

Vol. 1 Issue 1 2020

The Feminist Republik

DZUWA



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A WORD FROM THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK

Dzuwa is an online publication featuring innovative Afrocentric stories that explore the threads that connect self and collective care, healing, and indigenous knowledge and practices. The publication is brought to you by the Feminist Republik (formally known as the African Women's Human Rights Defenders Platform). It is an editorially independent initiative of Urgent Action Fund Africa.

Our aspiration is to offer a bountiful repository from which African feminist activists may both draw and offer a steady supply of varied healing and wellness pathways and knowledge. All to embolden and support them in their individual, family, and community journeys of healing and wellness.

The offerings in this publication are largely voices and expressions of African advocates, healers, activists, organisers, academics, musicians and many more committed to the work of rights and justice. It is through the political act of intentionally honouring, acknowledging, understanding and confronting our collective trauma that we may experience healing.

We intend to draw from our homegrown knowledge and heritage as a repository of resilience and wisdom. We are also excited to go on a continental voyage with you along our theme of "at a time of crisis".

This first edition of the magazine is special because we will be introducing you to the origins of the Feminist Republik along with some highlights of our launch and festival in December 2019 in Naivasha, Kenya.

In this edition, we learn about the thoughts and experiences of our contributors as we brave through a pandemic. Through the crisis, we see what we knew all along: the most negatively affected are those that also face the greatest inequality. All this because we still live in a world that ignores caring for people, and instead is controlled by authoritarian, capitalist, neoliberal and imperialist agendas.

Through the offerings in this edition we explore the range of emotions, experiences, and expressions shared as a true reflection of how far we have come, how far we need to go, but most importantly, how resilient we are in the face of oppression and discrimination.

Each edition of our magazine will have a guest editor to navigate with us the magnificent energy and wisdoms from the different corners of this great continent. This edition is no different. Our guest editor is Solome Nakaweesi, a Pan-African feminist from Uganda. She shares with us her insights and experience curating the contributions for this debut issue.

Enjoy our first edition of the Dzuwa!

Do write to us with your views, suggestions and ideas feministrepublik@uaf-africa.org

Melissa Wainaina
Feminist Republik Creative Facilitator
and Lead, Editor Dzuwa.
July 2020

A vibrant sunset over the ocean. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a bright orange and yellow near the horizon. The sun is low, creating a strong glow and reflecting on the water. A small, dark island is visible on the horizon to the right.

A Spectrum of Emotions and Feelings

A WORD FROM OUR GUEST EDITOR,

SOLOME NAKAWEESI

“

DZUWA! A NEW DAWN IS HERE!

”

A new exciting journey is upon us; the debut launch of Dzuwa Magazine. Like the sun, Dzuwa rises from the east, moving to all parts of this grand continent! It taps into the aspirations and energies of gallant African Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD). From our nascent dreams in Lagos, to actualising them in Naivasha and beyond, and now towards Dzuwa.

It is no coincidence that Dzuwa's launch coincides with Africa's search for new answers to old problems along with the rest of the world; talking about a possible 'new world order' post-COVID-19 and the many other crises, problems and inequalities that have culminated in our current state globally.

African WHRDs, have spent decades (centuries even) challenging the ferocity and destructiveness of patriarchy as it intercepts with and is mutually reinforced by other forms of oppression—racism, neoliberalism, heteronormativity, ableism, ageism, imperialism, capitalism, dictatorships and state repression. And, of course, engaging with these has drained us to the bone and left us shattered, while at the same time, ensuring that we realise the need to recentralise ourselves as an expression of our agency and leadership—we must care for ourselves and other sisters and comrades.

There is no question that the lives of WHRDs are under threat. Ill-health, insomnia, anger, depression and burnout are real and not a new phenomenon. What is new is that self-care, wellness and healing justice have become more visible and we are bold about it. What is new is the intentionality with which we approach our wellness as individuals and collectives.

What is new is the boldness with which we recommit to waking up every day to challenge the intersectionality of our oppression, to challenge the norm, and create a new world order, while at the same time, intentionally taking care of ourselves, being bold about our vulnerability, and doing something about it! What is new is the fact that we have come together as a collective to harness our collective power, energy, skills, networks and vision for a better world for African WHRDs in our diversities—women, transgender, gender non-conforming human rights defenders—to share, to unwind, to co-create, to vent, to cry, to celebrate and above all, to just be us.

Our ideals and commitment to the co-creation of a 'new world order' started a long time ago, well before COVID-19. With artists interrupting and disrupting physical and digital domains using their art; creative thinkers interjecting alternative discourses that destabilise normative ideas about bodies, gender and sexuality through poetry, song, dance or spoken word; activists pushing boundaries about the rights of women in their diversities, academicians theorising and creating alternative feminist frames and African women waking up every day of their lives sustaining communities, social movements and this beautiful continent, often without being acknowledged.

cont'd....

A NEW DAWN

This takes a toll on us as individuals, collectives, movements and organisations, and reinforces the fact that we must take care of ourselves as individuals and collectives; we must invest in curating and sharing all these diverse ways in which healing and care is practiced; we must create the time and resources for us; and we must re-prioritise ourselves as part of a new world order. It's not a selfish aim; it's the new world order! The new world order must address 'Feminist Wellbeing Injustice'.

Our resilience as African Women Human Rights Defenders isn't only through the work we do, but how when we fall, we pick ourselves up again and arise. We are vulnerable, yes, but also equally resilient. We are malleable yet strong pillars within our communities, collectives, organisation and the African continent. We are diverse yes, yet from that diversity we derive the strongest chains that bind us together. Our resilience is in sharing our stories and never shying away from being uncomfortable. And this is what the first edition is—diverse, grounded, unsettling yet speaking to our realities, breaking silences and connecting our uniqueness as leaders, artists, creative thinkers, and writers. It is destabilising normative ideas about faith, religion, bodies, gender, ability, and sexuality—yes oozing within feminist contestations! How sweet can being unsettled and having our feathers ruffled be? From faith to sexuality, to challenging oppressive regimes, to thriving through the COVID-19 crisis, to sharing healing practices, to balancing our various expressions and practices of spirituality (like balancing organised religion, say, Christianity, with African healing practices), to mental health and, of course, deconstructing COVID-19 from a gender lens.

Dzuwa's first edition uses a presentation of poetry, art, creative expression, wellness practices, story-telling, interviews, articles, to awaken the fire within you. This edition's deep feminist infusion is marinated with satire, fun and a puzzle that comes with prizes to win. Make sure you win something and keep the conversation going. These are all curated to replenish the soul and revive the spirits of our readers.

Feminist Republik friends and members, I am honored and deeply humbled to guest-edit this inaugural edition of Dzuwa Magazine. It is my hope that this first edition of Dzuwa reignites, affirms and validates your own individual and collective care, and creates alignment to find restoration, compassion and ultimately the paths of healing. I hope it tickles you well enough to contribute your own stories of resilience, balancing your passion and wellness, artistic expression, and journeys of healing and care. We can't wait to publish these in the subsequent editions. And, of course, feel free to utilise the 'Letter to the Editor' section to share your thoughts on what stood out for you and suggestions for our next edition.

This is a revolution.

Welcome and enjoy the revolution!

Enjoy DZUWA!

Solome Nakaweesi

Pan-African Feminist / Self-Care and Healing Justice Practitioner Uganda, East Africa

THIS IS NOT A STORY IT IS A PROPHECY

By Coumba Toure, Senegal at the opening of the Feminist Republik Festival

"This is not a Story, it is a Prophecy....

To the ones who are willing to be life bearers, to the ones who agree to be life enhancers, to the ones who agree to breathe life, resilience and hope onto themselves as individuals and others as collectives, to the ones who are the builders of tomorrow.

Mangala Ba created the earth and said to the ones will give them a sense of justice.

This is not a story, this is not a prophecy.

This is reality in the making, it is not a dream.

They named me to be a woman.

I am just one of you, the bearers of life, be the life enhancers.

Who are you?

The prophecy said that there will come a time when people will have lost their way.

Women will become tired of being tired, they will come together, they will do something about it.

Why are you here?

You know why.

The prophesy said that the people will gather from everywhere....

And here we are!"

A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK LAUNCH AND FESTIVAL

8-11 DECEMBER, 2019, NAIVASHA, KENYA

by Melissa Wainaina

In December 2019 the Feminist Republik launch and festival took place in Naivasha, Kenya. The fête in and of itself was a massive feat—we had not seen anything like that in a very long time. The words of Ndana Tawamba, Executive Director, Urgent Action Fund Africa (UAF-Africa), beautifully captured how powerful this moment was:

"It was an epic moment. Epic in the way it was constructed, imagined and in how it played out. The mere fact that this was a Pan-African wide platform where 315 women, transgender and gender non-conforming human rights defenders, representatives of rights organisations, collectives, movements hailing from 35 countries converged was in itself groundbreaking. The space was intergenerational, bold and rich, critical yet firm, with abundance in sharings. And it elevated the festival as offering something that had never been experienced before.."

The Feminist Republik was established out of a need for home-grown yet diverse styles by African Women's Human Rights Defenders (AWHRD) to create, challenge, provoke, re-imagine and re-engineer a continent free from pain and suffering. It paid homage to the wealth of wisdom in the space around healing. It was a leap of faith that saw over 300 people witness an arena of infinite possibilities around our self and collective healing.

The space had interpreters of five working African Union languages available as well as a sign language interpreter. There was a diversity of constituencies represented across the board, as participants, panelists or session-leads. It was a huge honour and privilege for Urgent Action Fund Africa to host the festival which was largely a collaborative effort. This required working closely with a bevy of African partners, healing practitioners, cultural leaders, psychosocial therapists and a whole range of experts across diverse focus areas.

It was remarkable how the 3-day festival reinforced the efforts of different feminists and promoted their knowledge, wisdom and practice around healing and care as ways that can inspire us and our movements to thrive. It was affirming how these three days validated diverse ways to practice healing and care. Particularly, how traditional healing and care in Africa intersects with conventional ways of caring for ourselves.

THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK LAUNCH AND FESTIVAL - CONT'D

Through plenary and concurrent sessions, there was a palpable energy and a kindness that saw people sharing, talking, and drawing strength from each other. This is what made the space and the moment special.

The discussions tackled the different ideas and approaches to give a broad conceptual grounding on holistic protection, wellbeing and knowledge generation for African feminists and movements. Key addresses made a political case for why self and collective care is necessary and urgent. There were solidarity conversations with a wide array of speakers sharing, listening and thinking about what it takes to shift ourselves and our communities towards a culture of healing and wellness.

The attempts in this festival was to sample opportunities shared of world of healing and care of the self and our communities. To explore this idea and practice in all its possibilities. In this space, there was ample occasion for women to take time to connect with old and new comrades, to share smiles, to connect with oneself. There was space for encouraging words and solidarity. The program was designed to be intentional, to provide a generous moment for pause, and for care of oneself and others. African feminist movements are in need of creative, mindful ways to meet unprecedented challenges and struggles. Artists are interrupting and disrupting physical and digital domains with their art. Creative thinkers are interjecting alternative discourses that destabilise normative ideas about bodies, gender and sexuality.

At its core, the festival sought to imagine a shared vision that can offer supportive mechanisms to help women feminist activists heal as a collective of communities and movements—as we all know, we can't give from an empty cup!

THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK LAUNCH - CONT'D

It offered opening for each and everyone to think and attempt to respond to the question, "What can we do to bring healing and protection to Africa, to ourselves, to our communities?" A way beyond our trauma and a place or space to fall into love and compassion?"

The dinner and launch offered a space to celebrate and pay tribute to the resilience of African WHRDs, past and present. It also offered an opportunity for a new era, a cultural renaissance where we place radical self and collective care at the heart of how and where feminists, activists and movements operate from.

The launch marked a new frontier where participants would return home and reconnect with each other to engage in new ways of being, of organising, and diminishing the obstacles that keep our bodies, souls, movements and activism stuck in suffering. Do enjoy the spread of images that showcase the spectrum of moods, meditative movements, reflections and support shared in the gathering. With the launch and festival behind us, the bridge of learning and practicing our healing is underway. And there is no turning back!

The 1,000-step journey begins, one stride at a time...

Aluta Continua...

HERE ARE SOME FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS AND PHOTO STORIES OF THE LAUNCH



HERE ARE SOME FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS AND PHOTO STORIES OF THE LAUNCH



PHOTOS DU FESTIVAL ET LANCEMENT DE LA REPUBLIK FÉMINISTE!



THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK FESTIVAL IN PICTURES....



HERE ARE SOME FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS AND PHOTO STORIES OF THE LAUNCH



THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK FESTIVAL IN PICTURES....



THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK IS HERE AND EVOLVING

By Masa Amir

With an understanding of the operating context, existing support and the gaps that need to be addressed, UAF-Africa convened a consultative meeting of 45 African Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) in Abuja, Nigeria, from July 13 - 15, 2018. At this forum, UAF-Africa sought to validate the proposition that a platform such as Feminist Republik is needed.

There was indeed agreement that such a platform is needed, and many ideas were generated on the different roles that the platform could play; the priority thematic areas, means of engagement, structure of the platform, stakeholders to bring onboard, regional languages to be considered, the partnerships that could be formed, among many other exciting discussions that pointed to the plethora of gaps that WHRDs from across the continent are grappling with. The convening in Abuja set in motion a process of putting together a holistic and secure care platform for African WHRDs where activists will co-create an innovative space for soul restoration, healing and wellbeing.

The idea within UAF-Africa to establish a platform focused on supporting WHRDs on the African continent is one that has been brewing for years. Worldwide, WHRDs have always operated under contexts of varying degrees of violent political repression, surveillance, insecurity, burn-out, attacks and threats.

For the past 5 years, coinciding with the increased usage of the term 'closure of civil society space', UAF-Africa has been tracking the upsurge in certain grim trends and collecting information from various sources on the context in which African WHRDs operate in.

These include the intelligence gathered from our rapid response grantmaking (including the steady rise in protection grants from 28% of all the fund's grantmaking in 2012 to almost 40% in 2017 and 46% in 2019); reflections and experiences shared by WHRDs during convenings under our Advocacy & Alliance Building programme (notably the closing civil society space global convening that UAF-Africa hosted in Kenya in July 2017, with generous support from the OSF's Women's Rights Program); and a resultant global report produced by the UAF Sister Funds on the manifestations of the closure of civil society space, highlighting the experiences of WHRDs in all regions in which the sisters work.

It is envisaged that the Feminist Republik will be a space where African WHRDs can relieve themselves of the wear and tear that come with activism, support each other, and rejuvenate. It was agreed that the space will bring feminist activists, potential actors, and partners together to work in ways that advances and prioritises the needs, aspirations, hope and dreams of activists in Africa. It will also work towards advancing activists' rights while promoting justice by documenting and addressing the violence and violations that women human rights activists face in different spaces where they operate.

The Feminist Republik will specifically focus on three baskets of work: holistic protection, security, safety, wellbeing and collective care; healing justice; and documentation and knowledge generation.

**"WE HAVE GRAND DREAMS FOR
THE FEMINIST REPUBLIK—
ESTABLISHING A HEALING FARM THAT
WILL BE A SPACE FOR REST AND
CONNECTING WITH NATURE, FOR
WHRDS TO MEET AND CONNECT, OR
FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE TO BE
DETERMINED BY WHRDS...!"**



We are also dreaming of creating a regional registry to track the nature and frequency of violations faced by WHRDs on the continent. In addition to this, we will work on groundbreaking research on healing justice as an approach for feminist movements to address historical and generational traumas, and create spaces for healing. We held our last consultative meeting with various stakeholders in February 2020 to inform them of our plans and you can read about it in our report via [this link](#). Many of these processes are already in motion and we will be sharing updates as we move along!

We are thrilled to be embarking on this grand journey along with feminist allies, advisors, practitioners and activists that are accompanying and guiding this process. We are thrilled that the discussions, consultations and collective thinking we have been engaged in for the last two years have gotten us to the phase of actually building a platform and space that contributes to a consciously feminist future.



WE GROW WHERE WE ARE CARED FOR

GENDER PERSPECTIVES AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

BY SOLOME NAKAWEESI AND MELISSA
WAINAINA

Pwaaaa... Pwaaa... Pwaaaa...

At the stroke of midnight, fireworks resounded, brightening the skies. The drums thumped within African villages as the singing, hugging and dancing climaxed those ecstatic moments. Rural or urban, rich or poor, young or old, abled or disabled, we welcomed 2020, ushering in a new year and decade filled with our hopes, aspirations, possibilities, anxieties, and dreams.

As African feminist movements and activists, we entered the year 2020 with our contradictions and contestations in advancing gender equality and women's rights, faced with the still existing wide gaps of inequality. Feminist movements in Africa and beyond have displayed tenacity and persistence through the years, reclaiming the power to interrupt the status quo and alter the course of historical injustices. We have seen many victories and losses, and we have jubilated as equally as we have agonised. We dreamt big for 2020.

The New Year offered a certain newness to the otherwise familiar fight for justice and lasting change. But life as we know it offers many interesting turns, and some of these come in big ways that demand our full attention. A COVID-19 global pandemic is one of these examples. We are currently facing a multidimensional global crisis. The pandemic has intensified already existing inequalities and vulnerabilities along gender, race, ethnicity, class and other social divisions. The surfacing of these deep-seated inequalities has disproportionate effects on health and wellbeing, livelihoods and stability.

GENDER PERSPECTIVES AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC - CONT'D

""Women and other marginalised communities bear the brunt of a lack of social protection, failed systems, and institutions that do not prioritise the care and wellbeing of communities."

While the world is experiencing a global pandemic that threatens modern civilisation and at the same time offers possibilities for a new and exciting world order, economies are on their knees and families are going without.

As African movements, we must find African solutions that respond to the uniqueness of how this pandemic has played out on the continent. For instance, one of the most critical counters to manage the outbreak is through public health. The reality, however, is that there are major gaps in many healthcare systems in Africa with respect to responding and adopting measures to curb the spread of the pandemic. Predominant capitalist models have failed to protect people, leaving most exposed and ill-prepared to face COVID-19. This has resulted in further crisis. Every day we see exceedingly strained health services and underpaid healthcare workers. These are problems we can attribute to the dictates of neoliberal economies that are now deemed incapable of dealing with the pandemic in ways that are people and care-centered.

The fact that maternal mortality, rape, incest, unsafe abortion, and gender-based violence skyrocketed during the lockdowns across the continent is a clear indicator that major shifts must happen as soon as yesterday. There is an urgent need to tackle the root causes of structural and systemic gender inequality and unpack gender relations and the imbalance of power.

It is also important to analyse the ways in which different forms of discrimination and exclusion operate together. Women take up most of both paid and unpaid care work worldwide and it is no different in Africa. The care economy has never really received meaningful attention in policy to address the structural root causes of gender inequality in economies. The main characteristics of care work have been poor working conditions devoid of social and labor protection. The COVID-19 pandemic further sends the fragile care economy spiraling.





"Africa has, in all this, brought out its sense of resilience and innovation which the world largely ignores. And reinforcing this rise and rise are the uncounted, its women."

GENDER PERSPECTIVES AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC - CONT'D

That said, the continent has had to brace itself against countless crises, in addition to grappling with an imperialism whose relics are still embedded in our institutions and economies despite the departure of the colonial masters.

The African continent has realised the need to invest in its own health systems, while at the same time contending with the fact that the COVID-19 response mechanism increased gender inequalities by disrupting social norms (through social distancing), and increasing sexual and gender based violence (in cases where women and girls were locked down with perpetrators within domestic units). This is why we see women at the frontlines of healthcare and care economies carrying the lion's share of work to maintain the wellbeing of their communities.

Nearly 70 percent of community health workers in Africa are women earning little or no compensation, often having to dig into their own pockets to perform their care duties (United Nations, 2019).

In addition, social distancing has interrupted African women's organising and safe spaces that have historically functioned through various social-economic groups, collectives and organisations. The insistence on the use of virtual organising spaces increases the cost of organising and makes many assumptions about access to technology and virtual spaces in ways that aren't concerned with social-economic divides, women's time, disability and the feminisation of poverty.

This pandemic highlights many things, some more difficult to face than others, and an opportunity has arisen for us to reconsider our priorities. The pandemic offers Africa a chance to turn to its rich cultural heritage, social support safety nets, wellness practices, and herbs that have been used to sustain communities during the crisis.

Moving forward, as we build sustainable movements in Africa, we have to stop, step back, listen to ourselves and look toward our collective ways of self-care and healing. Importantly, we must aim to continuously share these ways of care and healing through the many channels that exist because thriving through COVID-19 is one of the ultimate forms of resilience.

As African women, deconstructing this crisis from a gender perspective requires that we curate and tell our stories of resilience amidst such an unprecedented global pandemic. We must reclaim what patriarchy, racism, imperialism, neocolonialism, heteronormativity, and all those forms of oppression have taken away from us. We must claim this digital space and make it enriching rather than draining. We must build on the unique Africanness of sharing our stories around the fireplace. Yes, this is now our fireplace where we share how resilient, malleable, vulnerable yet strong we are.

We conclude by challenging you to think about what the 'new normal' will look like. Will it replicate the existing gender inequality models? Will it break the burden that racism places on Africans, black people and people of colour? Will it allow us to break free from this bondage? We challenge you to mull over these things.

There is a need to emancipate ourselves.....



UBUNTU VIRTUAL GATHERINGS WITH MOON GODDESS

BY ZANELE MBUGUA

"The universe has its own ways, which in the end ties, things up so neatly and creates complex webs!"

While the Feminist Republik platform was launched towards the end of 2019, its operations formally began in 2020 amid a precarious time when the COVID-19 pandemic began to spread like wild fire, in the process creating fear, anxiety, uncertainty about the death toll, rising infection, helplessness, and drastic changes in our lifestyles.

The platform, in response, thought of how to ease the physical, social, and psychological strain that activists and feminists were experiencing. After wide consultations, it was clear that a virtual space and gathering was necessary to support, hold and lighten the load for new and old friends or members of the Feminist Republik. The Ubuntu Virtual Gatherings were born!

Our host for the series of gatherings was an old friend of the platform, Dr. Toyin Ajao, popularly known as 'The Moon Goddess'. While exploring collaboration with Moon Goddess, she expressed what was a widely shared sentiment: people were facing complex issues because of the virus.

There was a need for a space to simply come as you are. A space where all our collective anxieties and vulnerabilities would be acknowledged, but also one where we could form a strong bond of agency. And so, the journey of the Ubuntu Gatherings began. The space was designed to enable women, transgender, and gender non-conforming human rights defenders to unwind, vent, cry, dance, have a glass of wine at home with a mainly Pan-African (and beyond) community.

Every Friday, we hosted the Ubuntu Gatherings platform, poised to politically embody that necessary but gentle reminder to constantly prioritise the self and the collective as African Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD).

To date, the Feminist Republik has hosted six weekly gatherings, where Moon Goddess has brilliantly held the space with a variety of themes and practices. From the Yemoja Dance and Happy Hour Café to Kujijua Song Therapy and Holistic Body Scan, Gursha Expressive Writing, Ubuntu Healing Circle and even Glow Yoga, incorporating her practical research, collaborations, and practice in transformative healing. All that guests needed to do was turn up and decide how to explore the space, from silent observation to avid interactions. Tears have been shed, new things learnt, songs enjoyed, new networks established, and we have plodded on in spite of occasional technical and network glitches.

The Feminist Republik works in constant collaboration with its members and friends, and soon the hashtag #FRFridays was coined to track all our gatherings and social media engagements. This is our first public convening after our launch and festival held in December 2019. We are excited to remain a staple and anchor in supporting African WHRDs to build themselves and their movements as stronger and more resilient through crises and beyond.

Moon Goddess intimates that the unexpected and holistic nature of the Ubuntu Gatherings was necessary as it was created for the people it serves:

"You can only operate from a place of fullness. If your energy has been depleted, how are you going to even speak to the change you want to see in the world? And if we keep on neglecting ourselves, to just continue to fight for equality, we will burn out again and again." – Moon Goddess

On their part, participants shared that they keep coming back to the gatherings because of the wide-ranging information shared in the sessions and because of Moon Goddess' energy, thoughtfulness, passion, charisma and gentleness that is replicated within these spaces. Participants say they have felt less alone in their experiences and vulnerabilities even when all they did was sit in silence in the space. For some, the gatherings have become the highlight of an otherwise long week. And for others, curiosity has kept them coming back for more.

Make sure you don't miss the next Feminist Republik Virtual Gathering! [French](#) and [English](#)

The Ubuntu Gathering

CONNECTING IN A TIME OF CRISIS

VOICES OF OUR PARTICIPANTS...

By Shinaz Ali and Zanele Mbugua

The Ubuntu Gathering platform developed a loyal following from friends of The Feminist Republik. Upon hearing about the gathering, some participants intimated that they initially joined out of curiosity, either by the platform's name, or the theme of the session or by its host, Moon Goddess.

While others joined to have a community of practice on care and healing, to have a safe space to off-load and up-load, to be able to navigate through the uncertainties of life, deepening their wellness practices, sharing with others as well as thriving and navigating through the fear, anxiety, incessant negative news of deaths and infections, partial and total lockdowns, sexual and gender based violence, hunger, homelessness and helplessness and all those response mechanisms as a result of COVID-19 pandemic that many people in Africa and across the world had to contend with. After experiencing an Ubuntu Gathering, participants said they loved the energy and community of the sessions... several kept coming back, week after week.

The Feminist Republik team caught up with three participants after the six-week series to explore their personal experiences and opinions of the Gathering.



Cynthia Happi (CH) - is a Cameroonian living and working in Ethiopia as a Peace and Security Researcher. Cynthia is a music lover who is passionate about football.



eloise burke (eb) - is a development practitioner whose background as a displaced African and Afro-Caribbean-Canadian has afforded her a diverse range of experiences, assets, informed tricks, and high-level skills that are unique to her path.



Françoise Moudouthe (FM) - is a Pan-African Feminist and the founder of Eyala, a bilingual platform that harnesses the power of conversation to explore what it means to be an African feminist today

FR: What did you enjoy most about the Ubuntu Gatherings?

eb: Being in that space with that sisterhood feeling makes one ecstatic. I found it very, very encouraging. Especially at this time, that we're personally as far as I'm concerned, we're under lock-down. But in particular Moon Goddess is a very special beam, and I'm not sure if someone else would have had the same effect on me, as she did in terms of how she took us through the sessions, being with us in the way that she did. The space provided me with the opportunity for growing consciously and it's as if they were planned by the universe for me. So, in that sense, they were very special to me as well as being in the presence of other beings that regardless of what their experiences were, we were all there having a good time. And for me dancing is very important so just the fact that dancing was involved was really special."

FR: Why did you initially join the Ubuntu Gathering? What was in it for you?

CH: I honestly attended the first time out of curiosity. Really wondering and asking myself the same question you're asking me, 'what really is in it for me?'. When I joined, I started feeling comfortable, that great feeling as if I'm at the right place. So, I consistently joined the gatherings because it was some sort of safe and welcoming space where I could off-load all that I'm carrying and reflect on my life journey.

FR: How have the Ubuntu Gatherings supported you in your healing journey?

CH: I shared a song in one of the gatherings that summarized my challenges, fears and life journey.

I received a lot of support from the gathering when it was being played and this was a turning point in my healing journey. I could feel the support from others. I could feel people trying to be in my shoes and sending out all their good energy.

FR: I know you are one of the people that have consistently attended the Ubuntu Gathering every Friday, why did you always go back?

FM: First, any space with African Feminists is my happy place! I am a huge champion of spaces where African Feminists can come together and be their full, vulnerable selves. I need them, I enjoy them, I love hosting them. So, I joined the Ubuntu Gatherings as often as I could (and I'm still gutted that I had to miss a few!) because I enjoyed the honest self-reflection that was encouraged. I found it refreshing, especially at a time when so many webinars required for us to show off our expertise. There was also a great mix of tears and laughter, writing and dancing, stillness and movement. What's not to like?

FR: How has the Ubuntu Gathering supported your healing journey?

FM: I have been in a relatively strict lockdown for three months straight with my family, and while I am fully aware of the privilege that I have to be able to protect myself in that way, the introvert in me has been struggling with the lack of quiet, introspective time. Add to that the anxiety I had about everyone for whom sheltering was impossible or dangerous, and then the brutal reminder that the world is still a dangerously racist place... Let's say taking care of my mental health has been a challenge. The Ubuntu Gathering has given me a space for community, introspection and joy. I am so grateful for it.

DEMOCRACY

Raquel Lima, Portugal/ Angola

1/2

**Democracy is an idea transformed into goods and services,
Bought with savings, bought for almost nothing.
Bought in the belief that it was a transaction without interest,
Reliable, irreversible, and with an unlimited warranty.**

**In the end, it was a loan on credit to capitalism,
Temporary, inflationary, at interest, right into the abyss.**

**Capital generated accumulated and reinvested wealth,
While the masses believed in social security:
They paid taxes, and got taxed, paid again, were taxed again,
They were granted human rights, however mechanically.**

**Of all systems, the democratic was the fairest and most coherent.
A whole legal circus was raised on a hoisted flag,
And we followed, believing in the solution,
Never dreaming that democracy would, later on, be mortgaged.**

**The large house was equipped with a variety of shelves
Full of rights, economies, literatures, arts and blunders
Humanities, sociologies, sciences, education
And in all of them, they assured us, was freedom of expression.**

**Blacks in the fields, have long shouted that there is no democracy,
Blacks in the fields, have long shouted that their rights
are violated with impunity as their
existence and personhood is hardly recognised
They're not taken as humans, but as resources, markets and merchandise.
So they thought they'd put up a few more shelves in the house:
Biology, human resources and anthropology, up front.**

**But selling democracy required a major investment,
Selling us the illusion of full-time self-control
And at the same time abolishing the idea of emancipation
So that banks, borders and churches would stand in for salvation.**

**The house of oppression was next door to the house of fascism.
They both sustained the long-built mansion of capitalism.
To mortgage democracy -- four coats of fresh paint,
Change the doors and the locks, hide the drawers in the attic.**

**Painting the façade was the most difficult part.
Even the Republicans and Democrats came to help!
But since beautiful outfits were always on show
They moved from right to left teasing us with candidates**

DEMOCRACY

**Meanwhile the houses grew so democratically
That few smelled the smell of rot in the air,
That smelled of genocide: Jewish, Indigenous, Black and Romany,
But back in the house they danced to Fado, Flamenco and Tango**

**Democracy... an idea transformed into goods and services,
Bought with savings, bought for almost nothing.
Bought in the belief that it was a transaction without interest
Reliable, irreversible, and with an unlimited warranty.**

**In the end it was a loan on credit, to capitalism,
Temporary, inflationary, at interest, right into the abyss.**

**And everyone knew that greed and ostentation
Were just the younger sisters of Madame Colonization
Even so, they went on buying democracy
Naïvely, innocently, ignorantly and stubbornly.**

**And if anyone dared to say anything about global warming,
"Oh that, what silliness, it's part of things, it's natural,"
It smells like carbon dioxide, gasses and greenhouses,
Burnt fossil fuels and tropical rain forests.**

**Years of silenced voices: years of democracy
Years of lives destroyed: years of democracy
Years of women raped, exiled, enslaved:
Years of democracy**

**Years of spying on the rebels of liberation
It smelled like guerrillas, like denunciations and theories of revolution
And when what was clandestine drained the budget
Then some megalomaniac genius invented social networks**

**Because in the democratic world we'll be able to share
A fulfilled life, and everything we dream of:
Ideologies, political parties, where we're going on vacation,
Arts, cars, lifestyles and everything we want to buy,**

**Nothing like offering ourselves up on the salver,
What the masses reflect and the people long for,
Cherry on top of the cake free of worry:
The Internet dictating what's true, history or fiction,**

**Democracy...an idea transformed into a virus,
Bought with savings, bought for almost nothing.
Bought in the belief that it was a great buy.
But the interest? ...that was the third world war**

****Originally Written in Portuguese find [link here](#) ****

VISUAL DIARIES-STORIES AND CONTEMPLATIONS FROM ARTISTS DURING COVID-19

Nancy Chela Cherwon, Kenya

WEIGHT OF THE WORLD



Meditation to me is being mindful of your environment ... where you live, the people you interact with and just everything that is without you but in one way or another defines you.

Weight of the World depicts a lady holding the universe in her hand with care while meditating. This is to symbolize that through meditation she is able to do anything that her heart desires.

Literally speaking: "you have got the whole world in your hands".

This encourages to believe in ourselves as limitless beings.

Who sets limits anyways??

All the limitations we know in this world were set by man and are not all made with the same fiber??

To me, meditation is very important because at one point I had faced some challenges that made me want to end my existence.

At that point, I used to just go sit outside and listen to the trees and birds and just not think about my troubles at that particular time. This really helped me overcome my doubts and troubles. To date, I practice meditation to remind myself who I am and my journey as an artist and just as any other being on this universe. For me meditation is looking within not from a point of judgement but from the perspective of love and care.

VISUAL DIARIES CONT'D....

artist *Nancy* shares about her piece that is this edition's cover page



FREEDOM

The piece freedom is mostly about the journey of finding self... being free from all the pressures and troubles of this world. The sky and the stars symbolize just that. They symbolize a state of peace and freedom and she floats on peacefully. The caption that led to the inception of this piece:

"But wait it is so peaceful here. Can I be free, can I be me... Can I be Chelwek."

I recorded this caption one late night during this period of the pandemic. I just felt stressed, lost and uninspired to do any work at that particular time.

At that point in time it felt like I wanted to float away.... Just be myself without any worries or cares of this world. As I started working on this piece, I felt free and inspiration started to flow through me again. I felt free, it felt like I was being true to my very essence and it felt like everything was possible in that space and time.

So, I decided to call that piece freedom. This piece helps us strive to be free from COVID-19 as it's a reminder to look within... find yourself in these trying times...

**DON'T LET WORRIES PULL YOU DOWN, WE
ARE STRONGER THAN THIS**

and always WE RISE.

VOICES AND VIEWS....

**CONVERSATIONS: SPIRITUALITY,
HOPE AND HEALING**





Who are Healers?

By Fatime Faye, Senegal

Africans have practiced ways of healing drawn from the immense riches of the African culture, rituals, customs, norms, and diverse flora and fauna from the beginning of time. These ways worked and sustained communities from one generation to another until colonialism and neocolonialism. But, I digress. What I really want to talk about is this: who are African healers and how can African women reclaim our healing rituals and practices?

I do not really identify as a spiritual healer. I am an ordinary woman who uses her knowledge to help friends, family and community.

Personally, I use massages that I learned from my grandma to cure fever. It is one of the many healing methods that African women have handed down through various forms of mentorship. The name for this massage is 'damp'. It is practiced on babies after their umbilical cord knot heals. It's soft and loving with minimal pain no more than the discomfort a baby might feel at the end of a massage when their head is held down and shaken a little bit. At the beginning, the massage surprises the baby and it cries in pain. After some more massages, the baby happens to expect and like it. I perform this massage not to please but to cure and sometimes find out where the pain originates from. It's necessary to state also that performing this massage on someone who has neuromalaria will result in a strong spell of dizziness the moment you massage their head.

cont'd

who are Healers

The second method of healing that I use is called 'mocc'. You can observe one of its signature gestures in most traditional massages. You first put your hand briefly on the ailing part of the body and then retrieve and shake off the danger, trauma or venom. The idea is to remove the pain from the body. People tend to fall sick three to six months after having lost loved ones or gone through traumatic events. And the mocc is rooted in the belief that illness derives from traumatic situations (spiritual, physical or psychological).

When you begin the mocc, you may feel that the ailing body part is of a higher temperature—warm, hot to very hot. I stop the first part of the healing when the person says that she/he/they feel better or when the heat reduces considerably. Then I make the person think about a pot of yogurt from which they have retrieved a spoonful of its content.

The second part of the healing is to fill 'the missing part' with good vibes and healing content. The whole process relies on the belief that the person who is performing the ritual is just the canal/channel/medium of communication between the person and other entities (the real healing is done by spiritual entities that some people clearly identify or not). During the whole process and after, you voice your concern and thank those entities by saying the following:

“Ancestors, please help me cure (name of the person)”.

“Thank you for helping me remove the trauma from (name of the person)”.

When you cure someone with a serious illness, please wash your hands and arms in salty water up to your elbow before and after the ritual

The third one is a modern method called Emotional Feeling Relief Therapy (EFT) or Tapping Therapy. The idea is tapping some parts of the body and repeating the sentence: "Even though I feel sad (or some other painful feeling), I love myself deeply and accept who I am". It has a variant which involves putting your hand on the person's chest and asking the person to give colour to the feeling and to let it go in a stream (from the imagination). I usually say after the colour is chosen, "Picture it as a stream and let it flow through my hand. It won't harm me because I regularly shake it off my hand like this". And then, I show him/her/them the mocc gesture.

cont'd

who are healers



I am not sure of the name of the last method. I picked it up during a session with a healer called The Noble Touch. This ritual, you do after you have cleansed the body using Tapping or EFT. You ask the person you are healing to “Imagine that you have a bowl of liquid over your head. The liquid has a light and beautiful colour. You tilt the bowl gently so that the liquid pours and fills your head, eyes, mouth, chin, nape. Then throat, chest, heart. Then hips, sexual organs, buttocks, legs, feet until it pours to the ground’. You put in the liquid all the things you need: joy, healthiness, love, etc.

Who are the healers? Healers are people who deeply love other people: friends, family, community and the whole world. Love heals and helps cure the suffering.

All these healing rituals have two things in common: voicing and the idea that we all can heal ourselves with our hands and frame of mind. We just have lost the competence to do this. When you fall on a hard surface, the first thing you do is hold the painful part of your body. This heals. Just keep your hand consciously there and use your mental energy, and you heal yourself! It’s that simple and almost everybody can do it for themselves and other people. Please listen to yourself or to signs that tell you what to do in situations like this. You probably have

been doing it for a long time without even thinking about it. Some hug, some singing, some dance, some praying, etc. Sit and think about the last time you faced someone in pain. What did you do? Did the person say, “I feel better”? Believe him/her/them.

You are a healer.

We are all healers.

Perspectives of an Afrocentric Healer and Nun

By Sister Letta Mosue, South Africa

I greet you all from South Africa.

I am here to share a message of solidarity and support, as well as give encouragement to the many African women suffering through the COVID-19 crisis. It is my hope that this message mentally and spiritually supports them to recenter themselves, thrive and become more resilient. I am also here to challenge what we think about "the importance of focusing not just on our physical health, but our spiritual wellness". I want to inspire the many women on this continent whose faith and spirituality means as much to them as their African heritage.



I do not suffer from any chronic illness. On days when I overwork myself, my immune system 'toi-toi' (packs up) and I get the flu. Two days of rest is enough to restore me to health with the help of 'granny's raad' (granny's advice), that is, the use of herbs or natural medication. How I deal with stress is using 'tap-tap' which is Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) that I teach to my clients who have experienced trauma or are unable to sleep well at night. Overall, since I embraced my ancestral gift of healing, I have had peace of mind. I undertake rituals if I need to. I do them with my family at home. I pray with my ancestors who I invite to join me whenever I pray Christian prayers. I don't feel alone or lonely even when I travel because I invoke them (my ancestors) to accompany me.

Because of its magnitude, COVID-19 has inevitably had an impact on all aspects of our lives, including faith, spirituality and community, as African women who practice their religion and healing. I do not have practical evidence, but I can say that if your faith depends on communing with people of your religion, stay-at-home laws, social distancing, self-isolation...must have had some impact on your faith howbeit temporary.

I am also here to inspire the many women on this continent whose faith and spirituality means a lot to them much as African heritage.

"I pray for Africa to find a cure for the pandemic and not succumb to those who look down on us children of this continent."

I like the portion in the bible where Jesus Christ says to the Samaritan woman, "The time will come when you will neither worship on this mountain or in Jerusalem, you will worship in mind and truth". As such, for me, worshipping from the heart due to COVID-19 limitations on social gatherings is what makes Christ's words a reality today. Real spirituality does not depend on whether you worship in communion. Spirituality binds us across religions and is what is helping us cope with the pandemic. The deeper, inner spirit within us gives us hope all the time. I pray for Africa to find a cure for the pandemic and not succumb to those who look down on us children of this continent.

People often ask me, "Sr. Letta, how are you able to be an Afrocentric Healer and a Nun at the same time? Or how are you able to carry both hats and so graciously at that?" My answer to people who ask this question is "I am not schizophrenic". Within the African context there is no compartmentalisation. Ours is a holistic spirituality. It is for this reason that people have a problem with me accepting my ancestral healing gift and being a nun. But I do not feel or sense the division any more. In the beginning I struggled because of the dualism of the Western culture. It was either for or against me. Now I am at home in my skin. Why should I be a Roman Catholic and not an African Catholic?

This brings me to the earlier point I made about challenging the ways we embrace Western medicine and healing at the expense of our own. Western medicine steals our very African herbs, puts some preservatives, and sells it back to us at a high price. I would like to challenge the women of the Feminist Republik to research and restore our heritage of healing. This is the time. We need to support our African researchers and scientists. There are so many elders in our villages that cure the sick using herbs. Let us get out there to talk to them and learn from them.

As we reposition during such difficult and uncertain times, women should fiercely build their spiritual resilience. How? By coming together to perform rituals and share knowledge about the calling to be a healer and the knowledge of medicinal herbs and trees. I am part of one such group called the Sangha Circle, made up of men and women healers who are required to undergo a 21-day initiation journey online.

As a parting shot, here are some useful ways to practice spirituality:

- **Do not apologise to anybody or any religion for who you are, or for practicing your African spirituality.**
- **Do not insult your ancestors by being ashamed of your calling to be a healer.**
- **Be proud and walk tall in the knowledge that "you are the child of the universe and you have a right to be here".**

insecure:

adjective

1. not firm or fixed; liable to give way or break.

2. (of a person) uncertain or anxious about oneself; not confident.

Synonyms: self-effacing, uncertain, self-doubting, inhibited, fearful, ill at ease

By Joia Sabinana, Burundi

Be good to me this time.

You walked out of our sacred tent long ago, told me you were going to fight the forces that had declared war on our bodies. The threat on our kind was such that there wasn't anything I could have done that could have persuaded you to stay. So I sang you a song, gave you the glow of my eyes, and sent you off with kind words. Every night, and sometimes when you see your face reflected in a mirror, you taste a glimpse of me... of us, discovering magic in our secret tent, together. But you were gone so long I feared only tragedy could bring you back to me.

The war made you tough. So many bodies at stake, and I know how much your heart bleeds for every last one of them. Protecting them at all cost, right?
The war made you forget the ways of gentleness, of genuine care, of intimate bonding that is void of insecure attachment. You forgot to protect yourself, love.

I knew you would come back to me some day, so I arranged a space for us to sit, along with a few thoughts for you to ponder on your journey to self-love and healing:

*So they thought they could break you
Get you to play their game, curl under their iron hand
But they can't bend an ocean, can they?
Or tell a volcano to go back to sleep when it wakes...
They hate it when you stand up for yourself
For them, there should be no place for the Self.*

As you begin to center your Self, you will often feel like you don't know what you're doing. It will feel foreign, the act of placing gentle eyes on yourself and observing the entirety of your being as it ebbs and flows and tangles itself with the Universe.

Don't move away.

Stay there a while.

Make a temple of your body. And in the temple, practice the many forms that Love and Life can take, until you remember that the language of your body is the language of the Universe.

I will be there with you, always.

With endless love,

Your inner Black Girl <3



FINDING HEALING IN LOVE

BY LIZ OMBATI

I toss and turn in bed, pleading with my soul to surrender to sleep. To rest for a little while. Tomorrow is going to be another long day. I reach out to my phone. Maybe I should not do this. I might linger for the next two hours, checking out what is going on around me tonight. I might get lost scrolling through timelines to see what everyone is saying about the pandemic. How they are struggling with sleep, just like me. I look at the time again, it is almost 2 a.m. This might go on until 4 a.m. Do I just lay awake like this? Will my mind wander too much, thinking about all the possibilities there are on earth, until sleep comes?

What would be the easiest way to fall asleep? Maybe some meditation music. I turn on YouTube. There are numerous options to choose from, some that promise sleep in three minutes. I choose one and go directly to the comments section. Three minutes pass and I'm not sure that meditation music will make any difference. I consider doing some work on the computer until sleep comes.

That I live with a diagnosis of anxiety might not be helping much. My mind is racing, all the time, trying to make sense of all that is happening around me. Will this be over soon? Shall we go back to the days before, days when we did not have to worry about all these restrictions of movement and a schedule that more or less does not allow for the possibilities of personal freedom? At the back of my mind, I am aware that I am spending more time online than I should, but there is no other way to connect with healing and support.

Which other medium exists to help us make sense of all this or even just distract my mind from the anxiety, fear, negativity and hopelessness sweeping through me? As my mind wanders between the north and south, east and west, I am reminded of how lucky I am to have a peer support mechanism.

Healing in Love

Last week, I was in my online peer support group and oh heavens! Did I not cherish those three hours of connecting with my peers?

We spoke about everything; our fears and our hopes, our laughs and our cries. We spoke about longed-for joy, and a longing for a return to normalcy.

We loved each other virtually. We healed. I long for the next one and the one after that.

Maybe the pandemic, after all, reminds us of what this busy world takes away from us? A busy world we each rush through seeking satisfaction, affirmation and love. Seeking to achieve those big dreams in spite of the frustrations along the way. Maybe the pandemic is reminding us that we need to have more time with each other, more time to be vulnerable with each other, more time to love each other, even from afar. Maybe the universe is reminding us not to move further away from friendship and love. For love is the energy that holds us together as human beings. Maybe the pandemic has enabled us to stop a bit and re-prioritise our healing, health, wellness and love? Love-energy is as important as all those things we keep chasing.

Love energy. Where would we be without love? I remember how difficult it was for me to hold onto jobs in the past; anxiety is not a good thing. I think about how love has brought me this far. Love dispels fear. I know this deeply. I know that no human can thrive without love. I believe that love gives our lives meaning. For what can I call this, that my work contract ended in March 2020, just as we were getting into the movement restrictions

Just as we were starting to experience life as we have not seen it before. Livelihoods were getting lost and everywhere there was so much anxiety about the future. Yet, I held onto love, I knew that love would come through. Just the day before I began to write this, I had a job interview. It feels like getting to an oasis in the desert, a sign of hope. The green cactus, found after searching and searching, tells me that there is hope. There is water. We shall not die of thirst.

And hope for yet another day, full of dreams and hopes, and Love.

May love fill our hearts during these moments. Love for ourselves. Love of our children. Love of our lovers. Love of our work and careers. Love of art and beauty. May love help us sail through, to know that even when it feels so lonely, love never leaves. She is here, holding us in her bosom. And she tells us, "Do not be afraid. In me you find your healing." And it is true, for I found my healing in love.

Alas! I can feel, from a distance, some sign of sleep. It's finally here! I hope sooner or later my soul can eventually rest. My body can rejuvenate. And I hope for yet another day full of dreams, hopes, and love.





THE BOUNDLESS UNIVERSE OF ART FOR REAL SALVATION AND SAFETY

BY AMAL HAMED

Speaking to Amal on her artwork collection called "Feelings"



You called this body of work "Feelings", please tell us a bit about it? What are some of the ways in which artists (individuals and collectives) are experiencing, coping and responding to the crisis?

The selected artwork is a result of a personal journey that started in 2017, however I cannot really separate my personal journey from what was going on around me because the artist is a mixture of the public and the private – and as a feminist I totally acknowledge that 'The Personal is Political'.

An artist is also always affected by the interactions with other artists as an individual within a group or collective, within communities where I grew up and where and I currently abode.

What we consider a result of a personal journey is also a result of a journey in the public space. This journey is a journey of self-discovery and how to use art - in all forms - as a tool to rediscover ourselves and heal it from life experiences, challenges, past and ongoing difficulties.

what is the deep impact that art is having in these unprecedented times as we try to heal from the 'woundedness' we are grappling with today?

This artwork revolves around topics that are considered by the current modern art scene to be simple, but from my point of view essential and crucial; friendship, love, connection and sharing. The selected pieces address different feelings and emotions such as alienation, loneliness and belonging. I believe that during the current COVID-19 global crisis it is clear to the whole of humankind the importance of these simple values and feelings, forcing us to create new forms and ways of communication.

When I think about the current situation and the role of art and its impact many questions come to my mind related to art agendas and its importance as a tool to highlight the voices of those who are not enjoying social and political privileges, and the reality of communication and sharing between artists. And despite all doubts and questions, art remains the real salvation for physical and mental safety. Art provides us Boundless Opportunities for Real Salvation and Safety!



This vagina has been bleeding suffering for far too long to remember,
the old lady says pointing intentionally in-between her legs
Too much, too trying until it became a norm, to the core of the bone within
I try to sit still within myself in my un-comfortableness
She shifts with the wind of truth deep into the earth she rests on
These days, ouma's voice is so calming with knowing, calming anxieties within, as if it
was one with the silence looming in the air
And still I knew without doubt, when I call - Sistah! Sistah! -
They would come rushing to carry me home
This body, black. Has been ripped apart into pieces for far too long, too quiet

don't tell anyone, it will bring shame to our family, they said

too lonely, too much to drive you to crazy, so when they said crisis, I knew with all of my
being how it look liked, I tasted it, I felt it. I live it.

This is not new to Us Irene //Garoës, Namibia

The Vagina's of the Afrikan womxn have been bleeding suffering for too long
too much
too trying to norm
to the core of the bone within

And still she knows without any doubt that when she calls
Sistah! Sistah!
They come rushing, each and every time without a doubt

The black bodies of the Afrikan womxn have been ripped apart to pieces for far too long
Too quiet (Don't tell anyone, it will bring shame to our family, they said)
Too lonely
Too much to driving to crazy

And still without question they come and sat with her day and night, remembering
exactly how it felt, knowing it, putting her back together, piece by piece.

The Voices of the Afrikan womxn have been supressed into silence for far too long
Too loud (they said)
So they tried to take away all she knew
They keep on taking and taking
they keep on taking & taking mind, bone, skin, blood, God - and still, She lacked nothing.
For when they heard her cry Sistah! Sistah! they howled from the depth of their
stomach in agony, not letting it in, they screamed and held her tight throughout
the dark thunder days

So now, silence looms over the world and we are en-caged with the real animals,
covered in what is supposed to be a doom of fear but knowing this is not where
our dreams come to die, this right here is not new to us

Women of Africa have not forgotten that their power lies with each other
They sat together
They sang together
They ate together
They were warm together
And they had a knowing that it was time for mother earth to heal

And the people understood this as she claims back what rightfully belongs to her, she is
becoming into, only as far as her dreams can take her together side by side with her
sisters, her people. She knew, they knew that everything we thought we lost is to be found
only within us.

Women of continent are rising, bleeding love, giving birth to freedom, so they can be.
The realisation that we, women of Africa bleed live into being.

ART FOR HEALING

Feminist Republik (FR) caught up with Anne Mwiti, Kenyan Artist, Researcher, World Citizen Artists Awardee 2014 and Lecturer at Kenyatta University in Kenya to dialogue about the importance of arts and creativity for wellbeing, healing, beauty, communication and thriving through crises.

Q: We have known that arts and creativity is so vital for wellbeing, therapy and healing because beauty has a role in our lives. How has your art impacted on women and other people's lives?

AM: Being a great artist means living as close to your emotions as possible so that you can produce something that is really unique. My art has been evolving over time and with each phase I have seen it change how people in general think of women artists and in particular how women view themselves in a male-dominated career. It has motivated and encouraged women to be artists. Art is a form of communication not just for the artist producing the artwork but for the consumers as well. My art has been a voice for those who cannot speak on issues that only art can express.



Q: As we grapple with coping in COVID-19 era, we would love to hear from you how your work weaves a visual story about how we travel this journey.

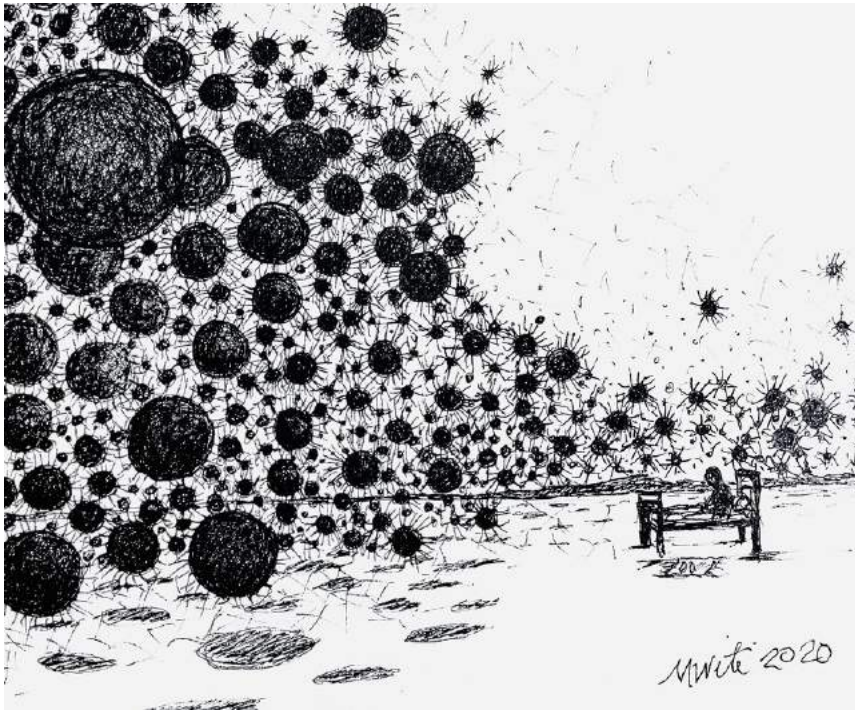
AM: I am very happy with my work. It is a communication from my mind, heart, spirit through my hands as a translation of the emotional state into what is going on around me. It is my way of finding a voice that is expressing my inner emotions, my dreams, my language and vocabulary of communication of something that I deem important.

Covid19 a blessing in disguise for me. I am a career woman with a family and finding long extensive hours of uninterrupted creative space is very difficult. This has been a period of stretched out time for me that makes days feel like a gift of emptiness. I am able to work for so many hours without looking at what I am doing until the work has reached a stage where I know what it is I feel. As an artist, I have watched my visual story around COVID-19 evolve from the actual outbreak and its impact on humanity to overcoming it.



"It has been a very difficult time for most people during the lockdown, looking at fresh art on social media that is relevant to their experiences and made us feel that we are together in this."

Art for Healing



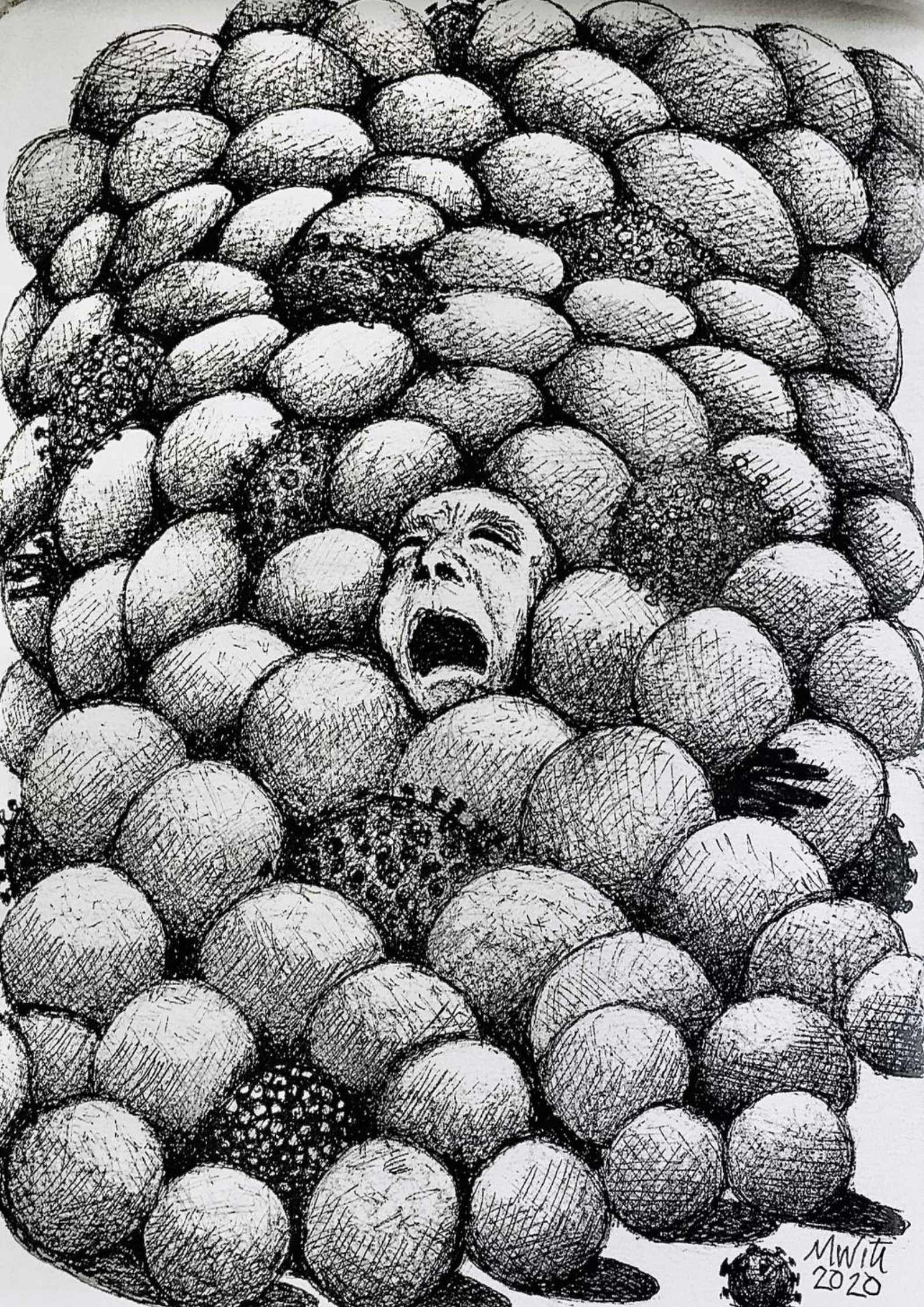
Q: As someone who comes in from the academia; how does your work draw women from all walks of life? How do they resonate with these powerful art pieces?

AM: Success in art is not just about being known and selling art but also in how people see your work and relate to it. The academia world is a very different space that does not relate to the art space in expression and delivery. One of the notable ways women have resonated with my art is in how emotional my art is and how it relates to them on a very personal level. Women are the canvas on which we put our emotions, good and bad. As a woman myself, I see and feel with women and express their worst fears for their children in my artworks; their loves and hates and uncertainty of tomorrow. The artworks I have been working on since the COVID-19 lockdown directly spoke to everyone and some of the comments I got from my daily posts online and on my social media platforms were speaking of the healing the pieces brought to the viewers. They looked forward to each artwork I created and put out there.



Q:What opportunities exist to deeply connect with each other, intentionally center art and creative expression as an avenue for therapy and healing justice?

AM: It is really difficult to manage that because so much emotion goes into what you are doing as a woman in all these aspects of life such as career woman, giving family emotional support as one navigates the landscapes of art creation. It is important to create networks that connect women and open opportunities for them by translating their creativity into monetary returns.



MWiti
2020

Be Encouraged!

In the wink of an eye; like the flash of a storm
Confusion, anxiety, panic, fear, loneliness, despair, shock, helplessness
Attacked the earth; like a dark evil cloud
An epidemic unleashed; Escalated into a pandemic
Corona Virus is its name; COVID-19; its nick name
The world became still; crippled to its knees
Affecting and infecting; snatching lives from every corner; making nation
states vulnerable; questioning the role of the state, its structures and its
citizens
In adversity we are made bold to question, to organize, to mobilize, to put
our differences aside, to combat
We are a light of hope – A beam of radiance
Surrendering not; defeated never; victory ever, soldiering on
Be encouraged; this too shall pass!

Expressions of gloom; an ever-memorable diction
#Lockdown2020, #self-isolate, #quarantined; all these challenging
the core of who we are as social beings, shocking us culturally and socially
Expressions to rejuvenate, long abandoned practices
#Wash hands often; #social physical distancing
#coughing etiquette; vigilance – is a must
Thoughts and reflections; transformation for the good
Our nations resolve; transform for development
Expressions to save; expressions of caution
#Stay home #stay safe, #stop the spread
Coordinate, collaborate; commit to service
The night may be long but dawn is assured
Be encouraged; this too shall pass!

Immersed in the audacity of hope – is to conquer
Courage in adversity – victory is our goal
In the light of strength – a new day is born
In the spirit of sacrifice – humanity is defined
In the spirit of resilience – humanity adopts new ways of living
A commitment to save even in the face of death
The health practitioner's mantra
In solidarity, togetherness; COVID-19 shall be defeated
Stay calm but be conscious; be armed with credible information
The road appears bumpy but there is an end
Alas! be encouraged! this too shall pass!

Bernadette French, Sierra Leone

‘The Resistance Has not Been Canceled’

As part of Partner Spotlight, Feminist Republik (FR) caught up with Anonymous Queer Feminist Activist (AQF) based in Egypt and Sudan to share some reflections on the resistance, organising and working on LGBTI rights. Our discussion revolved around the context, challenges and some ways activists they keep their heads above the water, what resilience looks like for them and the existing opportunities for partnerships with other African WHRDs across the Continent.

**** Sarah Hegazi - Rest in Power ****

1. What are the specific challenges you face in your context that limit your rights and freedom?

Retrogressive laws and policies: Sudan and Egypt both have retrogressive laws that increase exclusion and violations of sexual and gender minorities. Egypt prosecutes LGBTIQ+ persons despite the absence of an explicit legal statute that makes provisions for criminalising same-sex relationships and; upon arrest at trial, Law 10/1961 on Combating Prostitution is largely used. Resultantly; there are increased numbers of people arrested and prosecuted annually in debauchery cases that have increased five-fold with average of 66 individuals per year.

Activities of NGOs in Egypt are regulated by laws that limit the freedom of association and assembly for civil society including groups and organizations working on SOGIE and gives a room for more violations, harassment and threats against human rights defenders and a lot of funding restrictions.

Further, being an activist and part of an LGBTI organization is often considered as a matter of national security and in some cases anti- terrorism law has been used to witch-hunt groups and organizations working on SOGIE. In some cases, the Anti-Cybercrime Law has been criticized for being used to promote censorship, data retention and surveillance and allegations of “data trafficking between other governments”.

While in Sudan, the judicial system implements the Sharia Law of the Sudanese Penal Code to criminalize the act of ‘sodomy’ (anal sex by men with men and women).

Physical and digital security and safety remain a huge challenge for human rights defenders working on LGBTI persons in North Africa. As an LGBTI activist, I face challenges in maintaining my security and safety. As a Queer person living in patriarchal hostile environment that promotes hate, exclusion, homophobia and incitement against LGBTI individuals.

Political and economic situation plays a great role in the stability of the public, private sector and NGOs work. The fragile democracy, war and conflict and shaky political situation with huge economic inflation represents a major challenge to the projects and services provided by civil society organizations. This is especially so in countries that have experienced revolutions and frequent military coups, such as Egypt and Sudan.

Lastly, like we all know by now, many of our countries have instituted **COVID-19** response mechanisms some of which have worked while others have had adverse effects to some sections of society especially sexual and gender minorities. This therefore makes Health and COVID-19 pandemic one of the challenges we face at the moment. As a way to manage the crisis, the Egyptian Government continues applying a state of emergency and recently approved a set of proposed amendments to the Egyptian Emergency Law that in effect increased the powers of the presidency. As Egypt continues applying working from home measures, morning lockdown of malls, shopping centers and cafes, public spaces, private sectors and NGOs and; continued curfew hours at night majorly affect those on the fringes of society -where LGBTI persons are located.

In Sudan, a 24 hours’ curfew is entering the second month with full paralysis of all life aspects. This negatively affects the psychological wellbeing of LGBTI community members/activists especially those who found themselves locked-up with their violators (families or partners). In addition, the fact that most of the sectors that are locked-down are those where LGBTI persons are located affects their economic welfare and livelihoods.

“I face a lot of social stigma and discrimination. Therefore, finding the balance between my personal safety and being an LGBTI activist is not easy....”

The Resistance Has not Been Canceled cont'd

2. In times of fear, chaos and anxiety; what keeps you going as individual LGBTI activists, as Organisations and Collectives?

Taking care of my wellbeing, as an individual is very important in the time of crisis. In addition, taking care of each other's psychological wellbeing, is very beneficial for group productivity. We always ensure that there are no work overload but rather distributing the tasks amongst ourselves, and no blaming for the people who are expressing their inability to withstand the pressure, risks and anxiety that comes with working under such a volatile context and highly contested issues of bodily politics and choice. We also respect that sometimes some of us need time to rest and rejuvenate. And of course; effective communication as a collective and expressing our gratitude to one another is used often on affirming each other and encouraging our ability to resist and fight.

3. Are there some initiatives that focus specifically on wellness and radical care?

I am not aware of initiatives in Egypt and Sudan that are focusing on wellness and care exclusively, but in the recent few years many organizations became aware of the importance of wellbeing. Also, some LGBTI organizations and groups created projects that provide psychological support services for free or projects that focusing on art therapy

4. Please share some examples of ways you take care of yourselves as activists.

There are various ways in which we take care of ourselves that include: Practicing meditation and yoga; Art therapy that includes dancing, drawing and carving; Physical exercise including walking and stretching; Listening to music; Taking time off; Being surrounded by loving caring people (family, fellow activists and close friends) and; Seeking professional help (psychologist/psychiatrists) as and when needed.

5. What does resilience mean in Movements in Egypt and Sudan?

Despite the social violence, discriminative laws and shrinking of spaces, LGBTI activists in Egypt and Sudan manage to find alternative and creative ways for their activisms like: art, health and sport, using online activisms and social media platforms to bring the visibility to their issues, building alliances and coalitions through intersectional approach. Adding to this, Movements here are taking security and safety measures as a priority in all aspects of their work.

6. What opportunities exist to deeply connect with other African Women Human Rights Defenders that intentionally centers healing justice in ways that are rights-based, intersectional and Pan-African?

When it comes to physical spaces, at the moment there are very limited opportunities to meet with other African Women Human Rights Defenders that use an intersectional, rights-based and healing justice-centered approaches. Nonetheless, taking advantage of technology and online spaces, sharing our daily struggle stories through audio-visual mediums with focusing on healing and wellbeing strategies, will hopefully create solidarity and connection between us and other African WHRDs.

DZUWA - BRAIN PAUSE AND TEASER

ZANELE MBUGUA

We want to hear from you! What is **Dzuwa** without hearing from you! Did you know our name **Dzuwa** is the Chichewa word for 'sunrise?'

Can you drop us an email (see below) and let us know the word you use for 'sunrise' and we will feature these in subsequent editions. Let's make learning and connecting fun by spicing things up a little! Send in your answers and we will mention the first 5 winners in our next edition!

FUN FACT

Did you know about Senegal's Pink Lake? Located north of the Cape Vert peninsula of Senegal. Also known as **Lac Retba** or **Lac Rose**, this shallow lagoon surrounded by dunes is a popular day-trip destination for dakarois and tourists alike, all come to enjoy the calm and catch the lake's magic trick – the vibrant pink hues that sometimes colour its waters.

The pink hues are created by the lake's high salt content, which is 10 times that of ocean water. It's a beautiful sight that is enjoyed when the light is just right – the best chance to catch the spectacle is in dry season, when the sun is high.

Have anything interesting near you to share on our page? Please email us with your fun facts!

EDITION QUIZ

Question 1:

How many African WHRDs convened in the Abuja, Nigeria meeting to brainstorm and consult whether The Feminist Republik its establishment and rationale is needed?

Question 2:

What is the second method of healing that healer Fatime Faye uses?

Question 3:

When and where was the Feminist Republik festival launch held?

Question 4:

Name two of the self-care methods that the Anonymous Queer Feminist Activist shared about individual and collective practice?

Question 5:

At what time was Liz Ombati awake?

Send us your correct answers along with your name, country, what you are doing currently and two favourite ways to take care of yourself and your community. Drop your answers and information to feministrepublik@uaf-africa.org.

Contributors Page



Amal Hamed (أمل حامد): Graphic designer and illustrator from Cairo, Egypt, who is working in the field of human and women's rights.

A graduate from Cairo University, department of philosophy (2011), Amal participated in several projects related to prisoners of conscience in Egypt with the Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE).

She cooperated with other illustrators from different countries on a project by Take Back the Tech (Mexico) aiming to spread positive messages of solidarity on the internet through paintings of women. Amal also participated in several projects with Ikhtyar Gender Studies and Research Space including, "Being Online as a Feminist" and "Building a Feminist Internet". [Instagram](#)(@amalartworks)

[Behance](#)



Anne Mwiti is a Kenyan artist and researcher. She is in the early stages of pursuing her PHD on Crisis, Conflict and Culture: The Role of Art. She teaches art at the Kenyatta University. She is an accomplished artist showcasing her work for over 30 years.

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Anonymous Queer Feminist has been an activist for 10 years in the area of sexual orientation and gender identity in Egypt and Sudan. Her intersectional approach led her to become the MENA representative in the board of the Global Interfaith Network. In December 2017, and was awarded the Human Rights Prize of the French Republic for her remarkable work that influenced the LGBTI movement in Egypt.



Bernadette Abioseh French: A vibrant human right defender and gender analyst with 14 years advocacy experience in human rights, transitional justice, Gender, Women's rights and child protection, primary devoted to advocate for the adoption of policies, provision of effective response mechanisms whiles also intensifying outreach to ensure the prevention and protection of women and girls from all forms of sexual and gender based violence. She had developed a passion for writing poem as a way of narrating women's experiences of sexual and gender-based violence.

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Contributor Page



Cynthia Happi is a Cameroonian living and working in Ethiopia as a Peace and Security Researcher. Cynthia is a music lover who is passionate about football.

Cynthia is on Instagram: [@cynthiahappi](https://www.instagram.com/cynthiahappi)



eloise burke (eb) - is a development practitioner whose background as a displaced African and Afro-Caribbean-Canadian has afforded her a diverse range of experiences, assets, informed tricks, and high-level skills that are unique to her path.

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Fatime K. Faye was born in 1957 in Dakar, Sénégal. After her BA in English at the University of Dakar, she worked for several years with the US Mission in Senegal. She moved in 1987 in Guinea Conakry for 2 years where she started freelancing. In 1989 she returned in Senegal where she engaged in workshop and meeting logistics with international organizations. She now lives in Toubab Dialaw (60 km away from Dakar) in a small fishing village where she benevolently works with women and youth associations. Along with her professional activities, she often engaged in youth associations in the area of sports and culture, creation of enterprises for women and health. She is a member of the Association for Integrated Development in Toubab Dialaw, Toastmasters Clubs International and Pan African Network of Leaders (PANeL) Senegal.



Françoise Moudouthe is a pan-African feminist and the founder of Eyala, a bilingual platform that harnesses the power of conversation to explore what it means to be an African feminist today. You can reach Françoise on: www.eyala.blog / @EyalaBlog on Twitter & Instagram

Contributor Page



Irene //Garoës is a Feminist and a community mobiliser from a small village called Leonardville in the eastern part of Namibia. She is passionate about feminist movement building on the rural level with marginalised groups of women in Namibia. She works with women's rights organizations (indigenous women, women who live under customary law, lesbian and rural women) and trains young people on issues of human rights, Sexual Reproductive and Human Rights (SRHR), conflict resolution and healing from violence using alternative methods, as well as organizing and coordinating training's with life skills teachers and religious leaders, training young women in self-defense, public performances, writing, feminist leadership and movement building. Irene enjoys poetry, storytelling, film-making and loves getting to know different cultures, dogs and gardening. Irene is also a Country Coordinator for One Billion Rising Namibia and holds a Bachelor's of Communications (Honours) degree from Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).



Joia Sabimana and I'm a 28-year-old Burundian woman. I am queer identifying and have done activism work with local LGBT+ organizations. My educational background is in Psychology, but I have developed a keen interest in writing. A recurring theme in my poems is freedom from oppression and the experience of the African girl as she navigates the mental and social constructs she finds herself right in the middle of. This emphasis stems from an understanding that the feminine experience is one that needs telling. I often cringe at the thought of delving deep into the collective feminine energy, because of the pain it may arouse. But such depth is needed if healing is to happen. Embracing the feminine energy within goes hand in hand with heeding the call of one's intuition, trusting in one's inner knowing, and allowing oneself to live from a place of vulnerability. These are valuable gifts of the feminine that are lost in the fight for survival. Lastly, I hope to raise the veil on my own experience in an effort to encourage my sisters to not fear doing the same.



Liz Ombati: I am a disability rights self-advocate. My advocacy comes through my own lived experiences with a mental health condition. I started writing from a very early age, for it was the best way that I could express that which remained unspoken. Writing for me is a form of therapy. I use writing to agitate for change; to draw attention to marginalization, and to call attention to injustices around me. I write about the anger within me and the frustration of not being able to make the world the best for everyone. I write to find myself when I am in so much pain and anguish about unfulfilled dreams. Yet, I also write to express beauty and hope around me. The present, which is a culmination of the many yesteryears. I write about love and desire; about finding myself; about healing. I write about new tomorrows and new hopes. About sunrises and sunsets. I write about the promise of an equal world. A safe world for us all. A world that is enough for us all; to partake in its awe and beauty. Email: lizombati@hotmail.com
Blog <https://elizabethombati.wordpress.com>



Masa Amir is UAF-Africa as the Fund's Research and Protection Coordinator. Masa has experience in the documentation of violations faced by WHRDs and conducting advocacy at the Human Rights Council and the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights. She is particularly interested in women's economic rights and strengthening the protection mechanisms and effective responses to WHRDs at risk, with a special focus on WHRDs in North Africa. Masa has a Master's Degree in International Human Rights Law from the American university in Egypt, the focus of her thesis being on the manner in which violations of the right to social security contribute to poverty among women in Egypt.



Nancy Chela Cherwok was born in Nairobi, Kenya.. She works primarily in the medium of painting; acrylics on canvas and paper. She studied design and majored in Illustration and has exhibited some of her pieces at the Alliance Francaise Nairobi, Subtopia studios in Sweden, Kerry Civic parker gallery in Australia, the Bega kwa Bega arts collective in Babadogo, Ibuka in the University and for street at the walls of Kitintale skating park (Kampla), Korogocho, Jericho, Eastleigh and many more. The main themes that she tackles are on culture and identity. She makes use of symbolism, colour and patterns to set the tone of each painting. Mentor and life coach to girls with artistic inclinations and those interested in taking up art as an alternative activity to occupy their free time. Community graffiti artist putting up murals in turbulent neighbourhoods in Nairobi. Her work can be found on these links. Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/chelwek/> and Behance: https://www.behance.net/NANEY_CHEIACHELWEK



Raquel Lima is a Lisbon-based poet from both banks of the Tagus River and the Atlantic Ocean from an Angolan mother, a Santomean father, a Senegalese paternal grandmother and a Brazilian maternal great-grandmother. A poet, performer and art educator, raquellima sets out in this book & audio edition as part of a ten-year journey of essentially oral poetry, a movement that has taken her to over a dozen countries in Europe, South America and Africa. During this period, she presented her work in literature, oral narration, poetry slam, spokenword, performance and music events, namely FLIP – Festa Literária Internacional de Paraty, FLUP Rio - Festival Literário das Periferias, FOLIO – Festival Literário Internacional de Óbidos, Festival Silêncio, Palavras Andarilhas, entre outros. The transdisciplinarity with which she approaches art, memory and society, attentive to social inequalities and allied to a desire to find and understand her roots, led her to return to the academy, where she develops her research focused on orature and slavery in São Tomé and Príncipe at the Center for Social Studies at the University of Coimbra.



Shinaz is the Feminist Republik Culture Curator and has extensive grantmaking expertise and experience having been with UAF-Africa since 2013. Her deep knowledge of the realities of women living at the margins of society, especially in urban slums, coupled with her passion of employing theatre and dance as rehabilitation and collective-care tools has seen her working across Africa co-creating with arti-vists in elevating feminist and social justice approaches to achieving longstanding women's rights and gender justice. At UAF-Africa, Shinaz has been instrumental in championing the rights of marginalized communities, environmental justice defenders and feminist arti-vists. Shinaz is on Instagram: @nubianqueenbiz_zaidis and on LinkedIn: Shinaz Rehema Ali



Sr. Letta Mosue is one of 9 siblings (8 girls and 1 boy). By 14, she lost both her parents and joined the convent at 15. She managed to complete school and studying her college through correspondence school. She was a high school teacher for 11 years and served as a principle for a year in a township middle school in Pretoria. She went on to study Psychology. Sr. Letta comes from a family of healers and although she was brought up as Catholic, her family practiced African Traditional healing. The Church was against it and her aunt was threatened with excommunication if she continued. She realized her calling to healing while studying her Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology. She faced a lot of animosity, but she had a fellow Sister with the same gift who mentored her. She defended her gift and continues to practice African healing and psychology to date. She has remained in leadership in her congregation of Sisters.

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Dr. Toyin Ajao (Moon Goddess) engages the world as a public researcher, feminist activist, intersectional holistic researcher, storyteller and writer. She is the founder of the iAfrika Center for Holistic Research and Praxis; focus on personal and interpersonal transformation (healing) through evidence-based multidisciplinary empirical results and practices. She obtained a master's degree in conflict, security and development from King's College London and a bachelor's degree in accounting from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. She holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Pretoria, where she was previously a lecturer in international relations. Ajao is a research associate, former graduate and current coordinator of the alumni of the Africa Leadership Center (ALC). She is also a former doctoral fellow of Next Gen-SSRC, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the ALC.

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Zanele Mbugua is a Kenyan feminist activist who is passionate about women's rights advocacy, with a focus on LBTQI + rights as well as sexual reproductive health and rights. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and Sociology from Rhodes University (South Africa). Zanele is currently pursuing a master's degree in Gender Studies and Development at the University of Nairobi. As the Feminist Republik Champion, Zanele looks forward to contributing towards a robust Feminist Republik agenda that ensures women and gender non-conforming people's holistic security and safety, wellbeing and healing justice.

You can find Zanele on Instagram: [@zane_ee](https://www.instagram.com/zane_ee) and LinkedIN: Zanele Mbugua



Melissa Wainaina is an African queer feminist and artist based in Kenya. She is actively involved in African feminist spaces that advance women and gender non-conforming people's holistic security and safety, collective care and wellbeing, healing justice as well as feminist inspired documentation initiatives. She has over 12 years' experience in the non-profit sector having worked since 2006 mainly focusing on sexuality, gender and sexual rights. Melissa has extensive experience in strengthening capacities for more rights-based approaches in transformative social change work.

Melissa is the Feminist Republik Creative Facilitator and the Head Editor of Dzuwa.



Solome Nakaweesi is a Pan-African feminist activist, active participant and analyst within the women rights, human rights, sexual rights and feminist movements in Uganda, Africa and Internationally. She has played a fundamental role in supporting the (re)emergence of progressive social movements and organizing in the Africa region, Eastern Africa Sub-Region and Uganda. Solome is a renowned facilitator and practitioner on self-care, wellness and healing justice and has travelled BOTH a personal and a collective journey with other human rights defenders.

Solome is the Guest Editor for this First Edition of of the Feminist Republik Newsletter.

DZUWA

Dzuwa is an editorially independent publication brought to you by the Feminist Republik, formally known as The African Women Human Rights Defenders Platform.

It is supported by Urgent Action Fund Africa as a space filled with story-telling, sharing and learning about holistic security, healing, wellness and radical care for and by African women, transgender and gender non-conforming human rights defenders and their communities to draw inspiration of the rich resilience of their movements...

Email us:
feministrepublik@uaf-africa.org

Check out our Call for Proposals for
Collective Care and Healing Grants

July 2020

