining connections to the broader OVOF framework.

The country conversations focused on:

- * Documenting context-specific achievements
- * Identifying unique challenges and adaptations

- * Developing strategies for sustainability beyond OVOF
- * Planning for continued collaboration and mutual support

These discussions laid the groundwork for ongoing collaboration at the national level while connecting to the cross-regional themes emerging throughout the summit.





DAY 3

Our Futures



Panel 4: Feminist Holistic Protection Approach


The third day opened with a session led by *IM-Defensoras* and past *Feminist Holistic Protection (FHP)* School participants. The panel focused on generating a space for exchange on how Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) can be collectively protected, using FHP as a starting point. Participants examined the impacts of worsening contexts and explored tools for protection and care to sustain their lives and struggles.

Mapping Violence and Impact

The facilitator from IM-Defensoras introduced the concept of feminist holistic protection as an approach developed over 15 years of working with WHRDs. She emphasised the importance of documenting the impacts of violence:

“We must map what is happening to us, how it is affecting our bodies and communities. If we do not remember, we will not know how to work against it.”





The session included a powerful exercise where participants documented the impacts of violence on their bodies and communities. After reflection, they posted their experiences on an outline of a body displayed on the wall. The impacts shared included:

Mental and Emotional Impacts:

- * Brain block and mental violence
- * Fear, anxiety, paranoia
- * Depression and insomnia
- * Burnout and chronic fatigue
- * Loneliness and internal pain
- * Doubt in identity
- * Suicide ideation
- * Hypervigilance
- * Loss of trust
- * Feeling like no work has been done
- * Being “taken the privilege of being vulnerable”

Physical and External Impacts:

- * Heart problems
- * Body damage and burnout
- * Debt and homelessness
- * Targeted threats
- * Family instability
- * Stigma and discrimination 33
- * Sexist insults

- * Loss of lives
- * PTSD

This collective mapping created a powerful visual representation of shared struggles, with Jelena acknowledging the difficulty but importance of the task: **“This reminds us to build collective practices of resistance.”**

Strategies of Resistance and Care

Following this sombre reflection, the facilitators encouraged participants to move around, dance, or express themselves physically to release the trauma. The room broke into clapping and singing, with a song in Portuguese that translates to: **“My dear friend, help me because I can’t work alone. Alone, I walk well, but with you, I walk better.”**

Participants then identified strategies they use to respond to violence and sustain their work. After reflection, they posted their strategies on an outline of a body displayed on the wall. The strategies shared included:

Individual Strategies:

- * Documentation
- * Hope and self-care
- * Sex/making love
- * Pleasure
- * Saying no
- * Breathing techniques
- * Resting
- * Screaming, cursing, and crying



- * Being in nature
- * Jokes, laughter, and silence
- * Counselling and therapy
- * Talking it out
- * Working out
- * Medication
- * Sound therapy
- * Solidarity
- * Practising what we preach 34
- * Empathetic management of care
- * Monitoring and evaluation
- * Management healing sessions
- * Systems and structures for work and movements
- * Collective power
- * Security kitty
- * Psychosocial support groups
- * Universal response line/emergency number
- * Creative work

Collective and Organisational Strategies:

- * Security response mechanisms
- * Working politically
- * Trauma management



Image 37. Advancing protection and care.

Additional strategies:

The discussion expanded to include additional strategies:

- * Donors who support care and protection
- * Developing organisational safety and security plans
- * Mentorship within movements
- * Financial resilience for organisational sustainability
- * Healing circles and care committees within organisations
- * Trauma-informed care training
- * Decolonising work days through shorter work weeks

Feminist Holistic Protection School

The second part of the session focused on the Feminist Holistic Protection School, a training initiative that several participants in the room had attended in Mexico the previous year.

One participant shared her experience, describing it as **“life-changing”** and noting that **“if I had gone ten years ago, I would have been in a much better position now.”** The risk assessment sessions were particularly powerful in helping protect herself, her community, and her organisation. When she shared this training with women in Sudan, many realised they were carrying significant trauma. She helped them build risk assessment plans and develop community and alliances based on their contexts.

A participant discussed the network-building aspects of the school, emphasising that **“protection and care should be collective because the work we do spills into our personal lives.”** The training addressed reshaping relationships, power dynamics, and responsibilities within communities and movements. **“What happened each day was seeing people and knowing you can depend on them,”** she explained, recognising that,

“Protection and care is not one size fits all, some people need a hug, some people need to talk.”

Other participants highlighted learnings about resource mobilisation, the importance of in-between spaces for co-learning, and the need for leadership development to ensure movement sustainability. Naomi shared how her organisation had implemented practices from the school:

“Whatever we do, we check in on well-being, and we cannot expect people to perform when mental well-being is affected.”

They introduced self-care days where staff could take time off for personal needs and collective care days where the team agreed on activities to enjoy together, which had **“helped and increased productivity in the organisation.”**

The session concluded with the facilitator from IM-Defensoras affirming the importance of networks in sustaining movements:

“Networks save ourselves and each other, and you have a friend in us even outside of OVOF.”

A song by Natalia Lafourcade titled “María la Curandera” (Maria the Healer) played to close the session, with lyrics encouraging healing through nature, community, and self-love.



Session: Feminist Money Laundering

This provocative session, moderated by UHAI, explored challenges in resourcing movements and strategies for sustainable funding. The title **"Feminist Money Laundering"** served as a metaphor for moving resources to communities in contexts where direct funding is difficult or dangerous.

The facilitator explained that UHAI, an East African fund, works to **"move resources to communities that are colonised and in their own countries,"** transforming funding to make it accessible and relevant to movement needs.



Image 38. Resourcing and moving money.



Challenges in Accessing and Managing Funds

Participants shared their experiences navigating restrictive banking systems, hostile contexts, and complex donor requirements:

A participant from Uganda described receiving her organisation's first significant grant and being summoned to meet with the bank manager, who interrogated her about the source of funds. **"I was defensive,"** she recalled, **"They started inquiring where the money came from and started calling people, and I worried they would take the money and the funder would want accountability."** Eventually, a finance person from the funder helped resolve the situation by presenting a modified work plan that removed references to sex work. Her organisation was later identified as **"promoting homosexuality"** and advised to remove LGBTQ and sex work terminology from their materials. **"While pulling them down, I cried,"** she shared, describing the emotional toll of this erasure.

The impact of the U.S. funding freeze had further affected her personally, causing the landlord to become hostile about rent payments.

"Working with passion is bad because you break down,"

she reflected.

Another participant from Uganda emphasised the need for flexible funding in volatile contexts:

"We face legal restrictions that affect our work and our ability to work, including raids, and then you start working on how to coordinate in these times, and most times this falls on one person."

She questioned whether donors understand these contexts and emphasised the importance of country coordinators with direct knowledge of local realities.

Joan became emotional when discussing the devaluation of community-led work: **"As a lesbian woman working with passion, we must appreciate that we are underpaid and overworked, and is that appreciated? No!"** She questioned why organisations that don't identify as LGBTQ receive more support than community organisations and challenged the practice of fiscal hosting without capacity building:

“If you journey with me, then you will see my growth!”

Sustainability and Infrastructure Needs

Participants highlighted critical needs beyond project funding:

A participant from Uganda described how UHAI had supported her organisation in opening their first incubation centre in 2019, but noted the challenges of renting temporary spaces: **“When we are moving around, our data is also at risk!”** She emphasised the need for permanent spaces:

“Supporting sustainability includes helping us stop this moving around. Because as support centres, we are home for some people, and when we keep moving, we are moving homes.”

A participant from Kenya discussed the impacts of healthcare integration following the funding freeze.

Sex workers were now directed to government hospitals, where they faced significant barriers:

“We had a bedridden client who we had to negotiate with the government for admission. Government hospitals have no beds, and the hospitals are far apart.”

The closure of drop-in centres meant that **“people are staying ill”**, and HIV-positive patients avoided seeking care due to stigma. **“We now have to do training on how to navigate the new dispensation,”** she explained.

“Sex workers are losing hope, and some are stopping medication, and now we wonder, what’s next? Where has all the work we have done gone?”

Innovative Funding Strategies

Several participants shared creative approaches to sustainability:



Image 39. Teach us how to use funds sustainably.

The representative from Her Internet Uganda described how they diversified their funding by positioning themselves as consultants beyond their core movements:

“Our constituents are LBQ women and female sex workers, but we camouflage based on spaces we are in, so often when in non-safe spaces, we brand ourselves as a women’s organisation.”

This strategy opened opportunities for paid consultancy work, generating significant income: **“Last year we got a new partner running a five-year program all over East Africa who needed digital onboarding... by mid last year we had made 10,000 dollars.”** She emphasised the importance of negotiation skills with funders: **“Our first funding was 7,500 USD for the year for project funding, and I made it core funding. The funder called us to explain why people were being paid high salaries, but I negotiated with them.”**

Sandra acknowledged that **“not everyone has negotiating power, especially with non-feminist funders”**. She described how partnering with organisations that have established relationships with funders can help newer groups gain access.

A participant from Bangladesh shared how they were developing cross-border economic collaborations to become less dependent on traditional funding.

They suggested creating social business agreements between organisations across countries and exploring opportunities with progressive corporations to support queer-led enterprises.

Collective Dreaming Exercise

The session concluded with a collective visioning exercise where participants wrote down their **“boldest funding shifts”** for feminist futures. Yaya shared these dreams with the group:

- * Social justice systems locally and nationally sustained by communities
- * Occupying seats of power that directly affect our lives
- * Long-term emergency support grants

- * Economy of care
- * Supporting human resources
- * Affirming autonomy and dignity
- * Support for financial management and data protection
- * Increased funding with fewer restrictions
- * Multi-year core funding
- * Simplified application processes
- * Fair dispute resolution
- * Pensions for activists
- * Less dehumanising accountability requirements
- * Building a pink economy

These dreams served as a foundation for the closing panel on envisioning queer futures.



Closing Panel: Envisioning Queer Futures

The closing panel brought together participants to reimagine the future of Global South women's movements. Moderated by the UHAI team, this conversational circle created space for collective reflection and radical dreaming in the face of escalating repression, civic shrinking, and multiple intersecting crises.

(Intermediary organisations and activist funds) are “uniquely positioned between having trust of big back donors” while being “steeped in our contexts and know how to sub-grant and play a big role in sustaining our movements.”

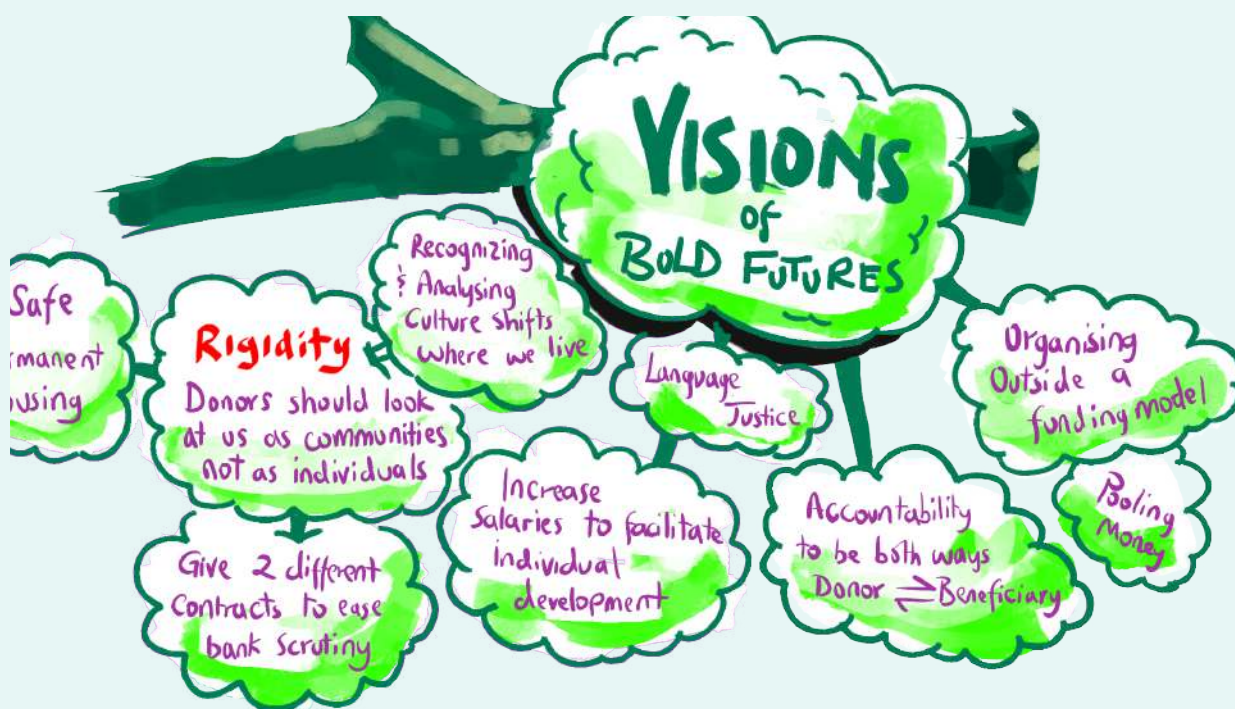



Image 40. Visions of bold futures.



Building on the dreams shared in the previous session, participants discussed what needed to change to ensure movements engage in **“resourcing justice.”** They were encouraged to dream big and envision bold shifts in funding, movement building, and solidarity.

After small group discussions, participants shared their recommendations, which clustered around several key themes:

Language Justice and Contextual Understanding

Participants emphasised the need for language justice in funding and movement building, noting differences between anglophone and francophone organising, even within Africa. They called for recognition of contextual and cultural shifts both in movements and in the global political landscape, noting that in Europe, countries were redirecting resources toward war preparation at the expense of social justice work.

Intermediary organisations and activist funds were highlighted, as these entities are **“uniquely positioned between having trust of big back donors”** while being **“steeped in our contexts and know how to sub-grant and play a big role in sustaining our movements.”**

Transformed Funding Models

Numerous recommendations addressed the need for fundamental changes in how movements are resourced:

- * Allowing organisations to earn interest on grant funds as a sustainability measure
- * Moving beyond the NGO funding model entirely to explore community-led resource generation
- * Providing flexible, sustainable funding beyond thematic areas
- * Balancing breadth with depth in grantmaking to ensure meaningful impact
- * Directing funding toward networks and consortia to maximise effectiveness
- * Simplifying reporting templates to accommodate different organisational capacities
- * Improving salary packages and creating proper exit packages for leaders
- * Treating emergency grants with appropriate urgency
- * Investing in community organising rather than duplicative convening events

Bilateral Accountability and Trust

Participants called for transformed relationships between funders and movements:

- * Building trust with communities and avoiding withdrawal based on rumours
- * Creating conflict resolution platforms rather than simply terminating funding
- * Establishing two-way accountability where funders are also accountable to grantees
- * Conducting regular check-ins beyond formal reporting to help funders plan better
- * Ensuring funders visit communities to understand contexts and verify organisations' existence
- * Reducing excessive documentation requirements, especially for smaller organisations
- * Using donor influence with governments to facilitate fund transfers for advocacy work.

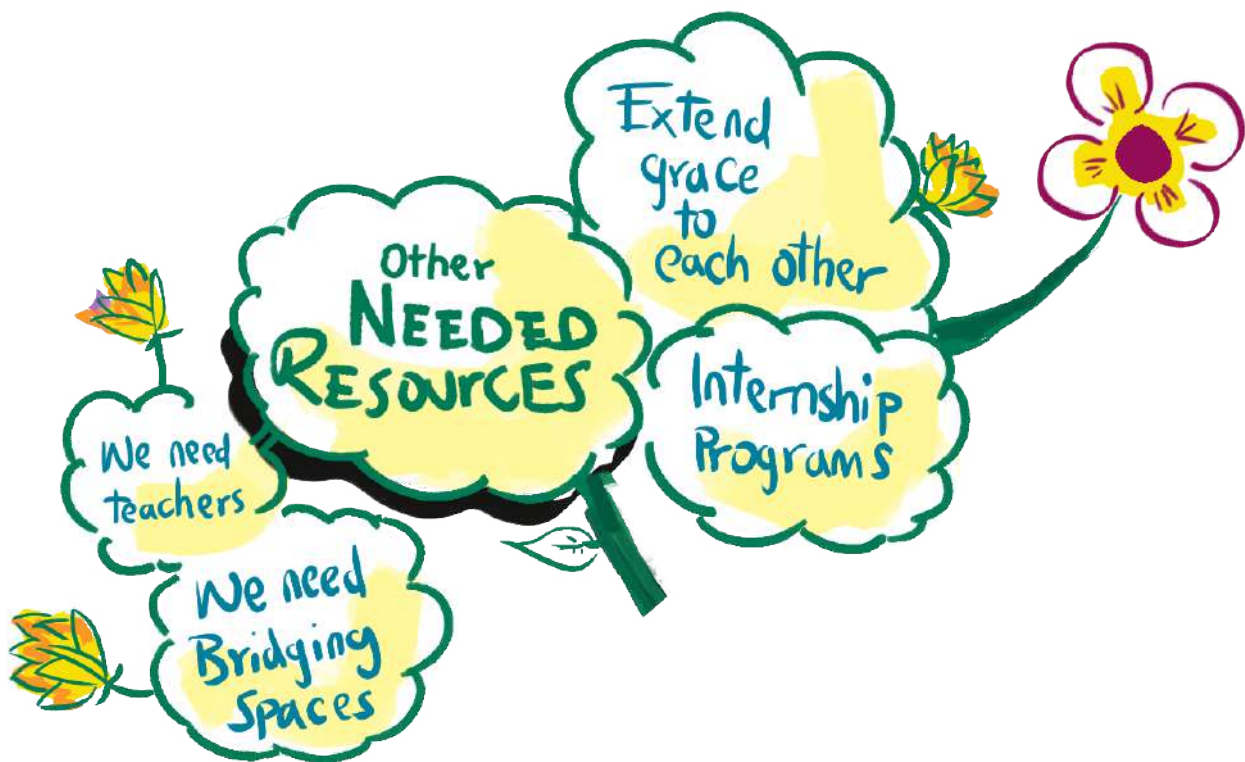


Image 41. Other needed resources.

Sustainable Infrastructure and Systems

- * Several recommendations focused on long-term sustainability beyond project cycles:
- * Supporting property ownership rather than endless rental payments
- * Developing income-generating activities through business plans and mentorship
- * Building movement capacity for government engagement, particularly in health budget processes
- * Supporting organisational assets like safe transportation
- * Covering essential costs like audits when funders require them
- * Creating permanent housing with appropriate safety features
- * Establishing donor roundtables to discuss shifting priorities collaboratively
- * Supporting coalition-building for joint resource mobilisation
- * Building a “pink economy” through cross-country social enterprise agreements
- * Creating collaborative partnerships across regions to support countries with greater restrictions

The facilitator emphasised that these recommendations would form a call to action accompanying the summit report, organised around three key baskets: movement autonomy, accountability, and funding models for a utopic future.

The session closed with a ritual led by healer Makgati, who invited participants to form a circle outside and reflect on the work ahead: **“In yoga, we say the work begins when you get off the mat. We have discovered discomfort and pain in our psyche, but all of this won’t make sense until we go back home.”** Buki offered a final reflection on dreams and ancestry:

“In thinking about dreams, something keeps popping up in my mind. I felt that there was some fear, but we need to remember the landscape that we are in; socially, economically, etc. The reason we are here is because of our ancestors and their dreams. So I hope we dream new dreams in this moment.”



Cross-Cutting Themes

Throughout the three days of the summit, several key themes emerged repeatedly across different sessions and contexts:

Digital Security and Resilience

Growing concerns about surveillance, platform governance, ethical use of AI, and online violence accompanied the increasing importance of digital spaces for movement organising. Participants emphasised that the online-offline binary was no longer relevant, as these spaces were deeply interconnected in activists' lives and work.

Key insights included:

- * The need to develop digital literacy and security practices tailored to different communities' needs and capacities
- * Recognition that digital security encompasses not just tools but behaviours and attitudes
- * Concerns about centralised platforms controlled by corporate interests, particularly following Elon Musk's acquisition of Twitter/X
- * The role of misinformation and disinformation in fueling attacks on marginalised communities and shaping harmful policies
- * The importance of counter-narratives and community-controlled digital spaces

Strategies shared included regular digital security training, creating accessible


resources for different communities, developing organisational policies on digital safety, and exploring alternative platforms and technologies. Participants also emphasised the importance of fostering joy and pleasure in online spaces, not only focusing on protection from harm.

Funding Models and Sustainability

The challenges of sustaining movements in contexts with shrinking resources and increasing restrictions emerged as a central concern. Participants critically examined power dynamics in philanthropy and explored alternative approaches to resourcing.

Key insights included:

- * The emotional and practical toll of undignified fundraising processes
- * The inadequacy of project-based funding that neglects core organisational needs
- * The impacts of the USAID funding freeze, which had created immediate crises in service provision
- * The need for community-led decision-making about resource allocation
- * The potential of income-generating activities and social enterprises to reduce donor dependence



Strategies shared included developing peer grant-making mechanisms, diversifying income sources through consultancy and services, investing in property and assets rather than renting, and creating cross-movement economic initiatives. Participants emphasised the importance of funding that respects autonomy, supports wellbeing, and recognises the true costs of movement work.

Movement Building and Cross-Movement Solidarity

The importance of building connections across different movements emerged consistently, with participants emphasising that no single issue exists in isolation. The summit demonstrated the value of bringing together activists working on different issues and in various contexts.

Key insights included:

- * The tendency toward siloing issues and communities, even within marginalised movements
- * How intersectional issues like digital rights affect multiple communities
- * The strength found in strategic alliances across movements
- * The importance of recognising differences in context and approach while building solidarity

Strategies shared included creating spaces for mutual learning, developing joint advocacy initiatives, supporting colleagues during crises, and recognising shared struggles against common systems of oppression. Participants emphasised the value of physical gatherings like the summit in building trust and deeper relationships among movements.

Mental Health and Collective Care

The toll of activism on individual and collective wellbeing was acknowledged throughout the summit, with participants emphasising that care is not supplementary but central to sustainable movements. Integrating healers and grounding practices into the summit structure reinforced this commitment.

Key insights included:

- * The disproportionate impacts of trauma on frontline activists
- * The question of “who cares for the carers” in movement leadership
- * The inadequacy of individual self-care in addressing structural challenges
- * The political dimensions of care and healing in resistance movements

Strategies shared included creating Executive Director forums for peer support, incorporating wellness sessions into organisational routines, developing healing circles and care committees, practising trauma-informed approaches to movement work, and reclaiming ancestral healing practices. Participants emphasised the importance of funding that explicitly supports wellbeing and collective care initiatives.





Key Recommendations

Based on the rich discussions and insights shared throughout the summit, the following recommendations emerged for different stakeholders:

For Movements and Organisations

1. *Strengthen Cross-Movement Solidarity*

- * Create intentional spaces for learning and exchange across different movements
- * Develop joint advocacy strategies on issues of common concern
- * Share resources, skills, and networks during crises
- * Recognise and address exclusions and hierarchies within movements

2. *Integrate Care into Organisational Culture*

- * Establish wellness practices as core to organisational functioning
- * Create peer support mechanisms for leaders and staff
- * Develop succession planning and leadership development pathways
- * Incorporate healing and rest as political priorities

3. *Build Digital Resilience*

- * Conduct regular security assessments and training
- * Develop protocols for responding to online attacks and disinformation

- * Create accessible digital security resources for diverse communities
- * Explore alternative platforms and technologies

4. *Diversify Resource Mobilisation*

- * Develop income-generating activities aligned with organisational values
- * Build skills in negotiation and proposal development
- * Create community-supported funding mechanisms
- * Invest in assets that reduce long-term costs and vulnerabilities

5. *Document and Share Strategies*

- * Capture lessons learned in navigating hostile environments
- * Create accessible knowledge resources for emerging movements
- * Preserve institutional memory through documentation
- * Share successes and challenges with allied movements



For Funders and Donors

1. Transform Funding Processes

- * Simplify application and reporting requirements
- * Provide multi-year, flexible core funding
- * Support language justice throughout funding processes
- * Develop responsive emergency grant mechanisms

2. Centre Community Leadership

- * Fund community-led grant-making mechanisms
- * Respect autonomous decision-making about priorities
- * Recognise expertise in the communities' contexts
- * Support capacity building identified by communities themselves

3. Invest in Wellbeing and Security

- * Provide dedicated funding for organisational wellness
- * Support holistic security assessments and implementation
- * Fund staff benefits, including healthcare and pensions
- * Recognise the true costs of sustainable activism

4. Build Meaningful Partnerships

- * Develop two-way accountability mechanisms
- * Visit and understand community contexts
- * Engage in collaborative planning around shifting priorities
- * Create spaces for direct dialogue between funders and movements

5. Support Sustainable Infrastructure

- * Fund property acquisition rather than endless rentals
- * Invest in organisational assets and security measures
- * Support technology and digital infrastructure development
- * Provide capacity building for financial management and sustainability



For the OVOF Consortium

1. Document and Share Learning

- * Capture the rich strategies and insights from the summit
- * Create accessible resources based on program learnings
- * Support ongoing exchange among partner organisations
- * Ensure the evaluation captures intangible impacts and contextual factors

2. Advocate with the Donor Community

- * Share recommendations for transformed funding practices
- * Highlight examples of effective, flexible funding approaches
- * Demonstrate the impacts of community-led decision-making
- * Address the consequences of funding restrictions and freezes

3. Sustain Connection Beyond the Program

- * Create mechanisms for continued communication among partners
- * Support regional and thematic collaborations
- * Facilitate access to diverse funding opportunities
- * Maintain solidarity during crises and transitions

4. Build on Successful Approaches


- * Expand the Feminist Holistic Protection School model
- * Continue supporting cross-movement exchange and learning
- * Strengthen digital security and wellbeing initiatives
- * Develop practical tools from program experiences

5. Centre Ongoing Evaluation and Learning

- * Ensure the evaluation process remains community-centred
- * Document both tangible and intangible outcomes
- * Capture adaptation strategies in changing contexts
- * Share learning broadly to influence practice beyond the consortium

Conclusion and Next Steps

The OVOF Global Partners Summit created a powerful space for reflection, connection, and strategic planning among activists from six countries across the Global South. Despite significant challenges in their contexts, from armed conflicts to legislative attacks, from funding freezes to surveillance and harassment, participants demonstrated remarkable resilience, creativity, and commitment to their communities and causes.




Throughout the discussions, participants emphasised that their work is not just about resistance but about building alternative visions and practices rooted in dignity, care, and justice.

The summit highlighted common struggles across regions and the specific circumstances each movement navigates. It reinforced the importance of contextual understanding while identifying opportunities for solidarity and shared learning. Throughout the discussions, participants emphasised that their work is not just about resistance but about building alternative visions and practices rooted in dignity, care, and justice.

Several key insights that will guide future work emerged:

1. Sustainability requires transformed approaches to resourcing. The current funding landscape often fails to support the true needs of movements, emphasising projects over people and imposing burdensome requirements that drain organisational energy. Participants articulated clear visions for funding based on trust, flexibility, and genuine partnership.
2. Care is not supplementary but central to movement sustainability. From mental health support for leaders to organisational wellness practices, healing houses, and collective protection strategies, participants emphasised that prioritising wellbeing is a political necessity, not a luxury.
3. Movements grow stronger through intentional solidarity across differences. The summit demonstrated the value of bringing together diverse movements, from sex worker rights to digital rights, from indigenous women's organising to trans activism, creating space for mutual learning and strategic collaboration.

- 
4. Art and creativity are essential tools for resistance, healing, and vision. Throughout the summit, artistic expression created spaces for connection, documentation, and imagination beyond what analytical discussion alone could achieve.
 5. Communities have the expertise and strategies to navigate even the most challenging contexts. The rich sharing of approaches developed in different regions underscored that solutions often already exist within movements when given space and resources to thrive.

As the OVOF program enters its final year, the summit laid the groundwork for sustaining connections and building on achievements beyond the formal program period. The ongoing evaluation will capture learning and impact, while the relationships strengthened through the gathering will continue supporting cross-regional solidarity and exchange.

Participants left with renewed commitment to their work, strengthened connections across borders, and practical strategies for navigating the challenges ahead.



Acknowledgments

The OVOF Global Partners Summit was made possible through the collaborative efforts of many individuals and organisations. Special thanks to:

- * CREA for their leadership in convening this important gathering
- * UHAI-EASHRI for hosting the summit in the East African region
- * Association for Progressive Communication (APC) for their contributions to digital rights discussions
- * IM-Defensoras for facilitating critical conversations on feminist holistic protection
- * WO=MEN for their partnership throughout the program
- * The healers who grounded our discussions in mindfulness and wellbeing
- * The artists who shared their creativity and vision
- * The Singizi team for their thoughtful approach to the evaluation process
- * All participants who generously shared their experiences, strategies, dreams, and time.
- * The donors who made the OVOF program and this gathering possible.

Most importantly, deep gratitude to the communities represented at the summit, whose courage, resilience, and vision continue to inspire movements for justice across the Global South and beyond.

Gala Photos





Our Voices Our Futures: GLOBAL PARTNERS SUMMIT 2025 REPORT

**Published by:
OVOF**

