

3 | Creating a new world with new visions: African feminism and trends in the global women's movement

BISI ADELEYE-FAYEMI

Many profound challenges face the global women's movements today, from globalization to HIV/AIDS; some of these issues are old, but some have taken on new faces. In the meantime, the leadership, agents and movements working for change are also under attack. In this respect, it is critical that we reflect on what we have accomplished, what we have yet to bring about and the context in which we work. This chapter starts by considering the specific context of African feminism and the global trends, issues and influences which are defining African women's movements. It then looks at the impacts this context has on feminist organizing, and how strategic African feminist spaces are under attack. Finally, it turns to the international scene and considers the global women's movement more generally, putting forward strategies that could lead to a revitalized, effective and inclusive movement. By linking the local to the global, feminists can understand the contemporary world we are facing and put forth new visions for our movement and our world.

The current context of African feminism: the challenges we face

The 'glocalization' of poverty Over the past twenty-five years, consciousness has been raised on issues affecting women all over the world, at both macro- and microlevels. In spite of this increased awareness, the material conditions of women have not necessarily improved; quality of life has continued to deteriorate for both men and women in most of the developing world. Global phenomena such as the debt crises, structural adjustment policies and increased militarization and communal violence have continued to widen the gap between most Western nations and developing regions. What is a 'regional' or national perspective or issue, therefore, is a result of global trends, while global events have direct and immediate local consequences.

In discussing African regional issues and global trends, an important phenomenon to note is what has been referred to as 'glocalization'.¹ The first time I used the term 'glocalization' in a paper, it came back to me from the editors corrected to 'globalization'. I politely informed them that

glocalization was in fact not a typographical error but a specific contemporary experience of interplay between the local and the global. In other words, events and processes at the global level affect women's situation at the local level at the same time as women's local activities affect global processes.

One of the most obvious global trends of recent times has been the rapid globalization of the economy and its attendant structures. Globalization favours the deregulation of markets, free trade and privatization. It involves the movement of capital 'at the speed of light' and the formation of 'quasi-governments' in the form of multinational financial institutions such as the World Trade Organization, World Bank and International Monetary Fund. While this economic globalization takes place at an intangible global level, it plays out in actual places and is manifested concretely in the lives of real people.

The implementation of economic policies, including structural adjustment programmes, trade liberalization and the privatization of education and health services has compounded the feminization of poverty, for example. Global economic trends take local form in terms of loss of livelihoods, unemployment, trafficking in women, street children and a total rupturing of the social fabric that binds communities together. Moreover, when international policies and economic transactions cause local economic crises, women are affected in different ways from men and, in most cases, they suffer more.

The African region has fared particularly badly over the past two decades and women in Africa have borne the brunt of the continent's misfortunes. Consider, for example, that approximately 44 per cent of Africa's population, the majority of whom are women, are currently living below the poverty line of US \$39 per month.² Furthermore, women continue to lack access to resources such as land, capital, technology, water and adequate food. The majority of women in Africa continue to live in conditions of economic underdevelopment and social marginalization.³ These local realities certainly shape feminism within Africa and also shape and reshape global trends.

So as some parts of the world grow fantastically rich and most parts grow desperately poorer, we need to ask questions about the true meaning of globalization. Does it mean we all exist in a 'global village' where a few get to have all the comforts and riches on the basis of their geographical location and race, while the rest literally clean their toilets? Or does it mean seizing opportunities to ensure equal access to the benefits of trade and investment, and to fairness, equity and justice?

Conflict and militarization These days, teenagers in the United States have come up with an expression for anything outdated or out of sync with the times. They say 'That is so September 10th'. For on 11 September, these youths, and of course most of their parents, had an excruciatingly painful awakening to the horrors of war, senseless destruction and despair. Yet, for millions of people around the world for whom conflict and communal violence have been a way of life for many years, the only thing that was different about 11 September was that they got to watch a real-life Hollywood blockbuster for free on TV. Millions have been killed in wars, conflicts, genocides and communal violence in recent years. Many states in the poorer parts of the world, with massive encouragement from the West, spend more on militarization than on education, health and food security combined.

With 'advances' in military technology, it is possible to obliterate an entire community from the air without sending in any ground troops. This has created the illusion that the ways in which wars are waged has changed. This change is touted as a new and positive trend in 'civilized' war-mongering. The impact of war and conflict remains high, however, in terms of massive violations of human rights, disruption of services and the diversion of already scarce resources to sustain the war effort. The impact on ordinary people is devastating, particularly on women and children. Conflict has increased the feminization of poverty, with women losing their own livelihoods, and the support of fathers, husbands and sons. Landmines and small arms abound during and after periods of conflict, and an entire generation of child soldiers exists in many conflict areas. People still suffer and still die. So, in fact, nothing has really changed in the way wars are fought or won.

Over the past fifteen years, millions of Africans have lost their lives in wars and genocide, and many more have become refugees. Twenty-three armed conflicts are currently raging on the African continent.³ These conflicts have placed tremendous burdens on women who suffer displacement, loss of families and livelihoods, various forms of intense, gender-based violence, and the responsibility of sustaining entire communities. Women and children from countries such as Liberia, Rwanda, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Somalia have spent the last decade living under unbelievably difficult circumstances. The irony is that the donor community is developing new proposals to support 'failed states', and making immense investments to restore countries in conflict while, in many cases, having for decades financially supported the build-up of arms or politically supported undemocratic leaders in the region.

Exclusion from politics and full citizenship One critical area which African

feminists have analysed extensively is the experiences of African women with the state and the exclusion of women from full citizenship. Women were active in liberation struggles that provided them with an entry point into political and social activism in several African countries, including Namibia, Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Uganda and Guinea-Bissau. But after the liberation struggle, what happened to the women? In many instances the constitutions that emerged following independence effectively wrote women out of existence as citizens.

Many African constitutions are now being questioned and renegotiated as a result of feminist activism. These constitutions do not recognize women as full citizens in that they deny women the right to transfer citizenship to another person, which is a basic right of modern citizenship. *Bona fide* citizens have the right and legal capacity to confer their citizenship on their children or a foreign spouse, for example. Millions of African women are therefore not full citizens of the very countries for which they fought and risked their lives to build. A related issue is that of land ownership, a right of citizenship which is also denied to most women in Africa.

Women are underrepresented in most levels of government worldwide, and Africa is no exception. Concern was raised about this issue in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, for example, and United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) set a specific target for women to hold 50 per cent of managerial and decision-making posts by year 2000.⁴ African governments have also made specific commitments on this issue. For example, several countries and political parties created quota systems and affirmative action programmes and reserve 25-50 per cent of elective seats at national and local levels, as well as other appointive positions, for women. As a result some countries such as South Africa (29.3 per cent), Mozambique (25.2 per cent), Seychelles (23.5 per cent) Uganda (21 per cent) and Namibia (22.2 per cent) now have significantly higher levels of women's representation in national assemblies and other positions of power and decision-making.⁵

Despite these advances, gaining access to mainstream decision-making and political power for African women remains a challenge. In the first place, millions of women are illiterate. Those who are literate have to contend with the difficult process of seeking the support of husbands, family and friends, and acceptance from party colleagues. They have to mobilize the necessary campaign finances and endure the harsh realities of political campaigns in Africa that can break the toughest of women. Those who are elected tend to find it very difficult to work within the established structures, which can be hostile to the empowerment and equality of women.

The implications of women being excluded from full citizenship and

to claim and to use. We use this space to mobilize around our feminist principles, to hone our analytical skills and to seek, and sometimes find, answers to our many questions. What makes the space work is faith: that is, the belief that this space is needed to make our lives better and easier. This faith is manifested in our processes of self-discovery, our hopes, our dreams, our aspirations, and our yearning for more knowledge and revelations. The two – space and faith – are interdependent. We need our space as feminists in order to walk the road together and we need the faith that will keep us together in good and in bad times.¹¹

At local, national, regional and global levels, we have worked hard to create feminist spaces and discourses. The gains for women embodied in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights, the Beijing Platform for Action and other international agreements came out of many hard years of feminist struggle all over the world. These movements have grown and evolved and the voices of poor, marginalized women have been a part of them. These feminist spaces, however, are at risk; they are at risk of being hijacked by 'friendly' and 'unfriendly' forces and of ultimately becoming obsolete.

One of the key challenges I see facing the women's movement globally and the feminist movement in particular is the need to maintain the focus on the specificity of women's oppression, their rights and their needs. Within the African context, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain space for feminist activism because most states are hostile to women's rights issues. While the laws and constitutions of the countries say one thing, the politicians and opinion leaders say and do something else. State actors, in fact, usually undermine the very important work of lobbying for legal reforms and constitutional amendments that could raise the status of women. The media, political parties, trade unions and other civil society groups do not genuinely understand why a feminist movement is needed. In this environment, it is an increasingly difficult challenge to garner attention for women's specific issues.

Another key challenge is that the women who are in leadership positions in government structures and other strategic institutions lack either the consciousness or clout to push a progressive agenda for women. These women sometimes become a liability to the feminist movement because of their reactionary positions at worst, or conservative positions at best. For example, a very common strategy is for them to work with or hold up as an example rural grassroots women who have no gender analysis. They are held up as the 'real women' instead of articulate, middle-class women, who are mainly urban-based. This strategy serves to erode any

political women's rights efforts because the rural women are not able to represent women's strategic interests. At the same time, the self-esteem and energies of feminists are undermined by making them continuously apologetic for whatever privileges they are perceived to have.

Yet another key challenge facing feminists in the global women's movement is a lack of conceptual clarity within the movement itself. A trend I have noted with great concern in recent years is the depoliticization of feminism and feminist politics as a result of gender and development language and praxis. At a conference I was attending in 1998, for example, a woman stood up proudly to announce, 'I have moved beyond feminism to gender'. In this strange analysis, the struggle for the specificity of women's rights and needs is rendered obsolete and replaced with a new politics which 'empowers both men and women', although without questioning the context or who is doing the empowering. It is precisely because 'gender' has been simplistically analysed in this way that many women in the movement describe themselves as 'gender activists' and not 'feminist activists'. Gender is safe, while feminism is threatening. Gender can be accommodated and tolerated by the status quo, while feminism challenges it. As a result, the feminist spaces we have tried to create for ourselves are in danger of being 'genderized'.

Many women ask, 'What does it matter what we call ourselves? As long as we are all fighting for women's rights, isn't that what matters?' For me, this is not good enough. The work of fighting for women's rights is as deeply political as the process of naming. Choosing to call oneself a feminist is a clear statement of ideology. We need feminist analysis because if we do not have an adequate theory of the oppression of women, we will lack the analytical tools to develop appropriate strategies of resistance. We will end up working only on symptoms and not on root causes.

Finally, the participation of men in women's movements is another challenge to sustaining our feminist space. We have been asking, and have been asked, questions such as, 'Why are we not talking to men and working in partnership with them?' It has been noted that there are men who are feminists and are deeply committed to supporting the feminist movement and that having progressive men on board as allies early on can help protect the work that women do in marginalized communities. There is a belief that after years of gender mainstreaming, men have been 'left behind' and they now need to be 'carried along'.

As feminist activists, we all have to work with men, build personal and professional partnerships with them, and seek them out as allies. Increasingly, men in our communities are stepping forward to provide moral and financial support for our movements. We must be cautious, however. Does

this new trend imply that feminist spaces have to be surrendered to men or carved up so that men can have a 50 per cent stake? Does including men imply employing them to run women's organizations, men editing women's magazines, speaking on behalf of women and counselling women suffering from abuse? Does it imply tolerating the company of men who philander, or those who batter their partners physically and emotionally in private while seeking to be our allies in public? Moreover, are these men that we are 'carrying along' prepared to give up the powers and privileges that patriarchy confers on them?

This is an issue that we need to think about carefully: some of us have lost our feminist spaces to men. In places where women are still developing the tools they need for self-expression and self-discovery, insisting that they let men into those spaces without a clear strategy is a recipe for disaster. While it is important that we work with men, we need to have a strategy about how and why we want to work with them.

New identities and globalized visions

Many debates among feminists in Africa revolve around issues of 'culture' and 'identity'. For example, what is African culture and what constitutes an African identity? Moreover, who defines them? These two terms are used by some African scholars, practitioners and politicians in reference to vital elements of our humanity which were lost through many years of exploitation, brutalization and dislocation. These concepts, however, mean very different things in the day-to-day lives of African women.

Within the context of an African culture defined and interpreted by patriarchal values, a woman is a second-class citizen, her labour is unremunerated, her body is available and disposable, her rights are subject to validation and violation, and her daughters will share her fate. She is socialized into sustaining the very structures that will oppress her throughout her life. There will be some rewards that come with compliance, and also punishment for rebellion. This, in essence, is her identity.

African feminists point out that definitions of 'Africanness' cannot be constructed outside the personhood of African women. This conceptual framework also applies to our global feminist movement; we should see our **task** as continuously creating new, transformatory identities for women. New strategies and new visions will emerge through the process of creating and re-creating our own identities.

In spite of its many curses, globalization does bring with it some key opportunities that the women's movement can take advantage of and which can be used to create new identities. One example is the increased demand for democratization processes and a broadening of the spectrum

of guaranteed rights for women, men and peoples all over the world. These aspects of globalization can strengthen the women's movement in the following ways.

Universal human rights guarantees An identity that women can now take advantage of is that of 'global citizen' with internationally protected human rights in parallel to their national citizenship and nationally protected rights. National citizenship is enriched through the coexistence of a global one, which provides recourse to regional and international legal instruments, mechanisms and universally accepted principles of justice and human rights.

In all of our countries, organizations are working on mobilization and awareness-raising around women's rights, such as violence against women and harmful traditional practices. They work with women in very poor communities, in both rural and urban areas, on changing structures, beliefs and attitudes. They use the language of human rights and appeal to universal values of justice and equality. This is a process of re-creating identities and redefining a personhood for women which has been opened up by processes of globalization.

New avenues for state accountability Emerging international norms of democracy and human rights have presented novel possibilities for engagement with the state. New demands for accountability and representation have brought about decentralization programmes, political representation, affirmative action, gender mainstreaming and calls for legal and constitutional reform, for example. Women have been active advocates in these sites of engagement. In nations such as South Africa and Uganda, women's movements have won the inclusion of constitutional provisions on the protection and promotion of women's rights, including quotas and affirmative action.

Women not only are taking advantage of new opportunities to engage with their state, they are recognizing that for their work to be effective they must be represented in government. There has been a deliberate shift towards fighting for access to decision-making positions and also towards strengthening women's leadership within hostile, patriarchal structures. A good example in this regard is the Women's Budget Initiative, which was spearheaded in Africa by women in the South African parliament and is now being taken on board in other African countries. Through these new means of engagement with the state, women's movements are again redefining and re-creating the identities of women in Africa.¹

Opportunities for women to shape policies in post-conflict countries As the international community has focused its attention on agendas for reconstructing war-torn societies and countries in political transition, new roles for women in shaping policies and priorities are emerging. We are witnessing a general refocusing on how, where and by whom power structures are defined and the re-creation of human agency in actors such as women's organizations, trade unions and human rights organizations.

Over the past ten years at least, civil society organizations have kept countries running when they had virtually collapsed, such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Rwanda and Somalia. Women in particular have formed broad-based peace movements and called for new values with respect to defining communal relationships and state-civil-society relations. Such values include accountability, transparency, anti-corruption and inclusiveness as crucial elements of good governance. With the understanding that no society can rejuvenate itself without the active participation of women, reconstruction and nation-building processes are serving to reaffirm and re-create the roles of women in their societies as well as at the international level.

Refocusing women's movements

One key lesson that we have learned as a global women's movement is the value of multidimensional thinking and activism. Our issues are always interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Understanding the influences and trends described so far in this chapter, it becomes clear that feminist organizing must respond to these new realities and challenges, always conscious of how the 'new issues' are related to the 'old issues' and how challenges in one region or sector are interconnected with other issues.

The vital strength of the global women's movement is that it is made up of numerous local women's movements, but this has also been its weakness: there are too many preachers with the same message. In proposing a strategic direction, therefore, rather than dwelling on the need for 'division of labour' strategies which could imply that each region, organization or network map out a piece of turf and guard it jealously, I would like to suggest strategically building a movement that has crucial elements within it for its survival. As Bella Abzug once said: 'to live to get the whole job done, great movements must reinvent themselves. To sustain themselves, movements must not only grow: they must change. This is not **only** because times inevitably change. It is because we ourselves have changed the times. Thus, we must react in part to our own history.'¹⁰

How, then, can we consolidate our gains and make use of the opportunities that now exist to reinvent our movement? What follows are my

personal recommendations of strategic priorities for the global women's movement and local women's movements all over the world, in light of the global trends and emerging issues which we face.

Repoliticize the movement The feminist movement worldwide should now concentrate on confronting global structures and systems. In order to engage critically with the global patriarchal structures responsible for women's lack of personhood, we need more feminists, not just women in decision-making positions. The time has come for us to face the fact that if the women's movement is aiming to struggle against all forms of patriarchal oppression, then it has to be feminists and their allies who do this. It is an inherently political struggle. The criterion for being in the women's movement can no longer be mere biology. We need *feminists* with power.

We need feminists as public advocates, politicians and law-makers, in the corporate sector and in social movements. If we are to see any lasting changes in the lives of women this century, if we are to see a change in our politics and economies, if we are to have lasting peace in our communities, we will **need** a feminist conceptualization of power and governance. This great transformation will not be achieved, I am reluctant to accept, solely by putting feminist women in power; we have to take risks and promote 'feminist' men as well. We also have to remember that the battle is not won simply by getting feminists into positions of power; we all have to do what we can to support them and keep them in their positions, and we also have to hold them accountable.

Develop new feminist knowledge The global feminist movement has made very good progress in the creation of knowledge. Feminism has thrived in the academies in the North, at least in part **because** feminists in these countries have **been** able to acquire the necessary spaces and resources. This success has unfortunately led to intellectual hegemonies: the sisters in the North are the ones with the academic institutions, women's/feminist studies programmes, fellowships, research grants, technology and access to international publishing. Thus they appropriate the knowledge bases of women in the South, resulting in an intellectual dichotomy whereby the women from the North are regarded as the thinkers and scholars and the women from the South are the **practitioners**, with, of course, more value and respect attached to the former. How many Western feminist writers on Africa refer to the works of African women? How many books on 'international feminism' include contributions from African feminist scholars and activists? There has been a very effective silencing of other women's voices and experiences.¹¹

The sole responsibility for redressing this imbalance does not rest in the North, however. We feminists in the global South should also challenge ourselves to devote time, space and energies to writing our own stories and to theorizing. We have to scale up our contributions to the rich debates on feminist theory and practice that are going on throughout the world. A very important area of work for us should be thoughtfully and consistently to document our experiences as women's movements. Only when all voices are being heard will we be able to talk of a truly global feminism.

Strengthen feminist institutions Feminist organizations today are somewhat different from what they were at their inception many years ago. Feminist spaces must be capable of evolution in order to survive. Feminist organizational development requires significantly more research and attention because it is a substantial challenge to assess the implications of marrying conventional organizational development theory and practice with the experiences of feminist organizational leadership. Building and sustaining our institutions, however, are critical to the movement and we must not neglect this foundational aspect of our work.

Frequently, feminist organizations have been premised on principles of non-hierarchy, collective work and collective responsibility. They have also been highly dependent on volunteers. These structures, however, do not necessarily support the institutional capacity to sustain long-term activities. While some might argue that so-called professionalism ruins social movements because it adds a dollar price to people's commitment, we need to also be realistic and accept that for movements to survive they need to grow and evolve. Commitment, good-will and volunteerism are vital, but they are no longer enough to sustain women's organizations.

A related issue is the fact that, as a result of ideological differences, donor involvement and poor employment opportunities, among other factors, civil society organizations tend to proliferate. Many organizations, therefore, carry out work that is not necessarily adding value and which is not part of an overall strategy for transformation. This tends to encourage cynicism, suspicion and a lack of respect for non-governmental organizations on the part of potential beneficiaries, donors and governments. It gives opponents an easy opportunity to discredit civil society institutions. Building and sustaining effective feminist institutions should be a collective priority for the global feminist movement in the immediate future.

Acquire money of our own Feminist organizations need to acquire their own resources in order to consolidate and sustain their legacies. Too many organizations operate on shoestring budgets and are both donor-depend-

ent and donor-driven. We can not afford for our movement to be at the mercy of donor funding, without mechanisms for sustained institutional development or independence. We cannot truly own our own agendas if we do not have our own resources.

Thankfully, there is now an emerging global feminist philanthropic movement and 'women's funds' in all parts of the world, with varying levels of resources and at different stages of growth and development.¹³ What these funds all have in common is the desire to place resources at the disposal of the feminist movement. One major challenge ahead will be to convince ourselves and other women of the need to invest in our own sisters by donating to these funds.

Managing our diversity We have now had many debates on diversity and the politics of identity and race within our movement. Feminists from the global South, as well as many Northern feminists, have actively critiqued the lack of an intersectional analysis in our work, including the issue of racism within the global women's movement itself. While we would like to think that we have worked on this and that it is no longer an 'issue', it has not been fully resolved. As feminists from both the North and South, we have to continue learning to redefine the ways in which we engage with each other in order to sustain our 'glocal' spaces, even though it can be painful and frustrating.

Develop feminist leadership The feminist leadership model conceptualizes leadership as a service. It allows for individual feminist leaders to guide and lead their movements responsibly, but it also decentralizes power and decision-making so that everyone in the movement becomes a leader in her own right. Within organizations, feminist leadership should, it is hoped, provide vital political content, ideological clarity and commitment to the ethos and principles of feminism. It should promote the learning and teaching of feminist principles, including, among many others, the centrality of the fight for women's personhood, the necessity of providing a voice for women, the validation of women's knowledge, a respect for women's bodily integrity, norms for working across diversities, and values for working in solidarity with strategically chosen allies.

Developing feminist leadership is fundamental to the survival of our organizations. For feminist spaces to survive, we need a reconceptualization of power and leadership within organizations. Furthermore, as organizations grow more complex and try to cope with the demands of juggling various projects, acquiring funding and servicing a variety of stakeholders, they need effective feminist leaders to manage them. Non-governmental

women's organizations have the ability to provide the necessary conceptual, analytical and practical tools for emerging leaders. Producing well-grounded feminist leaders through awareness-raising, self-esteem promotion, inter-generational capacity-building programmes and other types of strategic training should become the *raison d'être* of feminist organizations.

Replenish our ranks Simply stated, we need more young women in the global women's movement. Furthermore, we need to develop institutional cultures of intergenerational organizing. While many have recognized this need, actually addressing it remains a sticky area in the women's movement. On the one hand, younger women note the conservatism and the matronizing, often selfish, behaviour of older women. Older women, on the other hand, point to the lack of commitment of younger women, who are perceived to be less willing to challenge power relations because of where they are in their life cycle.¹⁶ It has also been noted that, in the North, the feminist movement has become a victim of its own successes. Young, middle-class women, armed with their college degrees, the right to control their bodies, their credit cards and a marked improvement in the quality of their lives compared with those of their mothers, say that we are now in a 'post-feminist era'. But, as has been stated so many times before, there is no such thing as 'post-feminism' until there is a 'post-patriarchy'.

Overthrowing patriarchy is quite a revolution. If ever we are to achieve our revolution, we must prioritize replenishing our ranks and take the actions necessary to bridge generational gaps.

Take care of ourselves and each other Addressing the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of women has been a major shortcoming of our work as feminists. The compounded effects of the growing backlash against the women's movement, media harassment, cultural and religious fundamentalisms, the pressures of running organizations, and the challenges of balancing family and professional obligations, make the task of sustaining individual women's energies very difficult. Many of us are tired, burned out, depressed and angry, and many of us have gone through intense periods of crises characterized by a breakdown in relationships, problems with our children, betrayals of trust, bitterness and deep hurt. Increasingly, we are cynical and are just 'going through the motions'. And while many of us are aware of this, we seldom talk about it. For a movement which has thrived on the slogan 'the personal is political', we have not reflected on how much of what we do to and with one another is both personal and political.

It seems that we have taught ourselves to put everything and everyone first before ourselves. There is of course a good reason for this - we simply

do not have time for everything! In order to address this problem, we need to go back to the old feminist strategies of consciousness-raising and developing women's self-esteem, whatever our age. We need to teach ourselves how to feel pain and how to talk about what we are going through, rather than denying it or seeking comfort in all the wrong places. For those of us who are mothers, let us take great joy and pride in motherhood even while we reject the identities of enforced heterosexist institutions. For those of us who have partners, male or female, let us feel free to love them without feeling that we are losing anything. We have to learn how to like each other, to respect each other and to love each other, and, most importantly, how to take great joy in doing that. Let us put the soul back into our movement.

Conclusion

We need more opportunities like this for reflection and dialogue on the new challenges facing the global women's movement. We will have to be cautious, brave and vigilant to ensure that the gains we have made are not lost at the same time as we push towards new targets and goals. We need to preserve our feminist spaces in any way that we can, at the same time as we build new spaces and put forward new visions. To do this, we need commitment, solidarity, critical dialogues, effective leadership, power and finances. We need a diverse, interconnected and interdisciplinary feminism, which is radical, local, global and collective, linking theory with practice. Let us stop diluting our language and agenda; let us stop being apologetic about our choices, our dreams and our visions of justice. Together, let us create a new world with new visions.

Notes

1 The term 'glocalization' is said to have been coined by sociologist Roland Robertson. See R. Robertson (1992) *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage), pp. 173-4.

2 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (1999) *Report of the Sixth African Regional Conference on Women*, E/EC/A/ACW/RC.V/1/99/12 (November).

3 African Regional NGO Report on the NGO Consultations (1999) Sixth African Regional Conference on Women, Addis-Ababa, 22-26 November 1999.

4 <<http://www.urgentactionfund.org/af-desk2.html>>

5 <http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/Publications/ACAW/new-acgd_publications/Political%20empowerment.htm>

6 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *The Political Empowerment of Women. Summary of Progress Made by African Governments*, Sixth African Regional Conference on Women, Addis-Ababa, 22-26 November 1999.

7 Ibid. Getting women into decision-making positions is one thing, but

ensuring that they make an impact is another. There are four key issues involved here: (i) access for women to political spaces (e.g. through quotas, voter education, public support and awareness, affirmative action, party support, etcetera); (ii) participation (e.g. representation of women in decision-making structures and their level of political engagement); (iii) transformation of the institutions themselves (e.g. meeting times at parliament, childcare arrangements, women-friendly language, etcetera); and (iv) external transformation (e.g. how gender considerations are integrated into legislation). See *Women in Politics and Decision-Making in SADC: Beyond 30% in 2007*, Report of the proceedings of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender Unit Conference, Gaborone, Botswana, 28 March- 1 April 1999.

8 'Health Care Still a Dream for Some', see <http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm_ch8.html>

9 For more information on these cases, visit <<http://www.now.org/issues/global/091202couple.html>> or <<http://www.amnesty.org.au/women/report-nigeria.html>>

10 This new partnership for African development is described as follows: '[it] is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time participate actively in the world economy and body politic. The Programme is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalizing world.' From <<http://www.dfa.gov.za/events/nepad.htm>> For more information: <<http://www.nepad.org/>>

11 I talk about feminist space and faith in *The Dame Barrow Distinguished Visitor Lecture* (1999) (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/ University of Toronto).

12 For more information on Women's Budget Initiatives, see <<http://www.case.org.za/gender.html>> or <<http://magnet.undp.org/events/gender/india/Soutaf.htm>>

13 B. Abzug (1996) 'Women Will Change the Nature of Power', in B. Abzug and D. Jain, *Women's Leadership and the Ethics of Development*, UNDP Gender in Development Monograph Series, 4 (August).

14 For more information on this point, see: C. T. Mohanty, A. Russo and L. Torres (eds) (1991) *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

15 An international network of women's funds was started three years ago. There are now up to fifteen autonomous women's funds in various parts of the world, most of which have been supported by pioneer women's funds such as Global Fund for Women, Match International and Mama Cash. There is a vibrant network of women's funds in the United States called the Women's Funding Network, which also shares its resources and lessons with other women's funds around the world.

16 This is a complex relationship. It is usually older women, free from the challenges of looking after young children, who have the time and space to

concentrate on public advocacy. Younger activists, especially those who are in the early stages of relationships ranging from dating to marriage and caring for young children, do not have the same time to devote to rounds of meetings and outreach, even while they are still deeply committed. On the other hand, we have seen many young activists challenge the conservative, accommodating politics of older women, calling for newer, more radical approaches. Through the work AMwA has done at the African Women's Leadership Institute, for example, we have provided platforms for these discussions to take place and develop strategies which take on board the positive contributions and insights of all generations.