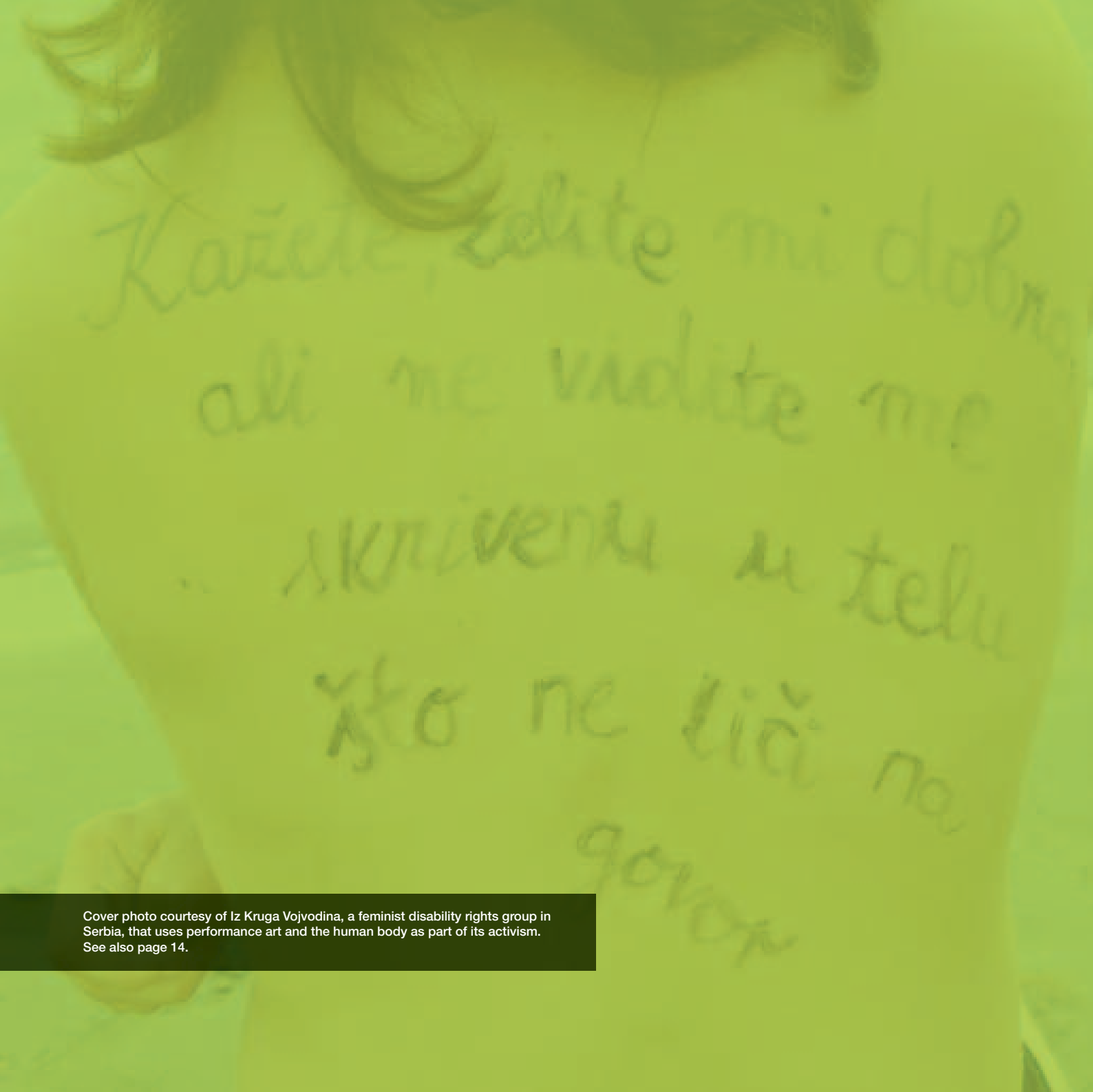


Kažite, želite mi dobro,
ali ne violite me
.. skriveni u telu
yha ne ...

Who Counts?

An Inclusive Vision for Ending Gender-Based Violence





Cover photo courtesy of Iz Kruga Vojvodina, a feminist disability rights group in Serbia, that uses performance art and the human body as part of its activism. See also page 14.

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Founded in 1983 in the Netherlands, Mama Cash is the oldest international women's fund in the world. Mama Cash mobilises resources from individuals and institutions, provides funding and accompaniment support to women's, girls' and trans groups, and helps to build the partnerships and networks to defend and advance women's and girls' human rights globally. Mama Cash also plays a catalysing role within the European philanthropy sector to promote philanthropy that advances women's rights. In the 30 years of its existence, Mama Cash has spent €56 million on achieving its objective of supporting the rights of women, girls and trans people, of which €37 million went into direct grants to groups and individuals.

Who Counts?

An Inclusive Vision for Ending Gender-based Violence

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Executive Summary

Mama Cash's thirty years of feminist grantmaking and support for groups that advocate for the rights of women, girls and trans people have shown that social change is possible. However, we have also learned that success depends enormously on the composition and culture of the movements that aim to bring about that change. Today, our work is based on the premise that in order to bring about deep and lasting social justice, feminist and women's rights movements need to be well-resourced and politically autonomous, but they also need to be inclusive, democratic and diverse.

In 2012, Mama Cash decided to examine how groups' struggles to end violence cut across our thematic and regional work areas. The groups we fund mobilise not only to resist gender-based violence in their communities and countries; they are also challenging the very definition of what violence is and who experiences it. This report highlights the strategies, challenges and lessons that emerged from in-depth information gathered from 27 groups Mama Cash has funded over the past three years.

The report focuses on how organisations define and redefine violence by expanding commonplace (but often incomplete) understandings of what violence is and who experiences it, and it identifies effective strategies groups have used to counter and end violence. It also seeks to capture the challenges faced and lessons learned by those who seek to influence their communities, governments, and other social justice movements in their determination to advocate for the human rights of women, girls and trans people.

The report has three major sections:

Defining and redefining violence

Around the world, Mama Cash's grantees are focusing attention on experiences of violence which are often overlooked or deemed unimportant (or even deserved) by communities and social justice movements, such as violence against sex workers, the economic exploitation of child domestic workers or coerced sterilisation on the basis of an individual's HIV status. This section provides an overview of what exactly is meant by 'redefining violence', and how groups have experienced violence and marginalisation, even within social justice movements. Organisations interviewed have found that while there is still ongoing resistance to creating more inclusive social justice movements, there has also been significant progress in developing alliances and creating space for open dialogue and reflection.

Strategies for change

Mama Cash's grantees are using a range of strategies to address individual instances of gender-based violence, as well as to build alliances, coalitions, and movements for deep and lasting changes in the structures that perpetuate such violence. These strategies are aimed at supporting and mobilising women, girls, and trans people themselves, as well as building awareness and solidarity among power holders in their communities and countries, and the public at large. Many of these strategies will be familiar to advocates working to prevent and address gender-based violence around the world. By adopting and adapting these, how-

ever, for use with women, girls, and trans people who experience violence that is often overlooked, or that is not considered violence at all, groups are challenging existing power dynamics and working to advance a more comprehensive human rights agenda. This section explores several strategies, including democratising leadership, using one's body to engage in activism, challenging the use of discriminatory and hostile language, and using direct action to claim back public space and resist physical and social marginalisation.

Challenges

Despite the many successes of the groups Mama Cash supports, an examination of their efforts to redefine, challenge, and address violence revealed key challenges. Many of these challenges are familiar, such as human resource constraints and government officials resistant to change, but this report focuses on three areas of challenge that receive less focus and attention when planning, implementing and evaluating human rights advocacy. Specifically,

this report highlights the danger of exposing survivors of violence to further trauma when engaging a justice system that can be hostile to them; high levels of burn out and frustration among activists; and the difficulty of engaging in advocacy when daily material needs are not being met, which reflects a broader problem of economic inequality within movements.

This report is, of course, not exhaustive, but we hope that the experiences and approaches it highlights will be informative for peer donors and other stakeholders, and that the lessons and reflections it shares will be useful to our grantees and other partners around the world. Despite their diversity, all of the organisations interviewed for this report share a broad, inclusive vision for social change that rejects narrow agendas, affirms the complex nature of change, and emphasises the links between diverse struggles for social justice.



The theatrical troupe of Danaya So (Mali) uses performance and music to promote the rights of sex workers, and advocate against the denial of their sexual and reproductive rights and health.

Introduction

In September 2012, an ambitious global study on violence against women¹ came to the conclusion that the presence of strong and autonomous feminist movements was the single most important factor in bringing about changes in a country's willingness to recognise and address gender-based violence. Based on the rigorous analysis of a complex set of data spanning four decades and drawn from 70 countries, researchers determined that feminist movements were more important than a country's economic growth, an increase in women's representation in government, or the presence of a left-wing government. Again and again, the data revealed that countries with strong women's movements operating independently of political parties were more likely to have progressive social policies on violence against women.



Sarah Nannyondo from MEMPROW (Uganda), during the convening 'Reframing and Ending Violence' in Nairobi, Kenya, where 17 Mama Cash grantees met to exchange knowledge and strategies.

The study is ground-breaking in the scope of its data and its application of rigorous analytical methods to the phenomenon of civil society organising. Its conclusion was welcomed by supporters of women's movements worldwide, and it also confirmed what women's funds such as Mama Cash already knew to be true: that the collective mobilisation of women and girls, together with the leadership and long-term commitment of women's human rights activists and organisations, is a critical driving force for transforming prevailing systems of unequal power relations into equitable and just ones.

In 2009, Mama Cash adopted a new five-year strategic plan that marked a shift in our priorities and methods of working². Since then, four years of intensive grantmaking and accompaniment has revealed that gender-based violence³ is a key priority for grantees across our thematic portfolios. In 2012, Mama Cash decided to take a closer look at how the theme of violence played out across our grantees' work. The groups we support are not only mobilising to resist gender-based violence in their communities and countries, they are also breaking new ground in defining, confronting, and drawing attention to forms and experiences of violence that have long been overlooked or relegated to the margins by society and governments, and even by social justice movements.

Purpose and research methodology

This report highlights the themes, challenges, and lessons that emerged from the research by exploring the question of how the groups Mama Cash supports define violence, as well as how they redefine it by expanding commonplace understandings of what violence is and who experiences it. The report seeks to draw out common strategies that groups have found to be effective in influencing social justice movements, and for advocating for changes in legislation, attitudes and values more broadly.

To begin fostering deeper learning and exchange on this subject, Mama Cash organised a three-day convening for groups we fund, primarily those based in Africa. Held in Nairobi, Kenya from 27-29 August, 2012, the meeting "Reframing and Ending Violence" brought together representatives from 17 grantee partners from across our thematic portfolios. Fifteen were based in Africa and two in Latin America. Prior to the meeting, representatives from each participating grantee organisation were interviewed by an independent consultant

and asked to share a 'story of change' from their work to address violence – a story of individual or collective transformation, a story of successful advocacy or movement-building, or a story of a shift in attitudes. In drawing out these stories, the interviews sought to gain insight into the circumstances, challenges, and beliefs underpinning the change process, as well as the strategies grantees used to achieve change and the observable results of these changes in their communities and movements.

Following the convening, the consultant conducted similar interviews with ten additional grantees whose work touched on the theme of violence: one from Africa, one from Asia, five from Latin America, and three from Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The consultant also reviewed reports written by groups and Mama Cash Programme Officers for all 27 organisations. Finally, the consultant interviewed three Mama Cash staff members: the Programme Officers for Body and Money, and the Officer for Philanthropic Partnerships who served as the rapporteur for the Nairobi convening.

The grantees represent the full range of Mama Cash's thematic and geographic grantmaking. Their stories highlight experiences and approaches that we hope will be informative for funders and other stakeholders and may also offer lessons and reflections that our grantees and other partners around the world will find useful.

Section I: Defining and Redefining Violence

In the past several decades, feminist and women's rights movements have made great strides globally in positioning gender-based violence as a human rights violation rather than a "private" matter, while also gaining recognition for the many different ways in which violence can manifest. While some resistance remains, the anti-violence work of these movements has been successful in contributing to building a social consensus about what violence against women is, why it is a violation of human rights, and why it should be socially and legally unacceptable. This is particularly true with regard to domestic violence and forms of violence perceived as 'more severe' (such as female genital mutilation/cutting or so-called 'honour' killings). Over several decades of advocacy, violence has come to be understood as an exercise of power in a world where inequality based on gender persists.

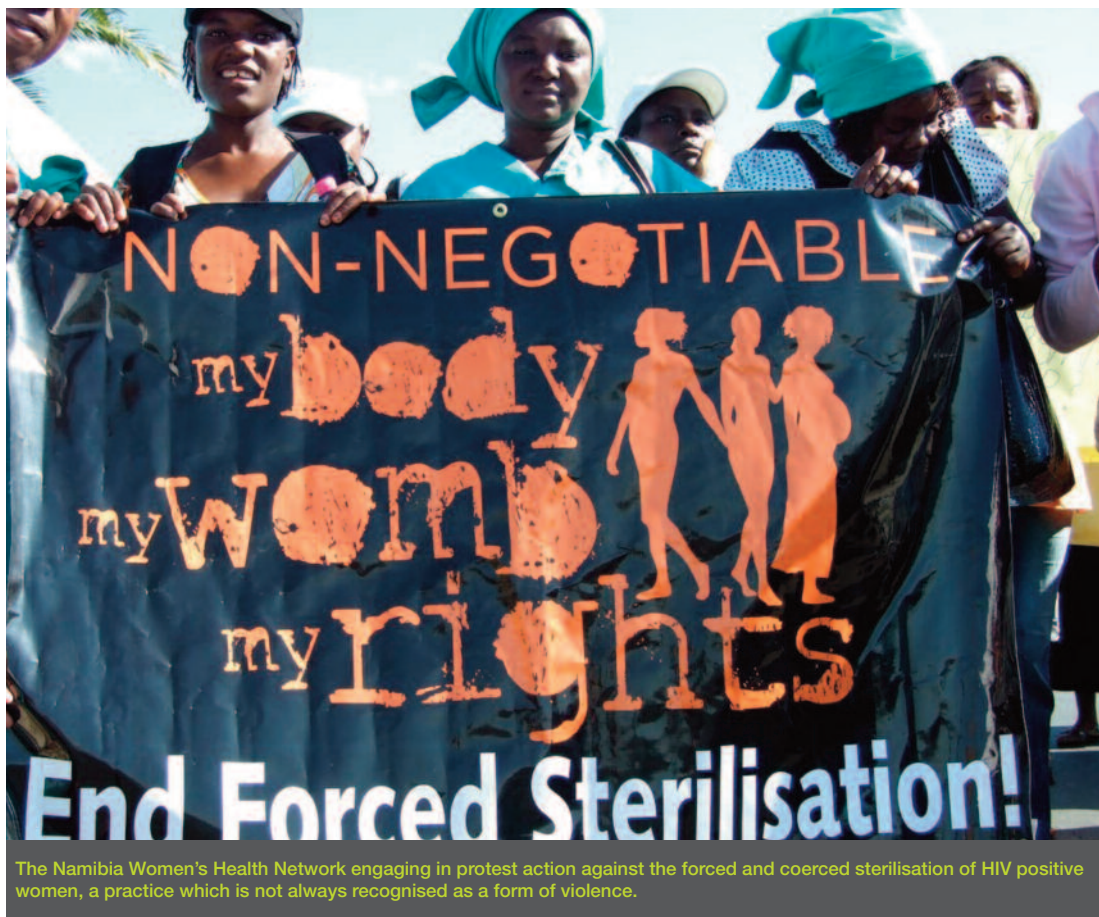
Despite these successes, however, other experiences of violence are often overlooked in mainstream anti-violence work and by society more generally because 1) they are not defined as violence, 2) they are seen as 'not as bad' as other forms of violence and therefore less worthy of attention, and/or 3) the people or social groups experiencing the violence are perceived to be 'less innocent' or somehow responsible for the abuse they experience, and are not seen as 'legitimate victims'. An example would be physical or sexual violence against groups whose social exclusion is seen as unimportant or is taken for granted (such as the rape of sex workers, or economic violence against domestic workers).

Around the world, Mama Cash's grantees are focusing attention on these overlooked forms of violence, challenging commonly held views of what constitutes violence, namely that it is an exclusively physical phenomenon which can only be defined as a narrow set of experiences such as being raped or beaten. For example, expanding definitions of violence beyond physical acts has been central to the Malian sex workers' rights collective Association Danaya So. Housnatou Tembely explains that for her organisation, violence is anything that can cause someone hurt or pain – including "blows, attitudes, behaviour, or actions." She adds that this is the definition Danaya So uses, and that they are working to make it the commonly accepted definition in Mali.

In this section of the report, our grantees reflect on two important conditions that support effective work to counter gender-based violence, particularly as it is experienced by women, girls and trans people at the margins of communities and societies. The first is the space and support that individuals need in order to raise their own awareness about the violence they experience and to reject an internalisation of responsibility for the violence. The second is the importance of creating inclusive movements that reject all forms of violence.

1. Consciousness-raising among women, girls and trans people

Socially and legally accepted understandings of what counts as violence – and whose experiences are worth 'counting' as violence – has an impact on how individual women, girls and trans people understand their own lives and experiences. Many groups interviewed for this report shared that it takes time and a process of support and politicisation for someone to recognise that her (or his) own negative and traumatic individual experiences are part of a larger pattern of violence in society. For example, Hazra Okem, a graduate of Uganda's Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) and a leader of its independent Girl Network shares the following:



"I used to think from a personal perspective that violence is about rape... maybe severe beating. But through my participation in MEMPROW and in the Network, I've come to understand how violence exists in so many ways, and affects us in so many ways. For example, being denied the opportunity to go to school is violence."

This has also been the experience of Iz Kruga Vojvodina (Out of Circle), a Serbian organisation focused on the rights of women with disabilities. Iz Kruga argues that addressing violence against women with disabilities requires more than just ensuring that services and educational materials are designed with their needs in mind. It also requires deepening disabled women's own understanding of how being both a woman and a disabled person results in a particular experience of violence. For example, disabled women are seen as having less value because they are perceived as being unable to fulfil the social roles expected of women (such as a caretaker (mother) and a sexual partner (wife)). Representatives from Iz Kruga explain that working with women with disabilities to address violence includes raising their awareness about how "their

experience is also the experience of other women" and that the violence they experience is not just personal, but is also a form of gender-based violence.

"Women with disabilities often do not recognise the violence they experience as gender-based violence – they usually attribute the violence [they experience] to their disabilities. And it is normal or common that the perpetrators are usually very close – caregivers, partners, parents — and that the women usually rationalise their behaviour: 'He or she is giving care, and so I understand that I'm difficult.'"

Iz Kruga's experience is similar to that of United Deaf Women's Organisation (UDEWO) in Uganda, as well as Malawi Human Rights for Women and Girls with Disabilities (MHRWD). Both of these groups focus attention on the kinds of violence that women and girls with disabilities experience: challenging the culture of impunity for perpetrators, and expanding the understanding of disabled women's experiences and capacities in the process. Of

course, the phenomenon Iz Kruga describes is not limited to women with disabilities. As representatives from the Peruvian sex workers' rights organisation Asociación de Trabajadoras Sexuales Mujeres del Sur (Association of Sex Workers 'Women of the South') point out:

"Women think bad things happen to them because they are sex workers. They feel guilty. They think they 'deserve' it, that they are being punished. It takes a long time to break that down."

2. Inclusivity within movements

Many of the groups Mama Cash funds also experience marginalisation within social movements, including feminist and women's rights movements. Frequently, more "mainstream" movements refuse to address or even acknowledge the varied ways in which different social groups can experience violence. For example, organisations of domestic workers must convince labour rights movements that women who work in households or in the informal sector have the same rights as workers in the formal or public sector. Sex workers' rights groups face resistance when they demand to be included in the anti-violence agendas of many women's rights organisations, despite the fact that they face regular sexual and economic exploitation by police who demand payment or sexual favours in countries where sex work is criminalised and/or unregulated. And trans rights organisations must use valuable time and resources explaining to mainstream women's rights groups why the term 'violence against women' fails to include their experiences, and indeed may serve to further marginalise or even erase them.

Consortio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad Oaxaca (Oaxacan Consortium for Parliamentary Dialogue and Equity), a Mexican grantee of Mama Cash, works to challenge the culture of impunity when it comes to violence against Indigenous women and human rights defenders, perpetrated by Indigenous men, many of whom are human rights leaders. This work is about more than ensuring women's access to justice; it is about building a social justice movement that embraces a commitment to the human rights of Indigenous women, including the right to be free from sexual and physical violence within the movement, as well as in daily life. As representatives from Consortio Oaxaca point out, "We're supposed to be fighting for justice and to be free from violence, but look at the violence that takes place in our own movement!"

Organisations of sex workers in Peru, Thailand, and Uganda supported by Mama Cash have faced similar challenges in their efforts to build alliances with labour rights movements, as have organisations of domestic and other informal sector workers in Guatemala and Tanzania. Organisations of women with disabilities from Malawi and Serbia reported similar struggles to build an awareness of and a commitment to addressing violence against women with disabilities, even among activists for disability rights. Despite these challenges, Mama Cash's grantees have persisted in their efforts to make women, girls, and trans people – and the violence they experience – visible within broader social justice movements.

Within the women's rights and feminist movements specifically, women's rights organisations have often been led by relatively privileged women (e.g., in terms of their socio-economic status, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation and gender identity). This has contributed to a relatively narrow set of interests being taken up by these organisations, often marginalising trans people, women from ethnic and racial minorities, and women from rural and/or low-income areas⁴. In Burundi, for example, most prominent women's rights organisations are led by married women, and as a result, the women's rights movement tends to focus on issues such as domestic violence in formalised partnerships, and the maternal rights of married women. As Pamela Mubeza, director of the Association des Mamans Célibataires (Association of Single Mothers – AMC) in Burundi, explains:



Empower Foundation Chiang Mai (Thailand) participating in a march on International Women's Day, insisting that sex workers are part of the women's rights and feminist movements.

“Single mothers are seen as ‘poor victims’ by the women’s movement. When a feminist organisation invites us to participate in an event, they use us as tokens or victims, not as equals or the subjects of rights. A lot of people don’t understand that we have the same objective: to work for the human rights of women. It’s a narrow definition of women if you don’t include everyone.”

Lesbian and bisexual women have also historically faced discrimination not only within gay rights movements (which tend to be dominated by men), but also within women’s rights movements, within which homophobic attitudes often go unchecked. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, the young women-led organisation Si Jeunesse Savait (‘If Youth Knew’ – SJS) advocates for the inclusion of violence against lesbians and bisexual women in the agenda of the women’s rights movement. Similarly, in Argentina, the lesbian rights group Desalambrando was formed to break the silence around the violence that occurs between women in lesbian relationships. This work has met with some resistance from more mainstream women’s rights groups, as well as from lesbian rights activists, who argue that Desalambrando’s efforts to raise awareness of violence among lesbians diverts attention from the homophobic violence lesbians experience. For Desalambrando, however, to overlook certain forms of violence is to betray the deeper principles on which feminism is based. “Feminism is supposed to be a conversation about power relations. But what do we do with the power we have [in relationships with each other]?”

Groups focused on the rights of trans people feel particularly excluded from feminist movements, where the very presence of trans people is often met with resistance from feminist activists that do not consider trans women to be ‘real’ women, or who reject the idea that the experiences of trans men or gender nonconforming people is a legitimate subject of feminist discourse and advocacy. The Costa Rican LGBTI⁵ rights group Mulabi emphasised that many women’s rights groups are resistant to including trans people in their advocacy with politicians, as it may make officials resistant to engaging with the movement more broadly:

“A very important type of violence is the exclusion of trans people by feminist or women’s rights activists and movements. This violence is strong. They don’t invite us to do advocacy with political parties, because [our presence] will ‘generate resistance’. They also say that trans people can’t be feminists. This is not an inclusive way of working.”

Mama Cash focuses its grantmaking to organisations of people who have been pushed to the margins of their communities and of women’s movements, and many grantees shared this experience of exclusion. Despite the frustration that exclusion generates, many groups have found that over time and through intentional engagement, they were able to strengthen their alliances with feminist and women’s rights movements. Indeed, it is a priority for Mama Cash to advocate that women’s movements become more inclusive spaces. We use our leverage and networks to ensure that this happens as widely as possible. Several groups mentioned meetings organised by Mama Cash as key spaces for building new alliances and being exposed to new perspectives. As representatives from the Peruvian sex workers’ organisation Mujeres del Sur report:

“[Mama Cash] has helped us intervene and participate in feminist spaces. These spaces are extremely important for us. They help us link up with feminist organisations, understand problems from another perspective, insert ourselves into their work plans, and get our issues on the agenda.”

In the following section, we will explore some of the strategies groups use to build these alliances, and to build power to effect deeper change through reflection, organising, education, advocacy, and direct action.

Section II: Strategies for Change

The groups Mama Cash funds are using a range of strategies to address their particular experiences of gender-based violence, as well as to build alliances, coalitions, and movements for deep and lasting changes in the structures that perpetuate such violence. These strategies are aimed at supporting and mobilising women, girls, and trans people themselves, as well as building awareness and solidarity with their families, partners, and neighbours, among leaders and authorities in their communities and countries, and with the public at large.

Many of these strategies will be familiar to advocates working to prevent and address violence around the world. Although some grantees have developed innovative new approaches to addressing familiar challenges, other groups are notable simply because of who they are and the communities they represent: women, girls, and trans people who experience violence that is often overlooked, or that is not considered 'legitimate' violence worthy of attention. Thus, the groups' adoption and adaptation of traditional anti-violence strategies breaks new ground by challenging existing power dynamics (including within social movements), and by advancing a more comprehensive human rights agenda.

The following section – based on stories, experiences and observations shared by groups Mama Cash funds – explores several strategies which groups use to expand narrow understandings of violence and to amplify the voices of survivors who are often overlooked or ignored. These strategies were common approaches that emerged across regions. These approaches make clear that change is required at many different levels, such as government policies, advocacy by social justice movements, and norms and values, but also at the level of marginalised people's own perceptions of themselves.

1. Broadening the leadership base

One of the challenges faced by groups working in this sector (and in all social justice movements) is that leadership is frequently concentrated in the hands of one or two (often charismatic) people. This

sometimes has the effect of stifling the leadership potential of others within the group and can also contribute to the narrowing of an organisation's vision and strategic direction. Many of the grantees of Mama Cash are addressing this by promoting a model of shared leadership and by cultivating new leaders, particularly from among their younger members and participants (women and trans people in their teens and 20s).

Promoting shared leadership can be an effective way of embracing a diversity of perspectives by opening up the space for individuals to bring their own unique experiences of marginalisation and successes in overcoming social exclusion. Supporting a variety of voices is important for ensuring both the efficacy and sustainability of the work. In addition, it is important to recognise people's agency and ability to identify their own experiences, develop solutions and contribute to building communities within which they can thrive.

The organisations interviewed for this project used a variety of methods to broaden their leadership base, including cultivating the skills and self-confidence of their members, and inviting them into spaces traditionally reserved for specific people (such as men only, or people with high levels of formal education). For example, groups often encourage younger members to participate in discussions and negotiations with political leaders.

Jennifer Gatsi-Mallet of the Namibian Women's Health Network (NWHN) noticed early on that younger women were absent from the community dialogues for HIV-positive women that she was organising across Namibia. Most young women living in rural areas are reluctant to speak in front of



Women in Black (Armenia) is a group led by young women. The group's creation was supported by Society Without Violence, a group that believes in promoting the leadership of young women. Translation: "The absence of violence is our strength".

older women as, within the local context, this could be considered disrespectful. So Gatsi-Mallet set about identifying a young woman who was open about her HIV status and committed to highlighting the violence and exclusion faced by women living with HIV. The woman she identified in turn mobilised 30 other young women across Namibia to hold local workshops on leadership, advocacy, policies related to HIV, and human rights. This network has become a platform for NWHN's local advocacy and capacity-building in communities across Namibia; the network has also brought urgent issues – such as the coerced sterilisation of women living with HIV – to NWHN's attention, and in turn, to national and international attention. As a result of the NWHN's work, in collaboration with other human rights organisations and the Southern Africa Litigation Centre, a High Court in Namibia ruled in July 2012 in favour of three women who had been sterilised without their informed consent. While the judgement noted that it had not been conclusively established that the women had been sterilised because they were HIV-positive, the case framed coerced sterilisation as a violation of women's sexual and reproductive rights and brought significant national and international attention to the issue.

The exclusion of women, girls and trans people from leadership positions is often based on assumptions about the importance of maintaining power hierarchies – even in human rights organisations – and on prejudices about what a leader looks like. Resisting these preconceptions that certain

people should be followers rather than leaders is an important part of challenging power disparities and structural inequality more generally.

While broadening the leadership base of an organisation has proved to be an effective strategy, it should also be noted that this was one of the greatest challenges reported by groups. While committed to sharing power internally, they struggled to implement this effectively.

2. Changing the language

For many of Mama Cash's grantees, challenging discriminatory or stigmatising language is a key strategy for raising awareness and challenging people's assumptions about the rights of women, girls and trans people. As human beings, our ideas and beliefs are often shaped by language and the words we use to describe people or situations. For example, the use of the term "sex worker" rather than "prostitute" or "prostituted woman" is often preferred to highlight the fact that sex work is legitimate work chosen by an individual, rather than inherently coercive, violent and immoral which are meanings we have come to associate with the term "prostitute" (sex work is also a more inclusive term that captures a variety of work, including dancing and escort services). Similarly, deliberate use of dehumanising language during genocide has enabled perpetrators and bystanders to distance themselves from victims, to facilitate violence and to



An event by Desalambrando (Argentina), promoting positive messages about lesbian and bisexual women, and challenging negative stereotypes. Translation: "Lesbians? Join the visibility. Take a photo"; 'Hurray for the girlfriends'; 'You are invited to come out of the closet'; 'Enough of lesbophobia'; 'No to forced heteronormativity'.

"maximise" fatalities. For example, during the Rwandan genocide, Tutsis and moderate Hutus were called "inyenzi" [cockroaches] as a way to deny their humanity and individuality, and as an incitement to violence.

These examples reflect that the words we use to define people's identity is a reflection of (and contributes to) their social status and how they will be perceived and treated by society more generally. Many of the groups interviewed challenge prejudicial language and discriminatory terms, using words and meanings that are important to them and reflect the realities of their lives and identities.

As Liz Hilton of the Thai sex workers' rights organisation Empower Chiang Mai explains, "Once you change people's language, then you change perceptions, you can change attitudes, and then you can change a whole lot of things." Established in 1991, Empower Foundation Chiang Mai is a sex workers' rights organisation based in Thailand that works to promote positive images of sex workers and to share a different reality with society, challenging common media representations of sex work. Hilton shares that in response to the negative images and language used in the popular media in relation to sex work, the organisation developed the Empower Dictionary, a dictionary that captures how sex workers use language and understand their own realities:

"Empower's process started many years ago with women sex workers of Empower changing their own perceptions of themselves, work, and each other. And then together as Empower, we found ways to show positive images and different realities to society beyond what they've been fed by the media. Normally you see a small woman, held by police, with her face blacked out. Or you see a go-go dancer. We wanted to give society other images for understanding sex work. We used art and culture – posters, street performances, t-shirts – games that asked society to have another look and another think, because sex workers can also be like this.

In 2007, we got a small seed grant after an AWID [Association of Women's Rights in Development] conference in Bangkok to produce our Empower Dictionary: a dictionary of how sex workers understand the words used about them and around them. For example, people like to use the word 'flesh trade' when they talk about sex work. Women sat around and thought about it. What does the flesh trade mean to us? In the end, it means a butcher and an abattoir. So our dictionary explains that sex workers don't sell our flesh, we use our mind and our skills to make money, whereas a flesh trade would be a butcher or an abattoir.

We published the dictionary like a normal-sized book, but we also made three or four huge, hardcover copies... And we would take these big versions with us to any meeting or press conferences, and whenever we heard people use words we didn't like, we would stand up with our big book and correct them."

For many organisations, simply breaking the silence on a topic previously considered taboo and using language in ways that challenges people's assumptions is the first step in addressing social exclusion. For example, for AMC in Burundi, even legally registering the name of the organisation was a two-year struggle. Ultimately, it was a moment of profound practical and symbolic significance in a country where single motherhood is not recognised as a legitimate identity, and where young single mothers are commonly referred to as filles-mères ('girl-mothers'), even when they are adults. AMC was committed to speaking out about the stigma, violence, and rights violations faced by girls and women who become pregnant outside marriage; the group was further determined to use language that resonated with their own life experiences and did not treat them like children with limited agency and decision-making capabilities.

One outcome of this has been a slow but perceptible shift in how the media and other women's organisations engage with pregnant single women and unmarried mothers: as full citizens rather than pariahs, victims, or social problems to be 'solved' or eradicated. This has also resulted in a greater commitment by women's rights groups to include young pregnant women in their work and to address their social stigmatisation and denial of access to social services such as health care and education. In addition, after successfully resisting exclusion from the women's rights movement, religious institutions and schools, many AMC members have been approached by married women who affirmed that they became pregnant before they were married, and then got married in order to 'legitimise' their pregnancies. These revelations have encouraged AMC to deepen its efforts to take on violence against single mothers as a phenomenon that affects far more women than those who are 'publicly' single. The extent of the group's impact is partly attributable to its insistence on using language that reflected its agenda, redefining narrow perceptions of the rights of young single mothers.

3. Using research as a tool for awareness, advocacy, and action

Women, girls, and trans people on the margins of their societies and social justice movements are often overlooked during academic, civil society or state-sponsored research. Organisations seeking to advance their human rights must often begin by documenting their experiences and developing analyses of the causes of violence that, in turn, can

be used to develop appropriate solutions. Many of Mama Cash's grantees have found that conducting their own research deepens their understanding of how and why violence manifests. This process of conducting research can also contribute to building a social consensus on the significance of a problem, and it may assist in developing tools for raising awareness and sharing insights.

For example, in 2010 the Congolese young feminist group SJS conducted a study on violence against lesbian, bisexual, and trans women in the capital city of Kinshasa. The first of its kind, the study served as a vital tool in efforts to successfully oppose subsequent legislation aimed at criminalising homosexuality in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where same-sex relationships remain legal. SJS has also used the research to advocate for the inclusion of violence against lesbian, bisexual, and trans women as part of the women's rights movement's anti-violence agenda. This has contributed to building stronger relationships with more mainstream organisations.

WoteSawa ('All are Equal') is an organisation led by current and former child domestic workers that works primarily with girls employed as domestic workers in the Tanzanian city of Mwanza. This group has also found that conducting its own research helped to generate insights into the reasons children become domestic workers, the violence and rights abuses they face in their places of work, and the connection between domestic violence and the decision to become a domestic worker in the first place. This research formed the basis of WoteSawa's efforts to raise awareness of violence against child domestic workers that had previously been ignored, including economic exploitation that had not been commonly understood as a form of violence. The research was also used to mobilise local 'street leaders' (traditional authorities in Tanzanian cities) to intervene on domestic workers' behalf in the neighbourhoods they represented.

4. Using the body as a tool for advocacy

Many organisations and activists use their bodies to raise awareness and demand justice, but often the very act itself is a challenge to society's assumptions and beliefs about the bodies of people who are on the margins. For many of the groups Mama Cash supports, the bodies of their constituents are considered 'problematic' in some way, because they deviate from what is considered to be 'normal',



Iz Kruga Vojvodina (Serbia) works on disability rights for women, and challenges the belief that speech is the only way to communicate. The group uses 'body language' both as a method of unspoken communication and to convey the idea that the body can be used as a site of protest. Translation: 'Tell me, you say you wish me well, but you don't see me hidden in a body with no speech.'

either in appearance (e.g., people with disabilities) or in the choices they make about their bodies (e.g., sex workers). For these activists, engaging in embodied activism (activism in which their bodies are central to their strategies and message) is a powerful and effective way to challenge assumptions about their supposed weakness or defy the expectation that they do – and even should – feel ashamed about their appearance or choices.

For example, Organización por la Dignidad de la Diversidad (OTD) is an organisation advocating for the advancement of trans people's human rights in Chile. In May 2011, OTD organised a nude photo exhibition to raise public awareness about the physical diversity among trans people. The aim is to challenge people's misconceptions of what it means to be trans and to highlight both the pride and shame that trans people can feel about their bodies. One of the primary messages communicated by the exhibition is that the negative emotions that people can feel towards their bodies are due to stigma and public pressure, rather than an inherent part of being trans. The exhibition celebrates the dignity and humanity of trans people, serving as a visual account of the complex relationship trans people often have with their bodies⁶.

Rehema Namarone of UDEWO in Uganda has also experienced public misconceptions about what it means to be deaf. The example she recounts involved her and her colleagues – all deaf women – visiting a rural police station with a sign language interpreter to demand justice for a deaf woman who had been experiencing physical, sexual, and psychological violence from her husband for years. The police were astonished to be confronted with a group of deaf women, as there was a popular perception that deaf women are silent and therefore incapable of communicating with people who are not deaf. This led to a dialogue about the daily realities of being a deaf woman in rural Uganda, as well as to a deeper understanding among police of the challenges deaf women face, the violence they experience, and their need for the police to support the enforcement of their rights.

5. Engaging with government at different levels

The gap between formal legislation and policies and the day-to-day reality of people's lives is a constant challenge in activists' efforts to address gender-based violence. Even in countries that have anti-violence legislation, the reality is that violence is still commonplace and often tolerated, with few cases successfully moving through the court system. This is fuelled by a combination of endemic structural weaknesses (such as poorly trained judiciaries, underfunded police services, and a lack of awareness about regional and international human rights agreements) and a lack of political will.

In their efforts to close this gap, Mama Cash's grantees have often made significant progress by engaging with state officials, particularly in the legislative and judicial systems. This engagement can take many forms, including developing collegial and mutually supportive alliances (if possible) or more confrontational methods in which groups retain their critical distance, particularly when dealing with administrations less receptive to dialogue.

Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) is a network of research and advocacy organisations working across the southern African sub-region to promote and defend women's rights under the law, and the Lesotho branch has developed good relationships with judges, magistrates and police, conducting trainings on gender-based violence and on the importance of improving women's access to justice. WLSA's workshops are based on an awareness and acknowledgement of the struggles that undertrained law enforcement and criminal justice officials encounter in their own efforts to navigate Lesotho's justice system, which recognises both civil and customary law, which are sometimes in conflict. WLSA provides a space for police, lawyers, and members of the judiciary to harmonise the systems, navigate the conflicts between them, explore their own values and beliefs, and measure their work against international standards. As Libakiso Matlho of Women and Law explains:

"Law enforcement looks at law, but people make decisions based on many things. We try to expose the things that influence how police, lawyers, and members of the judiciary make their decisions... When [judges] look at the sentences, they should think about gender, and issues of security for the victim. If your husband is the perpetrator, where

do you go after you report the crime? This dilemma, as well as the fear of the perpetrator coming back to find them, can prevent women from reporting. So we encourage [judges and magistrates] to consider these cultural, practical and legal dimensions all together."

One of the primary methods used by groups is to invoke international human rights law to provoke debate and raise awareness in their local contexts, and challenge government and community leaders to take a more active role in respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of women, girls and trans people.

In Chile, the trans rights organisation OTD also made use of international instruments to successfully ensure that a reference to gender identity was included in Chile's landmark anti-discrimination legislation, which was passed and signed into law in July 2012. In its advocacy with parliamentarians, OTD drew on documents that had been developed by the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation of American States (OAS), unknown to most Chilean legislators. OTD also referenced recommendations from the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review of Chile, which had been conducted in 2009, and which specifically recommended that Chile pass laws outlawing discrimination on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender identity as a means to address homophobic and transphobic violence.

In Cameroon, customary law is generally hostile to women's rights, and the Centre Régional d'Appui et de Développement des Initiatives Féminines (Regional Centre for the Support and Development of Women's Initiatives, CRADIF) has succeeded in using international instruments such as CEDAW⁷ to make traditional leaders and administrative authorities accountable for upholding women's human rights.

CRADIF mobilised local women, building their knowledge, skills and confidence, to support them in preparing to speak in front of traditional authorities. During the meeting, CRADIF shared key provisions of CEDAW, as a way of redefining commonplace experiences as violence that needed to be addressed by leaders and the community (such as physical violence within families, the denial of land and resource rights and economic exclusion). Administrative authorities conceded that women had rights, but argued that it was their own responsibility to claim them. In response, CRADIF

and its constituents explained the various obstacles that women confront in claiming their rights – including illiteracy, low self-esteem, little access to information about their legal rights, and a fear of being ostracised for speaking out. Following this meeting between the women and local chiefs, 15 chiefs from eastern Cameroon signed a public declaration that they would respect women’s land and inheritance rights. This declaration reflected the chiefs’ belief that CEDAW represented an authority that superseded their own – a victory of enormous significance in a context where most individuals consider a traditional authority’s word to be law.

6. Using creative, arts-based, or direct action strategies

Many of the organisations Mama Cash works with use creative, visual approaches in public spaces to address violence, such as art, street theatre and flash mobs. The use of a visual medium can be powerful and memorable, and it also reaches beyond the usual audience by bringing advocacy into the public sphere rather than engaging in it behind closed doors. In addition, it sends a powerful message that people on the margins who are expected to remain invisible have a right to public space.

In South Africa, the One in Nine Campaign is a membership-based advocacy group which makes particular use of this strategy, emphasising the right of marginalised groups to be visible and vocal, both within social justice movements and in society more

generally. The group formed in response to the 2006 rape trial of current South African president Jacob Zuma (then Vice-President) and to provide support to ‘Khwezi’ (the woman Zuma was accused of raping). Members engaged in protests outside the courthouse in support of Khwezi and in opposition to Zuma’s supporters who burned effigies of the complainant while chanting “Burn the bitch!”. The campaign was made famous by its participants’ tradition of wearing purple t-shirts at their protests inside the courthouse. Following the trial, the Campaign continued to mobilise around specific rape cases, using various strategies to demand justice for rape survivors. As Carrie Shelver, one of the Campaign’s co-founders, reflects:

“Quite predictably, we lost most of the cases we were taking to court: perpetrators were acquitted and so on. But there was still a huge impact of claiming that public space, very often in the face of overwhelming patriarchal forces. In the Zuma case, it was literally thirty women supporting Khwezi, and five thousand members of the ANC supporting Zuma.. People still talk about the power of the purple t-shirt.. Recently, we were contacted by an organisation in KwaZulu Natal [a province of South Africa] supporting a woman who was subjected to public violence because of ‘inappropriate dress’. They asked for purple shirts.”



An image of the One in Nine Campaign (South Africa), using the concept of Lady Justice as part of a public protest to highlight the failures of the justice system to adequately protect rape survivors.

In addition, the organisation has claimed the right to public space in the face of exclusion within social justice movements. For example, in 2012, at the LGBT pride march in Johannesburg, a group of twenty women – primarily black lesbians – from the One in Nine Campaign staged a protest by lying in the middle of the road on the route that the pride march would take. Their aim was to raise concerns about the marginalisation of black lesbians from the event (which was predominantly organised by middle-class, white South Africans) and from the LGBT movement more broadly, which has been criticised for ignoring the reality of black lesbians from low-income communities, who are subject to particularly high levels of violence.

Participants and organisers of the march were aggressive, and activists from the Campaign were sworn at, pushed, threatened that they would be run over with cars, and told to “go back to your locations [black townships]”. After the event, the defence offered by organisers of the pride march was that the Campaign should have requested “permission” to attend the event. The protest by One in Nine was a powerful and visual strategy to claim space within the LGBT movement and opened up a broader conversation about racism within this movement in South Africa. Such public actions disrupt the status quo in public, sparking reflection and dialogue, and can be used to raise the profile of violence which is often ignored, in this case, violence against black lesbians.

Another group that has claimed public space to send a message about violence is the Women’s Initiatives

Supporting Group (WISG) in Georgia. Founded in 2000, WISG organises rural women, adolescent girls, and lesbian, bisexual, and trans women to build collective power, resist violence, and claim their rights via discussion groups, research, advocacy and campaigns. The group uses spontaneous street action (flash mobs) in Tbilisi. The first such action was to build an enormous upside-down billboard featuring the iconic ‘Rosie the Riveter’ image of a woman flexing her muscles with the slogan ‘We Can Do It’ printed below her. WISG women’s club members created a Georgian version of the image, portraying Rosie in her classic pose, but wearing traditional national dress and a more typically Georgian hairstyle. They positioned themselves on Tbilisi’s main avenue holding the enormous billboard upside down and asking passers by – mainly men – to help them turn it right side up. Most of the men agreed, and when they turned the image right side up, they were confronted with the Georgian Rosie and presented with a sticker bearing feminist symbols and slogans such as “LBT rights are women’s rights” and “Women’s rights must be respected in our country.” Many of the men were dismayed, but they did not respond with aggression, and the action succeeded in opening up space for dialogue and attracted public attention.

In another flash mob, young women who are members of WISG dressed up colourfully and gathered in one of Tbilisi’s public parks. They were met by other members dressed in black and wearing signs that read ‘sexism’, ‘racism’, and ‘homophobia’. They turned on waltz music, and while the colourfully dressed club members attempted to waltz with each other, the other club members dressed as



Association des Mamans Célibataires (Burundi) using community dialogue and engagement to build relationships and change perceptions about single mothers.

'isms' tried to break the couples apart, thereby dramatising how discrimination and prejudice prevent connection and loving relationships. After a time, the club members dressed up as 'isms' retreated, and the remaining colourfully clad club members invited all those watching on the edges of the park to join WISG members in a waltz free of phobias.

Such public actions disrupt the status quo in public, sparking reflection and dialogue in real time, and challenging the idea that those on the margins politically should also be on the margins physically.

7. Creating safe(r) spaces for reflection and relationship-building

Another theme that emerges from Mama Cash's grantees' work on gender-based violence is the importance of safe spaces – spaces where women, girls, and trans people feel both physically and psychologically secure. This was particularly important for groups seeking to seed new movements, including groups led by and working with young women, lesbian and bisexual women, and trans people. These spaces provide activists with an opportunity for internal reflection, peer support, consciousness-building and for developing a deeper analysis of the structural causes of exclusion and violence. They are also an invaluable part of building trust within organisations and movements.

As Pamela Mubeza, founder of AMC in Burundi, relates, the young mothers who started AMC had to go through their own process of empowerment before they could begin to advocate for their rights in public. This required questioning the negative attitudes about single mothers that many of them had internalised; it further required redefining the 'problem' of single motherhood to reject the commonly-held belief that their pregnancies and their children are responsible for the moral collapse of society (a charge often levelled against single mothers). Instead, AMC members build affirmative understandings of themselves and each other as powerful young women, responsible parents, and agents of positive social change. They reject the stigma they face as single mothers as part of a wider culture of gender inequality and as a manifestation of disrespect for women's reproductive and sexual rights.

Many of the groups interviewed cited the importance of taking time to understand the reasons behind why something was happening by engaging

in thoughtful, sustained, critical inquiry. For example, why are girls dropping out of school? Why aren't women making use of seed capital provided by an organisation to establish income-generating ventures? Why aren't women reporting violence to the police, or going to the doctor when they are sick? What are women's real experiences with a particular social or cultural practice? Some organisations tackled these questions using feminist, participatory, or more traditional qualitative and quantitative research methodologies; other groups made it a point to listen, learn, and reflect on a more informal basis. Regardless of the inquiry approach used, many groups found that when they questioned their assumptions about why something was happening and instead asked women, girls, and trans people themselves, the real root of the problem had to do with previously overlooked forms of violence.

For example, listening to girls and allowing the programme to evolve based on their priorities has always been a core value of MEMPROW in Uganda, a group which works to strengthen the leadership and social capital of adolescent girls and young women through training and mentorship. In MEMPROW's experience, making the time to listen to girls fosters a deeper understanding of girls' realities and a keener sense of how overlapping forms of violence conspire to limit their present and future possibilities. As Sarah Nakame of MEMPROW explains, listening to girls' stories revealed a strong connection between poor academic performance and verbal abuse from teachers, who often suggest to girls that any academic struggles they experience are a result of their 'weaker' female brains.

Beyond providing opportunities to deepen programme quality, a culture of internal reflection and sharing allows self-led groups to foster a collective sense of identity and empowerment among individuals who often encounter few supportive structures in their communities and societies; this gives people the support and confidence they need to mentor and inspire others. For example, the One in Nine Campaign invests significant time and energy in creating safe spaces for reflection among people who are rarely afforded the opportunity to develop and share their own analysis – particularly those who remain economically, socially, and politically marginalised in South African society. Carrie Shelver from One in Nine reflects, "People often say to the Campaign that creating spaces for people to engage in theoretical discussions is a luxury—that there's no time for that in the face of the onslaught of violence. But I would very powerfully resist that idea."

Section III: Challenges

As the previous sections of this report demonstrate, the groups Mama Cash funds are making important progress in their efforts to redefine and address violence – among their members and constituents, in their communities and countries, in partnership with public institutions, and in their relationships and alliances with other organisations and social movements. They have developed strategies for sparking change in their specific contexts.

Despite this progress, grantees also highlighted several persistent challenges in their efforts to prevent and address gender-based violence – particularly when that violence is directed at or experienced by women, girls, and trans people living on the margins of their communities. Beyond the usual obstacles of limited resources, staff turnover and public hostility to their message, most groups noted three additional challenges:

- 1) the danger of survivors of violence being re-traumatised in the process of pursuing justice;
- 2) burnout within movements; and,
- 3) the difficulty of engaging in human rights activism while daily material needs are not met.

While these obstacles are not new, they tend to receive less attention from peers and donors and are, therefore, often unacknowledged in groups' interactions with other actors.

1. Revictimisation and accessing justice

In the past several decades, increasing women's access to justice has been a key strategy for activists working to address gender-based violence; this violence often goes unreported in countries with weak or non-existent legislation and low administrative capacity to handle cases with sensitivity. In such contexts, women who report gender-based violence are likely to encounter additional discrimination – or even violence – at the hands of police officers, judges, lawyers, traditional authorities, and other actors within the justice systems of their countries. For example, research conducted by the One in Nine Campaign in South Africa on rape survivors' perceptions of the justice system revealed that survivors characterised their experiences with law enforcement and the judicial system as, in the words of researcher Dipika Nath, "violence, not justice."

This phenomenon, known as 'revictimisation,' is particularly acute for women, girls, and trans people since they often face multiple, overlapping forms of discrimination. In contexts where all women struggle to access justice, women living with disabilities, trans people, young women, sex workers, indigenous women, or lesbian and bisexual women may face even greater obstacles in their efforts to claim their rights within the justice system. Further, women's organisations seeking to strengthen legislation on gender-based violence or train actors within the justice system on how to handle such cases may be reluctant – or even resistant – to include marginalised groups in their efforts to improve conditions for women.

Several of the groups interviewed for this report emphasised that the justice system was not a safe space for the women, girls, and trans people whose rights their organisations champion. For example, organisations fighting for the rights of women with disabilities emphasised their constituents' reluctance to report violence to the police when it was not uncommon for police to ridicule their disabilities. Sex workers' rights organisations highlighted the difficulty of seeking protection from the police because the police were often the ones committing violence against them. And as Masi Kayombo of TransBantu Zambia explains:

"There's nothing that can protect LGBTI people in Zambia from a legal perspective... So to take cases of assault or violence [against a trans person in Zambia] to the police is very difficult. Most of the cases are dropped by the victims. They prefer it to remain a private matter within families; they don't want it to be a public issue. There have been some cases, but most of them have been withdrawn or dropped."

As Kayombo's comments suggest, publicly denouncing violence within the justice system is particularly dangerous when it involves other forms of public 'coming out': as a sex worker or a trans person, for example. Representatives from the Ugandan sex workers' rights organisation Women's Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA) explained that some sex workers who have engaged the legal system after surviving violence have even had to flee the country out of shame and fear for themselves and their families:

"To be honest, we have not been able to go through the door to justice. Many girls feel they cannot handle it. Lawyers will attack you. The interviewing and questioning process, it is very humiliating... Most [sex workers] are parents, and they also have parents they look after. Everyone will see you in the media."

This phenomenon has created a difficult dilemma for many groups: support women, girls, and trans people to demand justice in systems unequipped to deliver it, or protect women, girls, and trans people from revictimisation by avoiding the justice system entirely. A representative from WONETHA mentioned this dilemma, recounting that:

"We had a case we lost with a girl who was beaten up and stripped naked before the public. We asked her, 'Are you really ready to go through this trial?' At first she said, 'Yes.' But at the last minute she said, 'I can't do this. I can't do it.' It was too traumatising. I said, 'You don't have to do it. Don't do it if you're not ready.'"

As WONETHA's comments demonstrate, there is no easy solution to this challenge. Guided by their respect for women's, girls', and trans people's rights and decisions, our grantees are careful to balance their goal of sparking systemic change with their desire to avoid exposing survivors of violence to further violence and discrimination. Research such as the project developed by the One in Nine Campaign (focused on the experiences of rape survivors in the justice system) can help shed light on the phenomenon of revictimisation, and efforts to work directly with sympathetic actors within the justice system (through trainings, campaigns, and one-on-one meetings) can help change institutional cultures of violence and discrimination.

2. Burn out among activists

As Caribbean-American author and activist Audre Lorde wrote, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Many groups share this view and highlighted the importance of self-care as not only a practical necessity, but also a political act. In practice, however, it can be difficult to adhere to this principle when there is so much work to be done and the obstacles seem overwhelming.

A commitment to energy replenishment and self-care is particularly important for organisations working on violence, as the emotionally and physically taxing effects of such work have been well documented. Several groups highlighted how draining, frustrating, and upsetting it is to engage in this work and also stressed the importance of taking pleasure in successes, remembering that they were not alone in the struggle, and taking time to take care of themselves and each other. As the Argentinian organisation Desalambrando, which works to address violence against and among lesbian and bisexual women, emphasises:

"We have to take care of our bodies and address the pain that this work causes us. You get so frustrated, you feel so impotent, and so you need to develop constructive strategies. And you can't be angry all the time – if you think about all the social violence, all the violence we experience, of course we are outraged, but we also have allies in this struggle. We have to be creative, laugh, stay light. If not, we'll be angry and lose the energy to do the work and construct a positive agenda. That's why it's so important to invest in coordination and communication strategies: it's an investment in having good relationships with others."

Mulabi, an organisation engaged in a similar struggle to address violence against LGBTI people, concurs. As Natasha Jimenez reflects:

"One of the biggest lessons is not to think of ourselves as 'heroines'... If they are not killing us, then we're killing ourselves with the stress."

3. Balancing material needs with human rights activism

The themes of economic justice emerged frequently throughout the research process, and several groups emphasised the importance of applying a class and economic justice lens to feminist struggles against gender-based violence – a lens that many felt was not always present or prioritised.

Several groups highlighted the link between women's, girls' and trans people's economic dependence (or lack of sustainable income-generation opportunities) and vulnerability to violence. For several – such as MEMPROW (which works with young women) and UDEWO (which works with deaf women) in Uganda – understanding the connection between economic justice and resisting violence was a key turning point in their work. For other groups – such as WoteSawa (focused on child domestic workers in Tanzania) and Mujeres del Sur (focused on sex workers in southern Peru) – resisting economic violence and advocating for the recognition of their economic rights have always played a central role in their work.

Several groups also emphasised the difficulty of mobilising economically marginalised populations to fight for their human rights when day-to-day survival was their main concern. Research conducted by the One in Nine Campaign with rape survivors, for

example, highlighted the importance of economic survival in women's decisions about whether or not to seek justice or in their assessments of whether or not justice had been served. Researcher Dipika Nath explains:

“Given the economic danger that women live in generally, no amount of policy change or battling stigma, joining an organisation, becoming an activist, can address the problem unless it includes an element of socio-economic change. Many survivors say that even in the best possible scenario in the criminal justice system – if this guy who raped me gets arrested and put on trial and is found guilty and given an appropriate sentence, even then he's sitting in prison with three square meals a day, he's warm, and I'm out here and still struggling, maybe I have lost my job because of this process. So my situation remains the same or becomes materially worse.”

Nath adds that the “precariousness of material survival is such a critical element of gender-based violence work.” For the Campaign, the failure to address economic justice within some parts of the



Activists at the 2012 Venir al Sur: Encuentro LesBiTransInter Feminista in Paraguay, taking time to relax and have fun, while also making a political statement about the human rights of lesbian, bisexual and trans people.

feminist and women's rights movements reflects deeper class divisions. The Guatemalan domestic workers' rights organisation Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar, a Domicilio y de Maquila (Association of Domestic and Textile Factory Workers, ATRAHDOM) made a similar observation. In the words of one representative of ATRAHDOM:

"[The women's rights movement] deals with violence, femicides, sexual and reproductive rights, and HIV, but the work issue is not on its agenda.. When the trans people march, we march with them. When the sex workers march, we march with them. But when it comes to indigenous women, campesinas [and our struggle for economic justice] – forget about the women's movement. They listen to us, they call us their sisters, but they do not embrace our struggle for economic rights and justice."

The three challenges above reveal the complexity of social justice activism, where fighting for equality can mean additional trauma for survivors of violence, exhaustion by activists and further economic marginalisation due to existing economic inequalities within movements. These obstacles are daily realities in the lives and work of the groups Mama Cash funds and addressing them should form an integral part of how we approach our grantmaking. Integrating an appreciation for and sensitivity to these realities is also an opportunity for Mama Cash to encourage groups to learn from each other's experiences in addressing these challenges.

Conclusion

In 2013, Mama Cash celebrates our 30th anniversary. We are taking this opportunity to reflect on our role in feminist and women's rights movements in the Netherlands and globally, as well as to reflect on the achievements of these movements more broadly. Feminist and women's rights organisations have been instrumental in expanding mainstream understandings of human rights to include the specific ways in which violence is directed at and affects women, girls and trans people.

One achievement of these movements is that violence that was once accepted – or at least tolerated – has become unacceptable. For example, domestic violence has historically been seen as a legitimate way of a man controlling and 'disciplining' his family, but today, in most countries, it has been reframed as a human rights violation requiring legal action.

A second specific achievement is that marginalised people and groups are more likely to be leading their own struggles and defining their own political agenda. For example, black lesbians have historically been marginalised in movements focused on LGBTI and women's rights (among others), but they have increasingly claimed space to determine and pursue a human rights agenda that is sensitive to a multi-layered experience of prejudice and discrimination.

There is still significant work to be done, however, in ensuring that social justice movements are inclusive and diverse. Many people are still marginalised – even within social justice movements – and are ignored when they speak out about their own lives and experiences, particularly as it relates to how they experience violence. For example, many people, including some feminists, are reluctant to recognise the agency of sex workers. As a result, the violence that sex workers experience at the hands of police and clients is often construed as an unavoidable side effect of engaging in sex work rather than as a form of gender-based violence that women's rights movements should take up and address.

The stories of change shared by the groups included in this report reflect that redefining violence includes two components:

- expanding understandings of violence common in society and social justice movements, especially by highlighting groups that are often marginalised in anti-violence advocacy;

- articulating a more sophisticated analysis of violence, such as exploring the root causes in patriarchal systems of power and identifying how different forms of discrimination interact with each other (such as the impact of experiencing both racism and sexism).

The importance of reflection and breaking through internalised prejudices was repeatedly highlighted as being of central importance. Groups see this as a continuous process that allows space for rest and critical thinking, and enables groups to take their work to a deeper level.

The interviews and reflections in this report demonstrate that redefining commonplace understandings of oppression and violence is an ongoing process that reflects the nature of social change: a slow, evolving process of transformation that affects values, beliefs, behaviour, legislation and policies, and even how people understand their own lives and identities. Mama Cash believes that securing change requires collective action over a sustained period, and that it must involve everyone. That is why Mama Cash supports groups working at the margins of society and social justice movements. Many of the groups we fund are committed to pushing the boundaries of what is considered important and worthy of attention by (re)defining experiences of violence that have often been overlooked.

Mama Cash thanks our grantee partners for their willingness to accompany us on this journey of discovery by offering generously of their time and expertise in the development of this report. We congratulate them on their incredible and transformational work to advance the human rights of women, girls and trans people.

Annexure 1: Acknowledgements

Mama Cash is grateful to all of the individuals and organisations that participated in and supported this research project.

The following individuals and organisations were interviewed and/or provided written responses to interview questions as part of this research:

- Ana Luz Mamani Silva, Asociación de Trabajadoras Sexuales Mujeres del Sur, Peru
- Ana María Hernández and Yésica Sanchez, Consorcio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad Oaxaca (Oaxacan Consortium for Parliamentary Dialogue and Equity, Consorcio Oaxaca), Mexico
- Andrés Rivera and Victoria Yanez, Organización de Transexuales por la Dignidad de la Diversidad (Organisation of Trans People for Dignity and Diversity, OTD), Chile
- Angel Benedicto Mnagoza and Mwajuma Raphael Mwita, WoteSawa ('All are Equal'), Tanzania
- Anna Arutshyan, Society Without Violence, Armenia
- Azita Azargoshasb, Mama Cash, Netherlands
- Carrie Shelver and Dipika Nath, One in Nine Campaign, South Africa
- Chantelle de Nobrega, Mama Cash, Netherlands
- Daisy Nakato and Macklean Kyomya, Women's Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA), Uganda
- Ekaterine Aghdgomelashvili, Women's Initiatives Supporting Group (WISG), Georgia
- Elisabeth Ngo Njock, Centre Régional d'Appui et de Développement des Initiatives Féminines (Regional Centre for the Support and Development of Women's Initiatives, CRADIF), Cameroon
- Esther Vonk, Mama Cash, Netherlands
- Hazra Okem, Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women Girl Network, (MEMPROW Girl Network), Uganda
- Housnatou Tembely, Association Danaya So, Mali
- Jane Meriwas, Samburu Women Trust, Kenya
- Jennifer Gatsi-Mallet, Namibian Women's Health Network (NWHN), Namibia
- Joyce Mkandawire, Girls' Empowerment Network (GENET), Malawi
- Laura Eiven and Ivana Otero, Desalambrando, Argentina
- Libakiso Matlho, Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Lesotho
- Liz Hilton, Empower Chiang Mai, Thailand
- Maritza Velasquez, Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar, a Domicilio y de Maquila (Association of Domestic and Textile Factory Workers, ATRAHDOM), Guatemala
- Masi Kayombo, TransBantu Zambia (TBZ), Zambia
- Natasha Jimenez, Mónica Monge Mora, and Shirley Alarcón Zamora, Mulabi, Costa Rica
- Pamela Mubeza, Association des Mamans Célibataires (AMC – Association of Single Mothers), Burundi
- Rehema Namarome, United Deaf Women's Organisation (UDEWO), Uganda
- Sarah Nakame, Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW), Uganda
- Stella Nkhonya, Malawi Human Rights for Women and Girls with Disabilities (MHRWD), Malawi
- Stephanie Mwamba, Si Jeunesse Savait (If Youth Knew), Democratic Republic of Congo
- Svyetlana Timotic and Jana Damjanov, Iz Kruga Vojvodina (Out of Circle), Serbia
- Movimiento de Mujeres Por Nuestros Derechos Humanos (Women's Movement for Our Human Rights, MOMUNDH), Nicaragua

This report also draws on reports and other written materials developed by the following groups: Pembe Hayat (Pink Space) in Turkey and Sentra Advokasi Perempuan Difabel dan Anak (Centre of Advocacy for Women, People with Disabilities, and Children – SAPDA) in Indonesia.

The research for this report was conducted by Andrea Lynch, an independent feminist consultant who has worked with a range of international and local organisations focused on achieving gender equality, social justice, and respect for youth rights. Andrea wrote the report, with additional writing and editing by Chantelle de Nobrega. In addition, Esther Vonk, Azita Azargoshasb, Barbara Lotti, and Tamara Pels-Idrobo of Mama Cash facilitated communication with grantees.

Annexure 2: Acronyms List

- AMC – Association des Mamans Célibataires (Association of Single Mothers), Burundi
- ATRAHDOM – Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar, a Domicilio y de Maquila (Association of Domestic and Textile Factory Workers), Guatemala
- CEDAW – UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- CRADIF – Centre Régional d’Appui et de Développement des Initiatives Féminines (Regional Centre for the Support and Development of Women’s Initiatives), Cameroon
- Empower - Empower Foundation Chiang Mai, Thailand
- GENET – Girls’ Empowerment Network, Malawi
- LGBTI – Lesbian, bisexual, trans, or intersex
- MEMPROW – Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women, Uganda
- MOMUNDH – Movimiento de Mujeres Por Nuestros Derechos Humanos (Women’s Movement for Our Human Rights), Nicaragua
- MHRWD – Malawi Human Rights for Women and Girls with Disabilities, Malawi
- Mujeres del Sur – Asociación de Trabajadoras Sexuales ‘Mujeres del Sur’ (Association of Sex Workers ‘Women of the South’), Peru
- NWHN – Namibian Women’s Health Network, Namibia
- OTD – Organización de Transexuales por la Dignidad de la Diversidad (Organisation of Trans People for Dignity and Diversity), Chile
- UDEWO – United Deaf Women’s Organisation, Uganda
- WISG – Women’s Initiatives Supporting Group, Georgia
- WLSA – Women and Law in Southern Africa, Lesotho
- WONETHA – Women’s Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy, Uganda

Annexure 3: End Notes

1. Htun, Mala and S. Laurel Weldon. “The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975-2005.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 106, No. 3 (August 2012); 548-569.
2. The 2009-2013 strategic plan adopted by Mama Cash shifted the grantmaking approach from a regional one to a thematic approach: Body (bodily integrity), Money (economic justice), Voice (agency and participation), and Women’s Funds (local feminist philanthropy). This shift has allowed Mama Cash to strengthen cross-regional movements, networks, alliances, and partnerships by bringing together groups with knowledge and expertise from diverse national and regional experiences.
3. Throughout this report, we use the term ‘gender-based violence’ to refer to violence against women, girls, and trans people (unless we are directly citing a source that uses a different term). We use this term for two reasons. Firstly, it is more inclusive of trans people and others who have a gendered identity that does not match the identity assigned to them at birth, and who are often targeted for violence because of this. Secondly, it focuses on how unequal power relations based on gender result in some people being made more vulnerable to violence and discrimination, because of their gender identity.
4. It should be noted that many of these social identities are overlapping rather than mutually exclusive, resulting in multiple and layered experiences of exclusion and discrimination by – for example – trans women from low-income communities, or sex workers from Indigenous communities.
5. Lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex.
6. The exhibition with English text can be found here: http://issuu.com/francofuica/docs/transitando_ingles/23 and <http://transexualesdechile.org/?p=7871>
7. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women – Cameroon ratified CEDAW in 1994.