



# FEMINISTS' EXCHANGE LEARNING AS AGENTS OF CLIMATE ACTION.

**WOMEN FOR GREEN  
ECONOMY MOVEMENT  
UGANDA**



**17TH-23RD NOVEMBER,  
2024**



Email us  
**wogemuganda@gmail.com**



Visit our website  
**www.wogemuganda.org**



# OVERVIEW

A total number of 6 women from different villages of Kijumba , kyakatemba , Kyakaboga in Hoima District and 3 feminists , 3 women leaders attended and successfully completed this workshop that commenced with introductions of all members sharing their names, what their different names mean and a material or any tool that identifies them as feminists or women.

## OBJECTIVES

The main goal of this campaign was to heal ourselves through story telling of resilience on how each and every one is contributing to promote climate and gender justice in our communities and re-imaging and owning our own stories.

### Other Objectives

- Standing in solidarity with affected communities showering them Love, power, positive energy, kindness, and empathy. We believe the power of connecting ourselves, our minds, imagining the future we want as feminists that is free from capitalism, a future that is regenerative where we live in harmony with our mother earth.
- Sharing our stories with one another of the challenges we have passed through and how we can work together to overcome.



**AHIRIRWE LETICIA**  
Comm. Officer WoGEM

## INTRODUCTIONS

“

Ahiriirwe Leticia shared with members that her name **Ahiriirwe** means She is lucky and she was named that because her parents were also lucky to have her.

”

**Leticia** opened up the conference by highlighting to members the agenda of the conference and welcomed them all.

Participants introduced themselves, mentioning their names, what their names mean and why they were called those names. Below are the names of participants.

**Asinguza Agatha** told members that her name Agatha means something good but she doesn't know why she was called Asinguza.

**Tugume Recheal** told members her name Tugume means being strong but couldn't attach any reason to why it was chosen.

**Musiimenta Maria** narrated that they didn't expect her to be born and so when she was born and her mother heard her first little cry, she screamed Musiimenta meaning How should I thank God.

**Nahaboona Patience** told us she was named Patience meaning always wait.



*some of the participants posing for a photo*

**Alinaitwe Hope** confessed she doesn't know the meaning of her name and requested members to help her with the meaning by the end of this conference which was done.

**Nyakwezi Jackline** also requested members to help her with the meaning of her name and gladly learnt it by the end of the conference.

**Kyalikunda Novence** disclosed that Kyalikunda means Whatever God wills and she was named that because her mother had produced only boys and people used to mock her while she was pregnant that she will produce another boy and would respond Whatever God wills and so when she produced a girl she named her Kyalikunda.

**Twikirize Evalyne** told members that her name means We believe and she excitedly added that she believes in her name that she can move mountains in life.

**Aganyira Comfort** told members that her name Comfort means someone who gives hope and empathy to others and pledged to offer comfort to any woman who needs it always.

**Ahairiirwe Mary Blessing** shared with members that her name Ahairiirwe means Someone who is lucky and tells that she was named that because the parents were happy she was born thus the second name Blessing.

**Twongirwe Ireen** told members she was named Twongirwe because her parents wanted a boy and so baptized her after her little brother was born, they baptised her Twongirwe meaning We have been added something.



# EXPECTATIONS

Women expressed their expectations from the conference some of which included; finding solutions to their teenage girls who are running into early marriages, how to re-enroll their school going age kids who dropped out back to school as well as finding safe space to share their challenges in their families and marriages.



In addition to the above expectations, some women shared their expectation of making friends, healing from past traumas and stress, learning different skills to earn a living and as well as gaining knowledge on different experiences from their fellow women.

*Participants' expectations*



**Ireen Twongirwe**  
ED WoGEM Uganda

### Communication from the ED

Ireen welcomed members for honoring the invitation and attending the conference/workshop, she briefly told members that such conferences are organized to provide safe spaces for women to share their challenges in their families and find solutions on how to keep their families moving and strong amidst the challenges in their families some mostly due to climate change.

## BOUNDING WITH MOTHER NATURE

The conference engaged in a session of bounding with mother nature where members were requested to hold hands around a Pot of water and meditate about their lives since water represents nature and something as women need and can't live without.

### WATER RITUAL



*Ireen taking the Participants through the water ritual*

Ireen took members through a water ritual by asking members to meditate on how water is useful and important in their families, as women and day to day lives and the challenges they face while collecting water. Ireen took members through a water ritual by asking members to meditate on how water is useful and important in their families, as women and day to day lives and the challenges they face while collecting water.

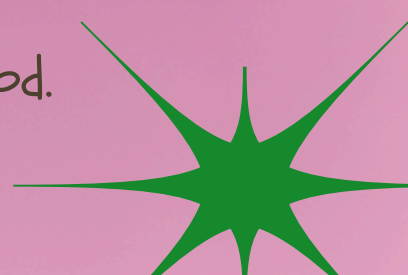




Leticia, Ireen and Evelyne holding a pot of water

More so, members one by one moved to the pot of water in their midst, scooped water from the pot using a cup to the bucket as they expressed the challenges they face as women in their lives and homes. This was done as a symbol to release their stress and depression into the bucket.

Women went ahead to share about the challenges they go through looking for water and firewood and these included;

- Children being beaten by police guarding the forest thinking they're spying on them.
  - Girls and women being raped in search of water in far places.
  - Domestic violence in homes where men claim their women are always sleeping with men at far water sources yet these women are genuinely collecting water.
  - Walking a long distance to fetch water and firewood.
- 



## DAY 2

# STORY TELLING



*Participants dancing*

Day 2 started with a dance which women enjoyed as they were waiting for the sessions to kick start. The dance was one way of connecting ourselves and creating open , safe space for each participant and for refreshing our minds. Before the day started, facilitator called upon participants to do a recap of what they discussed the previous day. Members shared that its very important to discover yourself and know the power you hold as a woman. They also shared that they need to know the meaning of their names and be intentional in discovering the potential in themselves.

The facilitator introduced and initiated the story telling tool for advocacy and why its important for women to use it as a strong tool to improve on their livelihoods and build confidence in themselves.

Different women shared their stories about the challenges they're facing in their families and members present provided solutions in one way or another. The challenges shared by different women include, insecurity and violence, false accusations, early marriages of their girls and several school drop outs

According to all the above challenges , they draw back to domestic violence. Finding possible solutions to domestic violence is a way of solving 90% of these challenges in families. Women highlighted some of the solutions below to end and fight domestic violence in families.

- Working together with men to end build their families.
- Money is one of the causes of domestic violence in most families so as women, there's need to focus on learning a skill or finding ways of getting money like starting a business since getting money from men sparks off some of these violence in homes.
- Women need to get out of this silence and fight for their rights and families.

The facilitator advised the members to focus on their inner peace and continue supporting their families to avoid depression and stresses.



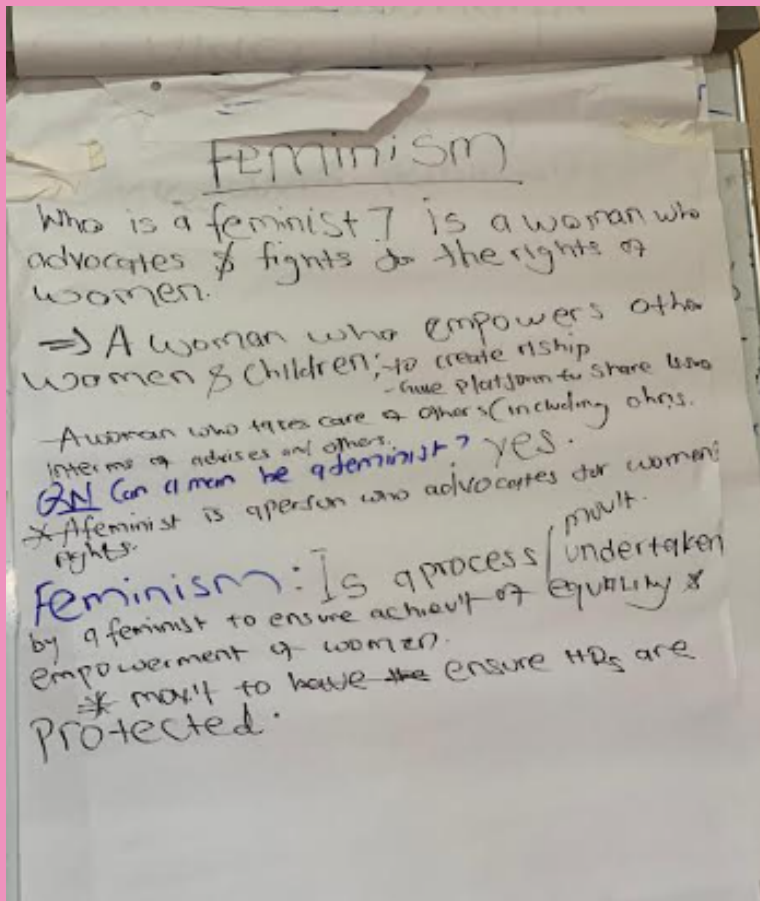
# DAY 3

## Power building, Gender Equality and feminism.

The session started by members welcoming themselves with hugs and laughter's which boosts the energy to start the next day of the conference. This session was about understanding feminism, misconceptions and breaking patriarchy systems.

Through group discussions, members in their respective groups discussed their perceptive and understanding of what they think feminism is all about.

Group 2 discussed that a feminist is any person who advocates for women's rights and therefore defined feminism as a process or movement undertaken by a feminist to ensure achievement of Equity and empowerment of women.



Board detailing feminism

Members discussed that power is a tool which everyone holds at different levels. One facilitator discussed that power imbalance has caused injustices in our country. She used the example of EACOP in our communities. She demonstrated that Government officials and Oil companies hold the power to decide on how the oil is going to be extracted and transported to Tanzania. This pushed the communities to face injustices like violations of human rights, communities being displaced from their ancestral land.

The facilitator shared different types of power that women have such as hidden power, visible power and invisible power. Many positive changes happen in the community when they work together as a group, raise the same voice and hold government accountable. Through collective efforts, women said that they have seen a great change in government prioritizing their needs for example revaluing their land for EACOP. The facilitator asked members on their thoughts about what Power building in women means and they expressed their ideas. Some of these ideas included being submissive in your family, holding your family together despite the challenges in a home among others.

# DAY 4

## STRESS MANAGEMENT

Members discussed that Stress is something that makes one overthink, and disassociate with other people, get lost in thoughts and feel desperate about life.

Stress is a natural response to challenging situations that can cause mental and physical tension. Stress leads to change in hormones

as women especially when in menstruation.

Participants shared that every person experiences different signs while stressed, these include, sleeping too much, eating too much, losing weight, loss of appetite, lack of sleep, crying and over thinking.

Women came up with some of the causes of stress and these are;

- Domestic violence such as conflicts and fights in the families.
- Death of a loved one such as parents, children, husband, and different people we hold dear.
- Lack of emotional support, constant reassurance, and love.
- Increased levels of poverty in the family, lack of school fees, basic resources for their children.
- Sickness
- Financial burdens

The facilitator probed members to iron out some of the possible ways of managing stress and these are some of the solutions discussed;

- Positive attitude. Sharing with people. Reaching out to a loved one and a trusted friend and then confiding in them is one way of managing stress.
- Listening to music. Playing music and songs they love on repeat.
- One of the members pointed out that she manages stress by giving herself treats such as buying herself things she loves such as food, clothes among others. This helps her to overcome her stress.
- Prayer and reading the bible. One woman shared with others that she overcomes stress by praying, talking to God and this helps her overcome her stress since praying restores her with hope and strong faith that good things will come her way because God knew her before she was born.

The above ways were brainstormed by women as their mechanisms to managing stress and the facilitator with other members argued about their effectiveness and women were advised to advocate mostly for productive ways mostly.



## DAY 5 RADICAL HEALING

The Session went on with an oil ritual where members grounded themselves again and Ireen demonstrated on how women can use oil to relieve stress through massaging different parts of their bodies as they were demonstrated to. These women got a chance to participate in the oil massage and were provided with some few bottles of oil to share and take home so as to massage themselves and their loved ones out of stress as taught.

Participants carrying out the oil ritual

After spending 4 days in the conference that had very emotional sessions, Ireen demonstrated on day 5 how the oil ritual is very important to reduce or manage stress in our day to day lives.

Oil was used to massage our bodies, smelling and taking a deep breath to take away negative energy, we also used oil to manage stress in our bodies by connecting to ourselves.

Furthermore, during Ireen told the, participants that shaking our bodies, inhaling and exhaling, shouting and self-massaging are other ways of managing stress.

Participants smelling oil



# CONCLUSION

Women expressed their gratitude for this conference since they felt relieved, their expectations all met and were pleased that the conference involved their participation as well since it involved I DO (facilitator) WE DO (Women and facilitator) strategy that kept the sessions engaged and interactive. They advocated for more conferences quite often so as to track, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the project.



*Women posing for a photo after the conference*



# OUT COME HARVESTING OF AACJ PROJECT

This year has been so wonderful for us through partnering with Oxfam Novib under Africa Activists for Climate Justice (AACJ). As feminists we have built a strong movement in different parts of Uganda.

With the help of these funds, we have been able to empower 12 members including climate activists, feminists, marginalized women and women leaders.

## What has changed?

Since 2023, we have been able to train 36 participants who have trained other members in their communities.

Women have been able to learn how to tell stories of themselves, their community. We found out that story telling is a strong tool for advocacy and for raising and amplifying unreported and unresponded to crisis that feminists, activist, marginalized women face in their communities, families and at work.

With this project, activist have been able to recognize how development projects like Oil extraction, construction of bi dams contributes to climate crisis. They have learnt to be intentional on how they can contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation hence contributing to climate and gender justice. Through sharing, they learnt how to start up local led solutions that combats the impacts of climate change. These include, bee keeping, weaving eco-friendly bags, briquettes as an alternative to reduce on the levels of deforestation.

Women are now able to report cases of domestic violence in their families. In solidarity, they have supported each other to report cases. This helped in reducing the cases of GBV.

Furthermore, after discovering the root causes of GBV, activists have been able start up small businesses that empowers them economically to reduce on the over dependency over men.

With this fund, we have been able to get more funding from Global Green Grants (GGF) to contribute in the fight for climate and gender justice. This project also contributed in strengthening African activists' movements and changing the narrative agenda.

In addition, with this fund the EACOP project have been postponed from 2025 by oil companies. This is because activists were able to hold oil companies, governments accountable of the injustices they face due to this project. This means that working together as a team is the power we hold as a community.

# TRAINER OF TRAINEES

We used the funds to carry out capacity building of 3 staff members who were trained on how to carry out water ritual, oil ritual during the conference. They acquired counselling skills, storytelling skills and how they can attend to the audience.

During the training, they learnt what feminism is and who is called a feminist. This created a deep understanding which they later shared with participants during the conference.

They also learnt how to carry out wellbeing sessions for example stress management, and tactics to manage stress. Use of oil, water ritual, shaking, inhaling, exhaling, screaming and shaking as ways to reduce stress in our activism.

## Link to the Video

<https://youtu.be/MomkpxWMuBw?si=PZQnynEC7fEQo2Vf>



# PICTORIAL

