



THE STATE OF THE

GROWING MOVEMENT

FIGHTING INEQUALITY





SEMANA INTERNACIONAL DE ACCIÓN CONTRA LA DESIGUALDAD
FESTIVAL POR LA IGUALDAD

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Atlantic Fellows

FOR SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC EQUITY



END THE AGE
OF GREED
#fightinequality



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INTRODUCTION

“Inequality is a question you cannot avoid when you see it every day.”

Interviewee, Ghana

The 20th century saw peoples’, workers’, women’s, civil rights, Indigenous and national self-determination movements secure some gains and shape societies. Nonviolent movements in particular made significant but unfinished inroads against the longstanding inequities of past eras, such as monopolisation by industrial robber barons, feudalism, colonialism, patriarchy, racism, slavery and exploitation.

In the 21st century so far, levels of inequality within and between countries have been rising. The neoliberal economic system has enabled an explosion in the concentrations of wealth and power in our societies: 26 individuals now hold the same wealth as the 3.8 billion poorest people.¹ Interconnected and systemic forms of oppression and inequity such as racism, patriarchy and homophobia shape the daily realities of the majority of the world’s population.

¹ Oxfam International (2019), Public good or private wealth, Oxfam International.

Rising authoritarianism is fueled by growing inequality and concentration of power. It is resulting in attacks on freedoms and protections on assembly, association, and speech—rights that peoples’ movements exercise in order to organise and influence action—as well as the enhanced targeting of particular marginalised groups and minorities by many regimes.

An increasing number of organisations and movements found that extreme and rising inequality was holding back their missions. They saw what history has taught—to counter the excessive concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a small elite, and advance the just, equal and sustainable world we want, the only feasible action was to rebuild collective power from below. To do this, the people knew they needed to collaborate across issues and borders.

The [Fight Inequality Alliance](#) was formed to fight this growing crisis of inequality. Numerous groups came together to establish the Alliance: leading international and national non-profit organisations, human rights campaigners, women’s rights groups, environmental groups, faith-based organisations, trade unions, social movements, artists, individual activists and other civil society organisations. They had a shared vision for radical, systemic change and tackling the root causes of inequality through a people powered movement².

The Fight Inequality Alliance is growing rapidly. Organising and action in a growing number of national alliances across Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe is at the forefront of the movement. Continental and global action are vital complements to reinforce the national action and to help achieve both a shift in narrative and changes in policy, as well as develop on-the-ground organising. Those organising at the frontlines of inequality—young people, women’s rights organisations and social movements—are central to strengthening civil society and its impact. They are at the front and centre of the Fight Inequality Alliance’s organising. Our practice is for people to tell their own stories, and for us to speak truth to power. Nobody is a ‘voice for the voiceless’. The membership of the Alliance intentionally brings together rural and urban, young and old, local and national groups who bring their different skills, talents and ways of organising to the collective efforts. This study helps us analyse the challenges and benefits of this in the effort to make the movement even more transformational.

This research was initiated by Fight Inequality Alliance with the support of the [Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity programme](#) at the International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science. Fight Inequality Alliance partnered with [Rhize](#) to lead the research, building on their experience in studying multi-country social movements³ as part of their broader mission to support nonviolent movements to build active, diverse participation so that societies have the democratic capacities to create sustainable change.

This study was done because much of the research on inequality to date has focused on tracking and analysing its rise in different forms, with much less attention given to the analysis of campaigning and organising against inequality. This research aims to widen and deepen our collective understanding of movements fighting inequality around the

² See the full global vision for Fight Inequality Alliance [here](#)

³ Rhize (2017) – Understanding Activism, Rhize

world. It aims to make our Alliance more connected, and share what we are learning, facing and winning around the world.

Defining inequality movements

These are social movements—groups of social actors including formal and informal organisations (including NGOs, trade unions, social movements, etc), networks, community organisations and coalitions—seeking to address inequalities (economic, political, social and/or cultural, and often systemic including relating to race, class, gender, ability, caste, sexual identity) and/or aiming to achieve greater equality for and between certain groups of people or within certain social, political or economic systems.

Defining intersectionality

Intersectionality is a key concept in understanding the root causes of inequality. It refers to how different forms of oppression overlap and interact, especially in the experience of marginalised groups or individuals. These forms can include, but are not limited to, gender, sexual identity and orientation, race, religion, ability and class. In practice, intersectionality calls for a recognition of the varying backgrounds, perspectives and needs of people from all walks of life and to accept that a singular understanding of inequality will never be sufficient.⁴

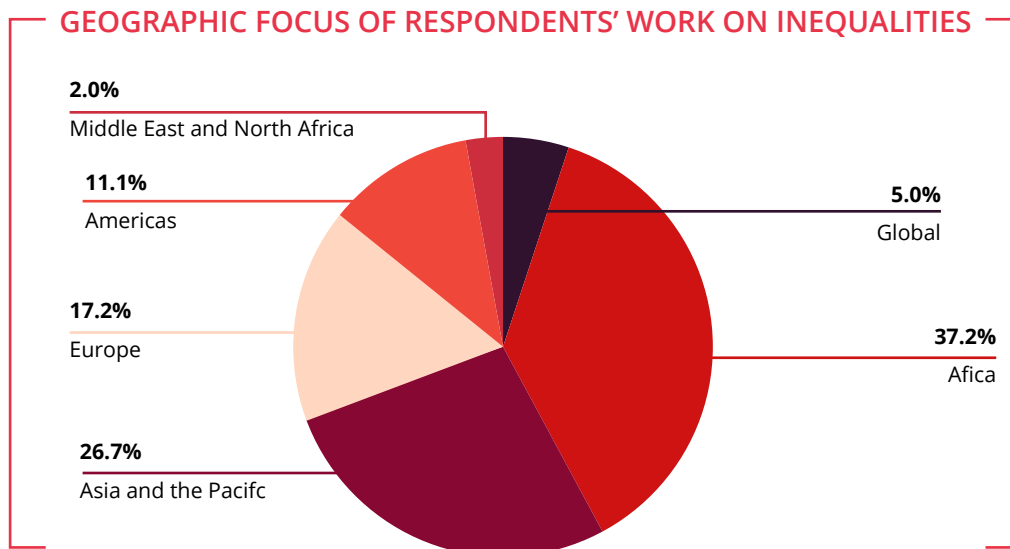
This study is a beginning of what we hope will lead to further work. Over 170 people shared their experiences through a survey and more than 40 in-depth interviews. The report also includes different ways of thinking about movements that resonated with the interviewees, as well as some tools that any group or movement fighting inequality can use to reflect on their own work.

This research has left us inspired and optimistic about the growing movements against inequality that are holding or gaining ground in struggles for rights, recognition, justice and equality. As we continue to build upon these findings, we invite you to connect with the Alliance, and to share your own experiences so that we can keep adding to our collective picture of how people are organising.

Who was involved?

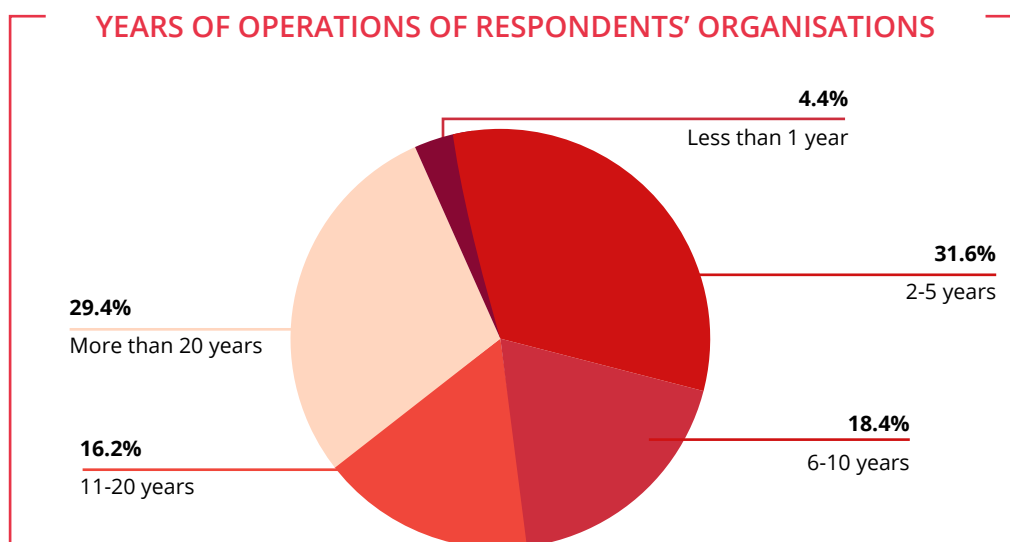
The research findings are based on 138 responses to a 30 minute survey and over 40 in-depth interviews. Of total respondents, 40% are female identified, 59% are male identified and 1% did not disclose.

⁴ This definition is adapted from K. Crenshaw (1989) Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black feminist critique of anti-discrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics, University of Chicago Legal Forum 140, pp. 139-167



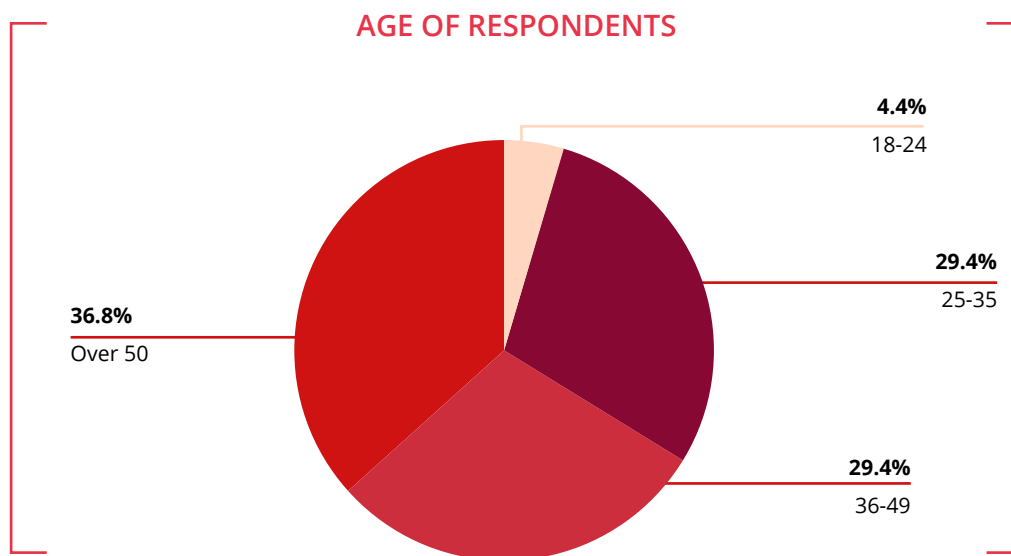
Respondents are organising in Africa (37.2%), Asia and the Pacific (26.7%), Europe (17.2%), the Americas (11.1%), at a global level (5%) and in the Middle East and North Africa (2.8%). This reflects the Alliance’s stronger connections and partnerships in Africa and the Asia Pacific at this stage.

The study aimed to going beyond current Alliance members. While 40% of the respondents have a formal, existing relationship with Fight Inequality Alliance, others do not, including 25% with no relationship and 17% who are only aware of their work.



Survey respondents belong to registered local or national organisations (40%), registered international organisations (18%), social movements (8%), youth organisations or movements (7%) and unregistered community-based organisations (6%). The rest of the responses come from think tanks, faith-based organisations, trade unions, collectives, networks and individuals. Interviewees represent social movements, local and national organisations and international NGOs. Survey respondents belong to organisations that have been in operation between less than a year and over 20 years; with the largest samples from organisations operating for 2 to 5 years and those operating for more than 20 years.

The survey respondents have a relatively diverse age range, but with a smaller sample of those under 25 years old. The older age range may also reflect the seniority of respondents. The majority of respondents hold senior or leadership roles (20% are Executive Directors, 27% in a leadership position and 8% Directors).



The sample is highly urban: 58% of survey respondents live in a capital city, 20% in another large city, 12% in a town and 7% in a rural or remote village.

32% of survey respondents identify as Indigenous and 17% of respondents identify as part of an ethnic minority in their country of residence.

The survey respondents have high levels of education with 35% having a Bachelor’s degree and 48% having a Master’s degree.

The urban location and education of the respondents may reflect only those who have access to time, information and resources to respond to an online survey. We acknowledge that activists in these movements are hard at work in their own struggles and are facing many kinds of threats. We are deeply grateful to those who took the time to contribute but also acknowledge that this form of information gathering is limited. We look forward to continuing to learn from people across these movements.

Frameworks to help us think about movements

In doing the research for this study, we drew on two frameworks to inform some of our questioning and examination - Rhize’s emergent Movement Mapping Tool⁵ and Bill Moyer’s Movement Stages⁶.

The Movement Mapping Tool helps examine the movement landscape in a specific place—city, country or region—understanding the demands/grievances, emerging

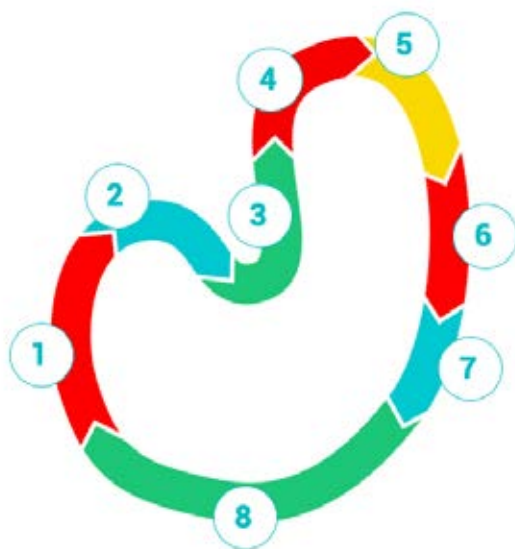
⁵ Contact Rhize at joinus@rhize.org for more information.

⁶ Moyer’s whole plan is available for free online [here](#)

movements, their strategies, leadership, participation and accountability.

Bill Moyer's Movement Action Plan is a strategic framework for describing the eight stages of successful social movements. Many social movements have used Moyer's stages to help understand where they are, to strategise and re-strategise and to avoid despair and burnout.

Moyer's Movement Action Plan



1. **Normal times:** Problem exists but there are hardly any grievances
2. **Failure of institutions:** Showing that institutions are incapable of addressing the problem
3. **Ripening conditions:** Overall political climate becomes favorable for movement formation
4. **Movement take-off:** Movement emerges, public knows about them, they stage public manifestations
5. **Identity crisis and powerlessness:** Activists hit a wall and need to devise new strategies
6. **Majority public support:** Movement is gaining ground
7. **Success:** Movement achieves its goals
8. **Continuation of the struggle:** Consolidation of victory

In their responses, interviewees reflect on the different stages of specific movements within the broader inequality movement in their country or how they moved through stages over time.

"If I look at the decade between 2008 and 2018, what happened is that discontent about the economic and financial crisis turned from a pro-rights defense of social politics into quite a nationalistic, conservative agenda. We went through failure of institutions, ripening conditions, movement takeoff, majority public support and then those movements became political parties. But they were not able to have proper majority support and things stuck there."

-Interviewee, Spain

“You realise that people know that institutions failed a long time ago, but we are now seeing the effects of that. First, making the environment ripe enough for us to say that we need to start several movements. So several civil movements are actually springing forth. If you look at Nigeria in the last ten years Bring Back Our Girls was just lucky to gain that global attention. But there are several others that are causing changes in communities or localities and they are making their own giant strides.”

–Interviewee, Nigeria



Questions for reflection:

Which stage do you think your movement or alliance is at? Why?

What are the opportunities or pathways for moving your struggle to the next stage?

What's in this report?

The stories, struggles and reflections of participants in inequality movements around the world have given us a sense of some deep commonalities in what movements are dealing with as well as their distinct diversity. Each section contains insights and themes from the research along with reflections from activists and stories from movements around the world. The sections end with questions that you can use to reflect on your own work and within your movements.

Section one shares how inequality movements are emerging and growing in response to the impacts of inequality, visions for a better world, and efforts to better connect and collaborate across civil society. As groups develop questions of structure arise—legal registration, forms of leadership and membership. These affect movements' relationships to communities, funders, the state and the rest of the movement. Whatever choices movements make, this research demonstrates the importance of being thoughtful and deliberate about how to structure for accountability to grassroots communities. It also shows how important it is to not reinforce, but actively dismantle inequities based on race, gender, age and other dimensions within movements and organisations.

Section two examines what movements are fighting for (looking at three of the biggest areas): natural resources, elite capture and corruption and women's rights and feminist agendas. Proximity to community grievances and levels of privilege (including political access and influence) affect how groups frame and approach their struggles and also their connections to the broader inequality movement.

Section three raises questions about who is leading and participating in movements against inequalities. Movements can make a significant contribution to redressing power imbalances if they consciously work to prioritise and support leadership and participation by those who do not have inherited or traditional power. For many movements this means being attentive to grassroots concerns and ensuring access to power and leadership by people of colour, women and young people. This research has found that this work to support grassroots leadership, dismantle inequalities within movements, and support feminist and other agendas is a work in progress in these movements.

Section four looks at where and how movements are holding and gaining ground. In the face of rising authoritarianism, neoliberal economic systems and austerity, movements are on the defensive in many contexts – needing to defend land, public services or civic rights that are under attack. At the same time, groups are gaining ground on proactive and positive agendas in many places—building movements and coalitions, reshaping the narrative and influencing policy change and implementation.

Section five highlights the ways in which groups are connecting across the international movement and their hopes for what connection, support and solidarity can generate. A critical driver of collaboration is when groups realise that they cannot influence systemic change on their own. They may keep being able to hold back some negative changes, but to really aim at transforming power relations, they need to work with others who can bring different kinds of power together. Movements and organisations fighting inequality recognise that their struggles are interlinked, with common transnational or global drivers. They want to be in common cause together in a way that makes them more likely to shift the structural causes of inequality.

What's next?

This project is just the start of Fight Inequality Alliance doing research, understanding and sharing information and insights about inequality movements. Our hope is that this effort helps to create new connections and provides inspiration and examples that activists can use in their struggles. We want to support reflection in and across our movements about leadership, strategies and power dynamics. We also want to keep listening and making sure that the development of the Alliance is based on the experiences, needs and visions of members and inequality movements around the world.

We invite you to:

- Join the Fight Inequality Alliance or sign up for news at www.fightinequality.org
- Reflect within your own organisation or movement using the exercises in this report
- Send us feedback at info@fightinequality.org
- Share the findings of this research with your own networks and movements

Together we can fight inequality.



SECTION ONE

THE EMERGENCE AND STRUCTURE OF

MOVEMENTS AGAINST INEQUALITIES

This study paints a picture of how inequality movements are emerging and growing in response to the impacts of rising inequality, visions for a better world and efforts to better connect and collaborate across civil society. In this section, we explore how movements emerge and how they navigate decisions about their structure, leadership and accountability as they develop.

Whatever choices movements make, this research demonstrates the importance of being thoughtful and deliberate about how to build a structure for accountability to grassroots communities. It also explains (as discussed in later sections) how to be proactive in actively dismantling inequities within movements and organisations.

Emergence of movements

Emerging from, and in, a struggle

“They started basically from a struggle.”

-Interviewee, India

A majority of groups who participated in the survey and interviews emerged in response to inequalities they directly faced. These were often systemic inequalities that related to their position within broader social, economic and political systems. For example, Dalit rights and Indigenous rights movements, trade unions and women's rights groups.

"They started from Calcutta in Eastern India where there was a massive attack on hawkers [street vendors] for urban development. They were butchered and thrown off the streets, they were arrested, their stuff was looted by the police calling them illegal. So they fought back, and that major struggle that started from one city, it found echo everywhere. Once they formed this federation, a lot of these groups all started coming together. Then they converged into the National Hawkers Federation. It took a long time but now it is a national body, it has members all over India."

-Interviewee, India

At times, as with the example of the National Hawker's Federation above, there was a specific threat spurring action by a group that already had unequal access to resources, power and influence. This was also a common catalyst for the emergence of new groups – for example, National Land Defense League in Uganda emerged from communities across the country organising themselves to resist large-scale land grabbing.

Groups to properly represent certain perspectives and interests

In some cases, new movements or organisations emerge to properly represent the perspectives, experiences and interests of certain groups within them, for example, rural teachers or women activists.

"The teacher's union emerged out of the broader labour struggle in Zimbabwe. In the 90's we had quite a strong labour movement that was in a very antagonistic relationship with the state. The union essentially formed very recently in the last 10 years specifically to cater for the interests of rural teachers, because those teachers are often discriminated against even within the civil service."

-Interviewee, Zimbabwe

"From the student movement, in the South African imagination particularly on the left, particularly amongst black, queer and feminist activists, you saw a more radical politic being adopted. Also, by political parties more radical tactics are being adopted so it really changes the way South African politics is seen and done. Therefore, in the university space, which is a middle-class space and a very small community in the broader South African context, you are now seeing groups arise that are focused on Pan-Africanism, black consciousness and on gender politics."

-Interviewee, South Africa

Their purpose is to represent those specific groups or interests. This allows them to focus on what is important to those groups without having to convince a wider movement or bigger organisation of why those concerns matter.

Broad-based change or campaigning organisations

There are national and international NGOs with broad-based or specific policy agendas related to addressing inequalities. These organisations are often based in a capital city or a country's political centre, they have a stronger focus on influencing policy change through a mixture of advocacy and broader campaigning that targets decision-makers. They sometimes emerge in response to a negative event or crisis and then develop into large organisations with broad-based agendas. For example, Oxfam was formed in response to the blockade of Greece during World War II in the 1940s and then developed over decades into an international development and campaigning organisation.

Some organisations emerge in the context of analysing what is needed to drive greater equality and equity, and working to make those issues and solutions politically possible. For example, the tax justice movement and many of its members have spent years researching, exposing case studies, making the case and building the conversation on tax justice. They now have public and political salience in many countries and globally, spurred, in part by the failures revealed by the global financial crisis.

Coalition and civil society building organisations

As civil society in a country increases its work on a shared agenda, or works on specific issues together, organisations or coalitions emerge. They typically support joint action, collaboration and build leadership, research and strategic capacity. Formal or informal groups can make up coalitions and combine their power to influence a shared vision, fight common forces or work in solidarity.

“That has been constant - groups arise and they also build networks. NETRIGHT [the Network for Women’s Rights in Ghana] is an example - two or three groups of women began and took the network to the whole country. The Indigenous movements also built alliances. The Coalition of Mining also started as a small group of one community, then they reached out to different mining communities to broaden their work. So they are constantly arising as a response to the changing and worsening situations that they face in the country.”

-Interviewee, Ghana

“There are Indigenous groups that recognise that before the national borders were imposed, they were the same people. Now they face common problems which have renewed their relationships. They are twinned in the struggle against these problems. There is a desire to strengthen their traditional knowledge, the ways of sowing their relationship with nature, their languages and their culture. It is evident that here and throughout Latin America, we face a common enemy. There are national, cross-border and transnational oligarchies that impose their projects, and the forms of enforcement and mechanisms and strategies are very similar, especially in their relationship and collusion with governments in each country.”

-Interviewee, Mexico

In some cases, coalitions are formed to create a common positive vision. This stems from a recognition that the multiple fights around specific policy issues or practices to prevent negative change are not achieving the kinds of transformative and systemic change that groups are seeking. In Australia, A24 was formed as a coalition of groups to create a positive, progressive vision for the country and its role in the world. The coalition of groups felt that they needed to articulate a vision based on what people in communities wanted as a basis for deeper organising and greater collaboration. This recognises that community-level visions may be more holistic and intersectional than a policy agenda set at national or international level.

In other contexts, political opening, such as the end of a dictatorship, can drive civil society and activism to flourish. However, in many countries the trend is now growing in the other direction: to restrict rights to speak, organise and assemble or to target certain groups.

“The emergence of these organisations was mostly around ‘98, ‘99 when Indonesia experienced political reforms and then the step down of dictatorship. And these coalitions were seen as strategic move to strengthen the pressure on government. As part of the civil society, we needed to solidify our movements.”

–Interviewee, Indonesia

Structures and their implications

Movements that emerge from grassroots concerns and organising, or to connect activists working in a country or region often start with a loose and informal structure. Examples of these movements are Manish Msamah (I will not forgive) in Tunisia (fighting against an amnesty for corrupt persons without justice), the Afrika Youth Movement, the Asia Pacific artist collective AMP3 and the Bring Back Our Girls campaign in Nigeria.

The benefits of this loose structure are that these groups can remain relatively independent of the funding system and not become bureaucratic. Informal coalitions can allow a larger number of groups to coalesce around something they agree on without having to agree on everything.

“The coalition is more loose - there is no permanent membership. Even if you don’t agree with positions of the majority, you are free not to sign on or you are free not to be part of an activity even though you are still in the coalition. But on a certain issue or on a certain position, you have the freedom not to sign or to be part of it.”

–Interviewee, Indonesia

In the case of oppressive regimes, loose movements are able to operate more freely - they are harder to target and shut down. This can also be an advantage for movements with dispersed or decentralised leadership where leaders are harder to identify and target.

“The student movements were non-partisan and relied on a flat structure of organising, so it didn’t have real leadership which has its advantages in that it is not personalised and leaders can’t be targeted.”

–Interviewee, South Africa

Some groups choose, intentionally, to create a shared leadership structure to facilitate sharing of power and authority. Shared leadership in social movements or coalitions takes a lot of capacity and time to maintain as it relies on practices around representational leadership, consensus based decision-making or rotating roles in different working groups or assemblies. Shared leadership requires structures that support leadership development so that people can grow in their roles as movement representatives or prepare people to move into these roles. Shared leadership contrasts with a more informally dispersed leadership where a movement may contain different groups under leaders who are not necessarily strategically working together to lead collectively.

Shared and dispersed leadership models can encounter challenges around unclear accountability for decision-making. These models may have some difficulty where a shared leadership structure is formally in place, but there is a leader who is informally making the decisions without the clear accountability for being in that position.

“The leadership is officially led by a working group, but it’s kind of controlled. In reality, a guy controls. Which I would say is one of the biggest obstacles to being effective and growing into a mass movement. So officially it’s a flat structure, but in reality it’s not so much.”

–Interviewee (anonymous)

Looser and informal movements, collectives or coalitions rely on the time and resources of their members and communities to operate, which is both a strength and a limitation. These movements often prove hard to fund because they lack the formal structures—legal registration, bank accounts, dedicated staff, clear metrics—through which most traditional US and EU based donors are used to working. If donors do want to fund these movements they often cannot as the movements do not have the usual form that allows for this type of funding, namely legal registration and staff.⁷ Some respondents did report that donors were increasingly funding social movements, alongside formal NGOs. Movements are also exploring how to build more resilient funding models through contributions from members, the public and community philanthropy.

⁷ This aligns with findings from Rhize’s research *Understanding Activism* which highlighted the greater access to resources and connections for formalised organisations than social movements that remained unregistered and had more shared or diffuse models of leadership.

As social movements grow, there can be pressure to professionalise, particularly if they decide to seek funding from traditional donors to have access to sustainable resources. This leads some groups to register as an NGO/non-profit, to receive funding and build a staff team. Such an arrangement provides advantages, such as having dedicated staff capacity to support the movement and funding to enable certain activities. Legal form can also provide standing and rights to certain kinds of actions.

“Slowly, the movement had gone to most states having different meetings and campaigns to help street widows. So that we can get legal rights, we formed the association.”

–Interviewee, India

The potential downside of formalisation can be a feeling or reality of becoming more accountable to donors, and their back donors, than to the communities and members of the movement. It can mean that the priorities of the movement shift in order to sustain the organisation financially as well as sustain participation and activation of people and communities, being the critical element that enables movements to develop and grow over time. Taking traditional forms of funding can create pressure for social movements to fit into specific agendas and goals set by donors.

“The disadvantage of professionalised social movements is that sometimes you have to be apologetic in your politics. You have to answer to donors, mostly European liberal donors, donors who have to answer to businesses. There is also an obvious potential for professionalised movements to become bureaucratic and lose a grassroots, legitimate politics.”

–Interviewee, South Africa

One way to guard against the potential risks of professionalisation is to have accountability and democratic mechanisms so that the members govern the organisation. For example, Equal Education in South Africa has local branches based in schools that send representatives to a national Congress that elects the leadership of the organisation. More systemically, shifts are needed in organisations and donors that are in positions to support movements with resources – financial and other resourcing - so that movement building is recognised as a crucial part of building and shifting power. Movement building should not be seen merely as a means to an end (especially where those ends are influenced and/or determined by donors or powerful organisations). This means more flexible long-term funding, working with groups rather than privileged individuals, letting movements set their own agendas and metrics and supporting people to advocate for their own rights.



Questions for reflection:

How and why did your movement emerge or start?

How have the origins of your group influenced how it has developed over time?

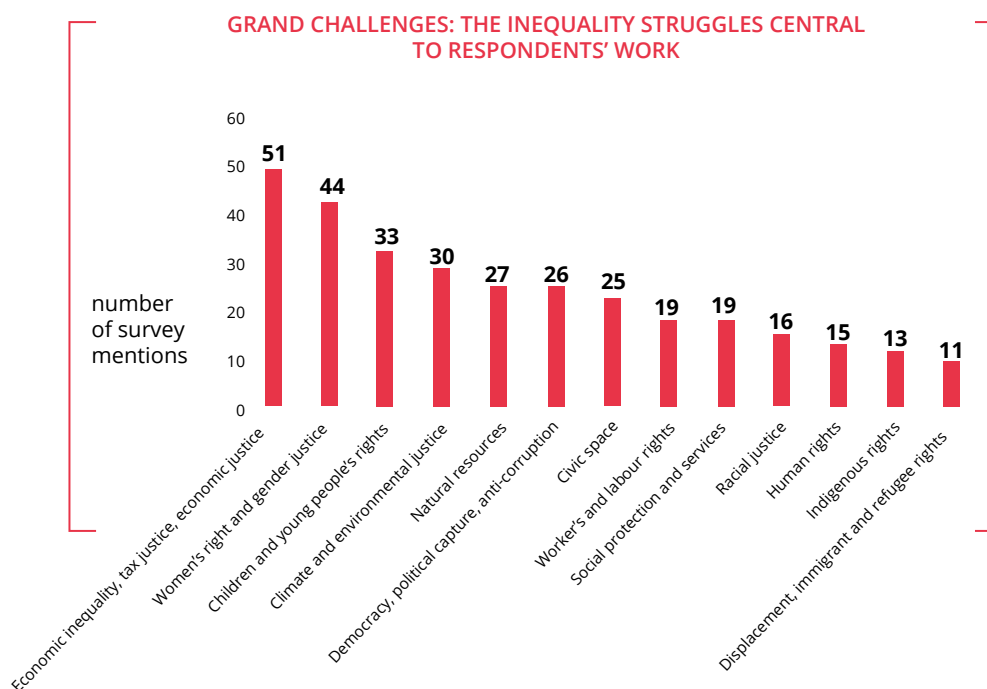
What structure has your movement chosen, and why? How has the structure changed over time? What are the implications of those choices?

If you are an organisation or donor that supports social movements or alliances, how can you better support them in and through the structures that they determine work best for them?



WHAT ARE PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR?

Inequality movements are addressing diverse forms and manifestations of inequality. The sections below detail three of the common issues to give a flavour of how movements are understanding and framing their struggles.



Natural resources

Communities, organisations and movements are working (both reactively in response to threats and proactively) to address serious inequalities around who decides if and how natural resources are extracted and used, and who benefits. Access to and control over natural resources, including land, reflects underlying dynamics of political and economic power—for example, reflecting the historical consequences of colonialism,

and patriarchal and racist systems. It also reflects concentrations of economic and political power, including significant corporate influence.

“Although each process and region has its own nuances, what is in common is the struggle for the land, which is an historical claim in Mexico and fairly shared at the national level, and now there’s the struggle for territory, which is a more complex issue.”

–Interviewee, Mexico

“We claim as a country that we have a lot of resources, but the people that enjoy the resources are very few. The people [geographically] near the natural resources are the poorest. We are aware of the fact that we will never achieve equality 100% but we want to reduce it. We want to see that people can enjoy even just the main basics. We should stop thinking that we are a rich country because of the natural resources, as they are already depleted. If we were rich then there would be not be as much suffering as there is now so we are not rich.”

–Interviewee, Indonesia

“There is a growing movement now around land. Historically black South Africans were dispossessed of land and land is still an incredibly contentious issue. It is still the core of the South African economy and the primary reason why people are not included in the economy. Recently the South African parliament called for the potential to change section 25 of the constitution which speaks to property rights and the expropriation of land without compensation. So because of that, land has become a more prominent issue in South Africa again: land and particularly spatial justice, correcting the wrongs of apartheid.”

–Interviewee, South Africa

“Now we are experiencing land grabbing in Indonesia, because of the [foreign] investment, and the laws and policies that really support the investments more than the people. We’re also working with farmers, for example, who lost their sovereignty today. Because before they had their own seeds, but now government policies force them to plant the companies’ seeds. And it’s creating dependency in the farmers’ community. And it’s not only influencing their economic situations, but it’s also eliminating their local wisdom, their knowledge, especially of women who usually had the role to manage the seeds.”

–Interviewee, Indonesia

Linked to concerns about use of natural resources are concerns about climate change and how to create an energy transition that doesn’t reinforce existing inequalities.

“For us it’s very important the connection between climate change and inequality. If you think about climate change, the people that are in the worst conditions are going to be the people most affected. It is very important to show [this] and to give power to people so they can do this fight against climate change, which is entirely connected to inequality, so we can have a better climate but also an equal society. Because there is no end to climate change without fighting inequality in the world.”

–Interviewee, Brazil

“We would like to push more on energy transition. The inequality here relates to the access of energy. There is quite a big gap between the electrification in the west part of Indonesia and east of Indonesia. While the east has an abundance of natural resources, unfortunately they do not have equal access to energy at the moment.”

–Interviewee, Indonesia

Elite capture of power, wealth and corruption

Many respondents spoke about the deep grievances of communities regarding injustices stemming from elite capture of power and wealth, often fueled by use of or control over natural resources. There are huge gaps of wealth and power in society between the richest elites and the rest, and real injustices in who has access to health, education and political influence.

“I think a huge grievance is around corruption in that poor people feel like the resources are not trickling down. We hear things about 15 billion worth of diamond revenue has been used and not been held accountable and people really struggle.”

–Interviewee, Zimbabwe

“Corruption is one of the things that is motivating people to work on inequality because corruption is high and people are beginning to feel that leaders are not empathising or feeling the situation that other people who earn less are going through. You can imagine someone who earns less than two dollars a day. How is that person supposed to find money to pay to access basic services? If you are going to hospitals, you have to pay even though there is supposed to be insurance coverage for basic health. You go to the hospitals and there are long queues, there are no beds, the medications are in short supply and you have to pay doctors sometimes.”

–Interviewee, Ghana

“After the revolution, the new government decided they will be using a decentralised system where the municipalities will be developing their own areas. One will vote for those people [at municipal level] and they will have more resources to build their regions. It will also create more participation of citizens when it comes to fighting inequality. That was good. However, with this kind of solution or reforms, other issues emerged. We didn’t have petrol and we are between two giants - Algeria and Libya. I wouldn’t understand how our small land did not have oil on it. So one of the main motivations for fighting inequality is the fact that people see the government and the

political class are actually corrupt. Government is not transparent at all and political parties are mafias. Before we had only one mafia, but now we have many. All these mafia just want more money."

-Interviewee, Tunisia

Women's rights and feminist agendas

Women's movements continue to fight for equality in many countries. There is also a strong push and need to bring feminist analysis, agendas and action into broader inequality movements to make them truly transformative. Additionally, the growth of the "me too" movement has seen renewed attention on women's rights and power dynamics within organisations and movements. It has proven to be the beginning of a necessary wakeup call within civil society for many movements when abuses of power and harassment have surfaced. Many of our respondents grappled with patriarchy and advancing feminist agendas in their own movements (discussed further in the later parts of this report).

"Feminism plays a big role in the fight against inequality. The fact that gender inequality is widening in Ghana is an area that the fight inequality coalition needs to look at. That's one of the areas I'm trying to get other women groups involved in since they will be able to articulate some of the issues affecting women here in Ghana instead of having others speak for them."

-Interviewee, Ghana

"A number of black feminist groups formed particularly in the NGO sector. These groups are still meeting asking the question of how do we build inclusive movements? How do we build intersectional movements? And these are questions that still don't have answers. These are questions that social movements, political parties and the labour movement need to grapple with. It's a deeply systemic and structural problem with movements in this country and I think more globally."

-Interview, South Africa

"Women's rights and women's issues have been the third grievance that you might read about being in a different part of the globe. When my friends call me up and say 'we read those rape stories and rape crimes all across the newspapers. What's happening in India? Because that's a really unsafe place'."

-Interviewee, India

The main factors that affect how groups frame and approach their inequality struggles are proximity to community grievances and levels of privilege (political access).

Community or grassroots groups often fight concretely for access to water, land, healthcare, respect for their rights as workers, or recognition of their rights and freedom from violence as women, Indigenous peoples, people of colour and members of the LGBTQI community. They may or may not identify explicitly as "inequality" movements but are aimed at the manifestations of inequalities in struggles for rights, basic services,

recognition, political space and focus on organising and mobilising people. These struggles are frequently informed by a deep understanding and analysis of the systemic (and intersectional) nature of the problem.

“Sometimes the actors are not using the word ‘inequality’, but it is a fight against inequality because they’re giving the power to people to make change.”

–Interviewee, Mexico

“It was not necessary to convince people that we have to fight inequality. They never only used this word; they used other words like oppression, exploitation, plunder, excavation, corporate looting. So this was basically a generic word that cuts across all these struggles. They’ve been beaten up, they’ve been murdered, they’ve been shot dead. There is not a single inch of land in the forest areas which has been taken away peacefully so there are struggles everywhere, every forest.”

–Interviewee, India

Groups with more political access and traditional power (including many international NGOs) can frame their aims more broadly (e.g. using terms like ‘economic justice’). They often focus more on elite advocacy to influence policy and practice by targeting decision-makers or power holders. In this sense, these groups are often closer to the ‘reform’ end of a spectrum of approaches between ‘reformers’ and ‘revolutionaries’. They often explicitly reference inequality, democracy and constitutional rights as their direct concerns.



Questions for reflection:

What are the main grievances or demands of your movement or group?

How do they relate to the structural causes of inequalities?

How is the language of inequality useful or powerful in your context? Which two slogans or demands capture this best?



SECTION THREE:

WHO IS LEADING AND PARTICIPATING

IN MOVEMENTS AGAINST INEQUALITIES?

Many inequalities result from, or are held in place by, inequities in social, political, cultural and economic power. As such, attention to who participates and who leads in movements against inequality is critical if movements are to reshape who has power rather than inadvertently reinforcing existing inequities.

In particular, movements can make a significant contribution to redressing power imbalances if they consciously work to prioritise and support leadership and participation by those who do not have inherited or traditional power. For many movements, this means being attentive to grassroots concerns and ensuring access to power and leadership by people of colour, women and young people.

Fight Inequality Alliance has an explicit commitment to prioritising the concerns of people on the frontlines of inequality – particularly grassroots groups and movements, women and youth within the Alliance. This research has found that this work — to support grassroots leadership and to dismantle inequalities within movements — is ongoing. This work within movements is likely to be long and slow. It involves bringing together people and groups who might not otherwise come together, and addressing long-entrenched issues of sexism, classism, racism and other forms of oppression that require healing and highly localised and interpersonal solutions. Movements are therefore not only taking on their common issues (often against significant concentrations of power and wealth) but also trying to address the implicit power structures that have enabled the situation in the first place where the “enemy” or “target” is not always obvious.

Explicit commitment backed up by specific strategies

The groups with the strongest grassroots participation and leadership largely started that way — with control and leadership by those affected in that context.

“The largest mass movements in India have been movements by the working class, led by the trade unions or organisations of the toiling people. These have been the huge movements getting millions of people out on the streets. And then there are other movements of Dalits, women, Adivasis, sexual rights movements. There are all sorts of struggles going on all trying to create an equal society.”

-Interviewee, India

Groups that did not emerge from the grassroots directly but are working effectively with communities, frequently have an **explicit commitment** to support grassroots leadership or to be in solidarity with grassroots communities. This can be both an ethical or normative commitment (that grassroots communities should have more power, including in social movements) or a strategic commitment (that the way to achieve this particular change is through grassroots action). For example, those committed to community mobilisation guided by the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, who have defined their role as working with marginalised communities to develop their collective agency with the aim to resist and transform unequal social relations.⁸

Explicit commitment needs to be backed up with **specific strategies** that include ceding power and control locally and making sure that the movement's staff know and are trusted by the community.

“They decide at the local level what kind of tactics they want to use. And then they can also get the solidarity and buy in from other chapters. Because land issues have been slow and sometimes there is violence on the ground. Other chapters will want to respond in solidarity to people who have been killed. So it's a national structure with local chapters and the decision making lies with the local chapters.”

-Interviewee, Uganda

“I think it's all about getting dedicated activists. When we hire as an NGO, we get people that know the community and can talk their language. We need people that can relate to the people on the ground level. When the big guys come, you need to ensure that you stand in solidarity with them.”

-Interviewee, South Africa

Practices that undermine grassroots leadership can lead to questions about legitimacy

Many civil society organisations or coalitions aim to support grassroots community efforts. But in practice, their approach may work against this, underpinned by implicit ideas about who has expertise and can influence. For example, a national group may want to support communities who are involved in a common struggle. They may do this by trying to “micromanage” how local groups campaign or organise, rather than follow and support local leadership. This may particularly happen when groups feel the

⁸ See: Catherine Campbell (2014), ‘Community mobilisation in the 21st century: updating our theory of social change?’ *Journal of Health Psychology*, 19 (1), pp. 46-59.

urgency of the campaign and feel they don't have time to work at the slower pace of community organising. However, this can again reinforce existing dynamics of who has power and control, and who can be part of determining the way forward.

"I think what is missing is the involvement of the people at the core of fighting this inequality. The people that suffer are sidelined and are not in the discussions. So it's more of an academic discussion and imposing of solutions."

-Interviewee, Zambia

Practicalities that reflect underlying power dynamics – who has access to technology, proximity to powerful institutions, speaks dominant languages – can entrench leadership and power for individuals who are in urban, capital centers and have more education, wealth and privilege. These can be further reinforced as movements engage internationally, through dominant international languages, using technology.

"In India we are the dominating group because we are based in New Delhi. We are English speaking, we are good on the internet, chatting on Skype calls and we use Zoom, Facebook and twitter. So obviously you don't expect all that from small groups that are mass based in small cities where internet and phone connection is very bad. It's not easy for them to travel or to get visas. So obviously it is skewed not because of design but because some of us who are privileged with all these facilities have an upper hand. And even though we don't dominate naturally, we will be the choice as someone in London will prefer to talk to me rather than a farmer from an Adivasi in Garkan whom even I can't reach on the phone, forget about Skype."

-Interviewee, India

The interviews reflect that some movements and groups that are struggling to build and maintain grassroots participation and leadership are having their legitimacy actively questioned when they do not allow those they claim to represent to speak directly.

"What I tell people is we need more activists on the ground. The feminism I want is the one that includes everyone. Right now it's the one of the elites and speaking English. We need the one that recognises women across [demographics], even women selling vegetables. The Sunday services that women gather at could be turned into feminism groups where people talk about things facing them. So there is no separation when it comes to feminism."

-Interviewee, South Africa

"Political parties have been formed around caste identity. Movements are challenging the big progressive left liberal movements now. But your leaders are still upper caste. Yes, you still feel like you need to present her issues. You need to take the mic to talk about us and we can't talk."

-Interviewee, India

The importance of connections between grassroots and national groups

The role of national or regional groups can be crucial as otherwise local groups can also be fragmented. Additionally, they may not have access to the bigger picture of how other communities are addressing similar challenges or threats, such as land grabs and other structural causes of inequality. Many of the movements that have had great success in gaining greater rights or stopping harmful practices have come from many disparate groups joining together in common cause. However, at that point, it is also important to see how grassroots leadership is translating into national leadership.

“Initially, our focus was to have all the street widows trade unions come together under the National Hawker’s Federation and fight for our rights. There was no idea or discussion of leadership or this kind of system. But after the 2014 Act, you realised that within the group there was a need for representation. We needed to implement this Act. With time we realised that women fought for our rights, but there were no women in leadership.”

–Interviewee, India

In different societies and political systems, grassroots or community action can either have great legitimacy and power or can be disregarded or marginalised due to the underlying lack of political power. In the latter case, the support and solidarity of groups with more political power can be important, so long as they don’t also undermine the autonomy and power of grassroots groups by starting to take control of the direction of the work or speak for them.

“Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people went through a really detailed process to come up with a proposal for how to get government to better engage with Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people. The process had two elements: one being a treaty and the other being a structure for a voice to parliament. It was dismissed without consideration by the current government. And that was a really big loss. It’s one that we’re still fighting, we haven’t given up on and we’re still trying to garner support for that.”

–Interviewee, Australia



Questions for reflection:

How grassroots is the leadership of your organisation?

How diverse is the membership of or participation in your organisation?

How accountable is your organisation or movement to those it represents?

How broad is the engagement of people with your organisation or movement?

How open is your organisation or movement to working with others and particularly those directly affected by the inequality the organisation is fighting?

How feminist are movements against inequality?

There is a critical challenge for all levels of inequality movements: to not reinforce inequities in their organising and operations, and to actively work to dismantle them – especially when the inequities are potent in their societies and contexts. In particular, the research highlights that movements need to continue to address inequities and oppressive structures around race, gender and age, amongst others.

A recent analysis of progressive movements has highlighted that putting traditional leaders in leadership positions unintentionally replicates the systems of oppression they are intending to fight, deepening racial and gender divides.⁹ Some respondents confirm

⁹ Sara El-Amine (2018), 'Today's Challenges: Training and Capacity Building', Mobilisation Lab and Rockefeller Brother's Fund, accessed at <https://mobilisationlab.org/todays-challenges-training-capacity-building/>

this by pointing to issues of gender inequality, harassment and racism within their own movements. Several of these issues are creating a necessary reckoning about patriarchy and sexual harassment within movements.

We deliberately chose in this research to examine how inequality movements engage with feminist ideals and practice, as it is central to our collective struggle. Inequality has deep roots. Gender inequality persists universally and is further entrenched by the increasing concentration of power and wealth. Women experience inequality in every aspect of their lives. Women experience inequality in urban areas, rural areas, in schooling, in high-level and low-level jobs, in unpaid care work, in marriage & family, in exposure to unconstrained violence, with the resulting fear and psychological impacts not only being deep and broadly-felt, but also widely accepted as normal.

A gender-just social movement:

- Affirms the importance of tackling gender inequality and patriarchal power as an integral component of justice and names this as an explicit priority.
- Creates a positive environment for internal reflection and action on women's rights and gender justice.
- Provides active and formalised support for women's participation and leadership in all areas of movement practice.
- Consistently tackles gender-based violence and establishes zero tolerance for sexual harassment in movement spaces.
- Assesses gender bias in movement roles and redistributes labour along gender-just lines.
- Enables full participation of both women and men, taking into account care work and reproductive roles.
- Appreciates the gender dimensions of backlash and external opposition faced by activists.
- Engages with norms and notions around gender, taking into account context-specific gender identities, trans and intersex identities and shifting understandings of gender in social life and activism.

Taken from BRIDGE on 'Why gender and social movements?':

<https://socialmovements.bridge.ids.ac.uk/socialmovements.bridge.ids.ac.uk/why-gender-and-social-movements.html>

Whereas the Fight Inequality Alliance has an explicit feminist commitment, there is a wider range of positions across groups both in the Alliance and beyond it. This is also reflected in interviews, where a spectrum of positions in relation to feminism were explored.

In the survey, we asked respondents to rate on a scale whether or not their movements or groups were not at all feminist, through to being explicitly feminist with a feminist agenda. Of the respondents, 21% said their group had no feminist commitment, and 42% said they had an explicit feminist commitment, with the rest in between.

In interviews, we found a set of positions:

“Not important” or “all at the table”: groups that do not see women’s rights as requiring any specific focus or think that the more important focus is economic inequality for everyone. These groups say they focus on participation by all without specific prioritisation of women’s rights and feminist agendas. In some cases, interviewees in this category also shared that they felt like this was an impossible issue in their patriarchal contexts.

“All I know is that every voice is necessary. Because everybody is seeing it from their angle. As long as one is at the table, we can decide what’s the priority and what we can focus on.”

-Interviewee, Kenya

“Zambia is a patriarchal set up, where women are still regarded as less intelligent compared to men. The system is built around that. So feminism is not something that can be pushed in the mainstream media.”

-Interviewee, Zambia

“Participation is all”: groups that recognise that there are important inequities but think that their main or only role is to ensure that women participated in their movements. These groups do not consider that they might work to address systemic issues around women’s rights or work to dismantle patriarchy. They do not pay attention to issues of power within their groups beyond numbers of participants or, at times, whether or not women are in leadership positions. This approach can lead to tokenisation of participants rather than creating open, welcoming space in which those participants can lead.

“You know many movements within the Alliance would have good things to say about the women’s agenda but in practice, most movements are not feminist.”

-Interviewee, UK

“With time, we realised that women fought for our rights, but there were no women in leadership.”

-Interviewee, India

In broader, mainstream or non-feminist organisations, feminist agendas can be misunderstood or marginalised. Feminist advocates may spend much of their time convincing their colleagues within their organisation that their issues matter. This is a major reason why feminist gains are often made when there are autonomous women’s

organisations and movements pushing for change.¹⁰ In those cases, men and mainstream organisations can act as allies in solidarity, using their power to support feminist-led agendas and movements. A major question for all mainstream organisations is about how they are listening to feminist leaders, supporting their agendas, and analysing their issues from a feminist perspective.

“Internally, gender equality is an issue. For example, [attention on] the numbers of unarmed black men killed by police, versus equal attention on the number of black women killed or harassed is imbalanced.”

-Survey respondent, USA

“Real feminist commitment”: Then there are groups that have a strong feminist commitment both in how they try to operate and in that they are committed to work to dismantle the patriarchy and create feminist futures. These are most often women’s groups and that also see major inroads being made with a feminist agenda or women’s leadership.

“We have seen that over time leaving the destiny of women in the hands of men who are patriarchal in thinking and nature would not lead us anywhere. So if women take the lead then maybe we would begin to see more traction and more changes.”

-Interviewee, Nigeria

“In terms of getting bills and acts passed, I think the women’s rights movements has achieved more than any other movement. But when it comes to the right to information, all these movements are working together because it cuts across not just women’s rights or inequality movements or the anti-corruption movement. It’s all of us.”

-Interviewee, Ghana

Groups with an explicit feminist commitment are also grappling with their own questions around power and participation: how are younger women, women of colour, rural women and others taking the lead in their movements?

Feminism, as with so many inequities, is about relationships and power. It has deeply personal implications for how we relate to parents, children, partners and colleagues. As with racism, it often entails long-term, deep and sustained work within organisations and movements, and by individuals, to learn about the system we are all in and unlearn attitudes and behaviours that reinforce it, even unknowingly.

¹⁰ See: Mala Htun and S. Laurel Weldon (2012) ‘The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence Against Women in Global Perspective: 1975-2005’. *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 548.

“Sometimes it means challenging your own power. I think feminism and patriarchy is very personal and it actually starts at the home and the family set up. It’s not something you come to work and do and go home. It’s in every stage of your life. It’s deeply personal whether you acknowledge that or you don’t.”

-Interviewee, UK

“Especially as men we have to learn. We have to learn how to be feminists or how to be in solidarity with feminism and with women more because we are probably not born misogynists. We are certainly raised to be that way so we have a lot of learning and unlearning to do and we will make mistakes. I make mistakes daily.”

-Interviewee, The Philippines

While women’s movements may provide leadership, a feminist approach is not exclusively for women or women’s movements, but is an important approach that helps address intersectional injustice and systems of oppression. Placing feminist questions at the center of our conversations about systemic change and prioritising it will go a long way.

There are lessons in the stories shared about how to strengthen the feminist commitment and practice of organisations and movements:

- That all organisations and movements can acknowledge and consciously work for members and leaders to understand and acknowledge the patriarchal system that we all operate in. To work through practices such as gender action learning or feminist reflection to consider how to change our behavior and our organisations.
- That all organisations and movements can use a feminist lens and analysis as part of an intersectional approach to inequality in all of our work, and for feminist groups to consciously work on the intersectionality of their own analysis, leadership and work.
- That supporting and encouraging women’s leadership and feminist organising and movement building is everyone’s work within the inequality movement. It can be done within any organisation or movement and also through the relationships that organisations and movements have with feminist organisations.



Questions for reflection:

How do you experience or benefit from patriarchal structures in your work and life?

How strong is your feminist commitment?

How feminist is your organisation or movement? Is it committed to feminist ways of working? Is it committed to a feminist agenda? How does it work to support feminist organisations and movements?

How well does your organisation or movement consider and seek to address intersecting inequalities such as race, gender, sexual identity, age, geography?

What are the steps that you can take to increase the level of feminist commitment, in policy and practice, within your organisation or movement?

Suggestions for further reading:

- Hope Chigudu and Rudo Chigudu (2015), [*Strategies for Building an Organisation with a Soul*](#), AIR
- Srilatha Batliwala (2010) [*Achieving Transformative Feminist Leadership: A Toolkit for Organisations and Movements*](#), CREA
- [*Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists*](#) (2007) African Feminist Forum



SECTION FOUR

WHERE ARE THE MOVEMENTS

HOLDING AND GAINING GROUND?

Movements are gaining—or holding—ground on issues that matter to communities. Strikingly, in the face of rising authoritarianism, neoliberal economic systems and austerity, movements are on the defensive in many contexts, needing to defend land, public services or civic rights that are under attack. This can make it more difficult to organise proactively on positive agendas. However, there are groups that are gaining ground on those agendas in many places—building movements and coalitions, reshaping the narrative, and influencing legislative and policy change and implementation.

BIG WINS: MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS BY RESPONDENTS' ORGANISATIONS



Achieving changes in policy, practice and regime

The most common positive and proactive successes noted by survey respondents were influencing changes in governmental or inter-governmental policy or practice. These include changes in national budgets, new laws on tax transparency, national peace policies, enforcement of laws on Dalit rights and minimum wages, recognition of LGBTQI rights, increasing the age at which marriage is legal, and new governance institutions. Interviewees also highlighted many changes of this nature—in achieving right to information laws, domestic violence laws and marriage equality or LGBTQI rights. The movement is clearly making inroads across a range of areas.

These can be major victories for movements, especially when they represent pro-active work to ensure that certain groups' rights are respected or there are fundamental shifts in who has access to resources, information or access.

At the same time, it is important to recognise that changes in law or policy are often the most visible, understandable signs of progress; they are often the kinds of markers that funders want to see to know that progress is being made. Of course, the story is much more complicated than that – as it often includes building movements, shifting the narrative, changing political incentives, developing and demonstrating alternatives – both in terms of the kinds of work that may be required to lead to a change in policy and also due to the frequent gap between policy and practice and the fact that policy gains are easily undermined by the wider societal and political context.

In a range of countries, groups and movements that achieve these kinds of policy and legislative changes may do so by working closely with or being directly associated with political parties. While the relationship between political parties and movements can be symbiotic in some contexts, political party affiliation can compromise movement leaders and their ability to lead with moral authority.

“Civil societies organisations are there but they are inclined to some political parties. So they don't want to speak out against the government and they don't want to go in the street, so they do nothing.”

-Interviewee, Nepal

Advances in policy or legislation often face real problems being realised in practice. In some instances, there is an intent to disregard protections to specific groups or the environment due to an ideology or vested interests in favor of a certain form of development. In other cases, there are significant gaps in implementation that may relate more to the ability to change the system in the way intended – that the underlying power dynamics have not been shifted enough. For example, in Uganda, successive promises from government have not been fulfilled; such as to return confiscated cows, or invest in a region that generates income from tourism but whose results aren't seen locally.

In some cases, movements have pushed for implementation by using strategic litigation to compel governments to deliver on their obligations. An example of this is education in South Africa. Although, as mentioned, the movement will need to monitor implementation practices to see how well these commitments are enacted and reassess strategy if tangible gains are not made.

“Equal Education won a case that compels the government to commit to basic norms and standards in schools; which means now there is a legal document that says that every school in the country has to have a lab, a certain number of toilets per number of students, a certain number of teachers per students, etc. But beyond the reformist campaigns, I see Equal Education fundamentally as a movement that organises working class young people in townships and rural areas and organises them primarily around education campaigns but with a broader outlook.”

-Interviewee, South Africa

Building coalitions and movements

A common feature of major legislative or policy change examples (as well as the negative change examples) are broad or deep coalitions where multiple groups have come together to work collectively for change. Coalitions may represent more a collective of organisations, whereas other wins have relied on public mobilisation demonstrating a level of public support.

“Last time when we tried to push the forest moratorium, we also were asking the Indigenous people’s groups, women’s groups and children’s groups to join and push this forest moratorium to the government and it worked. We got a positive response. The forest moratorium was implemented, and the regulations are in place up to now since 2011.”

-Interviewee, Indonesia

“Network for Women’s Rights in Ghana is a coalition that works on gender based violence issues. One of the successes was the passing of the Domestic Violence Bill and also the Act. The women’s rights movement in Ghana was able to push. So right now what we are doing is to ensure that that is being implemented.”

-Interviewee, Ghana

“I think it was already like the pressure was immense [to decriminalise homosexuality]. There was a huge public pressure from the ground. A lot of people in the government, who were coming in the government and democratic institutions, in the position of power, were coming out as LGBTQ people. So I would say that they were influences within the system as well.”

-Interviewee, India

A major grassroots campaign [for marriage equality], many, many people came out. GetUp ran a huge volunteer phone bank to call up people and talk to them about it. I mean I think mostly the majority of the people were already there, it was getting the politicians over the line that’s why we had to go through this torturous process.”

-Interviewee, Australia

These connections can also be regionally based, providing critical examples and support. For example, one win in Tunisia bolstered by regional connections between movements was overturning the law that made it possible for rapists to marry their victims so as to escape punishment in the form of jail time. The fight against this law and the subsequent win was inspired by similar wins in countries, such as Morocco and Jordan, that had the same law. Additionally, support came from some voices in parliament as well as young feminist groups stepping up.

Many groups see their work to build movements and coalitions as their greatest success to date. For example, building racial justice movements such as Black Lives Matter, creating a new union of care workers in South Africa, expanding the climate justice movement in the Asia Pacific, creating pan-African collaboration across movements. Linked to the discussion above of grassroots leadership and participation, creating new relationships, participation and leadership of those most affected can grow the strength and focus of a movement immeasurably.

When coalitions win, they often need to consider how to work towards implementation or evolve to fit the new conditions.

“A perfect example is the ‘Not too young to run’ campaign in Nigeria. The main thrust of their message is that they wanted the Nigerian government to amend the constitution so that the younger people under 35 years can run for certain [political] offices that they could not previously run for because of their age. And guess what? They were successful. In two years a constitutional amendment and a Bill was passed. So one can say that their purpose has been achieved and they could have gone into extinction, but those people evolved. At that point you begin to see either a going up or a going down. So after passing of the constitution, they are now training young people who are going into office. The Bill has been passed and you can now run but there is so much more to do, build your capacity, etc. So that is evolution.”

–Interviewee, Nigeria

Stopping negative change

Many survey respondents and interviewees highlighted wins that had prevented negative change— stopping major projects that would displace people from ancestral lands, undermining attempts to pass laws that would have the effect of entrenching inequality further or defending citizens and movements against attempts to limit their ability to speak out and organise. These wins have a real impact on peoples’ lives but they also highlight the level of energy and resources needed to stop things getting worse, rather than to make conditions better for people. They point to the current combination of rising authoritarianism and corporate and elite political capture in many countries that is fueling, rather than reducing, inequalities.

At the same time, at times of threat, communities and organisations demonstrate resilience and creativity in their responses. There is new power and confidence that is built through these wins, and new or renewed relationships that can help groups work better together in the future, including around their positive visions for change.

There are many examples of communities defending their land and natural resources through sustained action and mobilisation at a local level, sometimes supported by other national and international groups. Here, sustained resistance in which movements continue to bring in new members and continuously activate those already engaged has proven to be a common factor of success among nonviolent movements. However, it is important to note that movements' development is nonlinear. Oftentimes they gain ground only to face increased repression that then requires organisers to regroup and reassess their strategy.

“For example, we had a hydroelectric dam that was going to be built in the Tapajós River and it’s not going to be built there anymore. This is a very concrete win as an example. It was going to be built in an indigenous area of the Munduruku, and it was the fight of the Munduruku. We were supporting their fight and [working] together with them. [That was] what made this dam not [be] constructed: people being by their side on that.”

–Interviewee, Brazil

“The recognition of ancestral authorities who have stopped megaprojects, for which they have even received the Frontline Defenders recognition.”

–Interviewee, Mexico

“[The National Land Defense League] symbol is a millet flour. So that’s how they get organisers at local level to ask neighbours to come together around a meal of millet and then from there they just discuss what is their next course of action for resisting the land grab. There was a 33 day occupation of the UNHCR office in Gulu in Northern Uganda. It was one of the chapters that had 234 residents that went and did the occupation. But then the other chapters showed solidarity. They would do actions locally and would bring food to the people that had done the occupation. So we have had some success in chasing away the land grabbers and so-called investors or politicians trying to grab land.”

–Interviewee, Uganda

“We had some really big wins on fracking and that’s when local communities have come together and run. Where they have won those campaigns they have won them because the farmers are working with the greenies and local community, parents’ groups. That’s when they’ve won those campaigns. Regardless of the political bias of the groups, they have come together around a campaign. And of course every time they win those campaigns the companies fight back, they have to redo it and go through this again but we have made substantial gains.”

–Interviewee, Australia

In many countries, in the wake of the financial crisis, austerity or rising authoritarianism, movements are also having to fight to retain rights or more equitable policies, especially around social services. This can mean that a lot of energy goes into securing what exists

or reclaiming what was lost, and may not leave a lot of energy or focus for a vision of what could be different in the future.

“In terms of real changes, in my opinion there haven’t been any. But one of the things that the financial crisis created was backlashes. One of those backlashes has been regained. Only one. Usually in Spain we have a universal healthcare system and with the crisis, it stopped being universal. So migrants were exposed. Irregular migrants were out of the system and also very poor people. This was reversed this year so now we have a universal health care system. So this is the only thing I could say has been an achievement, a recuperation of something that was lost. Other things were lost and were not recuperated. Social pressure has succeeded in getting this.”

–Interviewee, Spain

“They came up with a new law which was extremely horrible to plunder [the] land. So the farmers came under an umbrella organisation—this is mainly the farmer organisations connected with the left parties who are quite strong in many parts of India. The umbrella is called the Land Rights Movement and they started mobilisations and protests and there were debates in parliament. And finally the government could not bring the law. They even tried to bring it through the back door through an ordinance but even then that also failed because it was difficult for the government to pass the law in the parliament because there are also people in the ruling party who had to appease the farmers because they will be going very soon to the farmers for votes. So that’s how the law was sent to the dustbin. So this was a major victory although it does not look like a major victory because the plunder is going on. Those who plunder hardly care about law and sadly the government [and] the police turn a blind eye. And it is not always that the courts are going to be responsive to you; they also have bias. So that’s why the movement and the struggle goes on.”

–Interviewee, India

Civil society and social movements are also facing security and even existential threats. That means they are also working proactively and defensively in many countries to secure basic rights to engage politically and publicly—to speak, meet, organise and act. Groups have secured new access to information and in other cases, have fought just to have the right to protest.

“In 2015, there was a movement about the freedom of access to information. The parliament was passing a law for the freedom of access to information and they wanted to limit information for civil society. Civil society was pretty quick to move to stop this. The journalist union, civil society and the mobilisation helped in changing the terms of the law. For me it was a big thing because now it is impacting the work of the civil society and many of them are now using this to reveal a lot of information that would otherwise not been possible had this law been passed.”

–Interviewee, Tunisia

“We noticed that the government had borrowed a lot of money and they had introduced a lot of taxes. We decide to protest at parliament on the day of the budget reading. We approached the police, notified them of that. The police, of course, denied us. We then appealed to the minister who gave us permission. So that’s a huge win for us. It rarely happens. Even just walking with a placard, you can be arrested.”

–Interviewee, Zambia

Again, this reflects a system of increasing authoritarianism that limits the rights of citizens and also has the effect of putting movements and groups on the defensive. They become concerned with their own survival and ability to operate, as well as with upholding fundamental civic rights, rather than being able to focus on building towards a positive vision of the future citizens want.

Shifting perceptions, narratives, attitudes

Sometimes a specific campaign, largely won, creates the attention that is needed to focus on the underlying issues that caused the situation in the first place. This is the view of the Bring Back Our Girls campaign in Nigeria. The movement tried to draw attention not only to the effort to return the Chibok girls back home, but also to insecurity and education in the North East region.

“Of all the girls, 107 have been brought back. We are still waiting for the 112, but the fact is that that 107 number is better than having nothing at all. So that’s a huge win for us. And still on Bring Back Our Girls, the win is not just that the girls have been brought back. The win is also now the attention that is now being paid to the issue of insecurity, underdevelopment in the North East region of Nigeria and even the broader landscape of insecurity in Nigeria. Prior to that, even a lot of people in Nigeria didn’t know about Boko Haram, a lot of people did not even know we were dealing with that problem, a lot of people did not know that we have a group of miscalcs that had the capacity to actually abduct girls in that number. And even when the Chibok girls issue just happened, it further opened people’s eyes that we are actually sitting on a time bomb. The wins are not just direct wins but also indirect wins.”

–Interviewee, Nigeria

Many groups have also highlighted their success in setting agendas, raising issues and changing discourse as a precondition for broader change. For example, respondents pointed to the increasing debate on taxation and tax havens in the UK and Australia and globally, and the rising attention on extra judicial killings in Kenya. Groups have also influenced attitudes and beliefs of individuals and institutions; for example, citizens’ perceptions of their rights and civil servants’ valuing of integrity. These were seen by respondents as enablers of activating citizens and working with the government to increase integrity.

“Taxation went from something that people weren’t talking about to an issue that was regularly talked about, and where the inequities in the tax system was on the front page. That only happened because people came together and went after that issue. Collectively, they rebranded it.”

–Interviewee, Australia

Even where those agendas are gaining ground, activists are very aware of the asymmetries of power and resources between their movements and those who have an interest in maintaining the status quo.

“Tax justice is always and everywhere a challenge to undertaxed elites and the opacity they enjoy. The movement will never have the resources or political access of those elites.”

– Survey respondent, Global organisation

Positive community impacts

Many in inequality movements are also engaged in the work of making their communities better without necessarily focusing on policy change. Survey respondents gave examples of providing support for refugees, education for girls, supporting access to justice and increasing women’s and young people’s political participation and representation.

Learning and adaptation

Groups and movements are faced with significant, changing circumstances including major threats to their existence and ability to operate. While many groups are, of course, aiming at immediate wins—to avoid harmful change or influence access to rights and resources—as a broader set of movements, most are aiming to influence not just specific instances but broader systems of inequality. As such, they are engaged in long-term work that is unlikely to be straightforward.

Frameworks such as Moyer’s Movement Stages are useful to remind us all that change is not predictable or linear. There are dips and moments when all seems lost. It is worthwhile that inequality movements, and Fight Inequality Alliance, also look more closely at the reflective practices that can support groups to understand their changing environments and adapt their strategies as they go.



Questions for reflection:

Where has your organisation or movement enjoyed the most significant success or contribution?

What has enabled your success?

To what extent is your work reactive or proactive? Why?

How does your movement or group reflect on progress and adapt?



SECTION FIVE

BUILDING COLLECTIVE STRENGTH,

NAVIGATING POWER DYNAMICS

Collaborating across diverse strategies

Movements against inequality include both groups who focus on influencing those who hold power through research, advocacy and engagement, and those who want to build and use collective people power to demand and enact change. One example would be through sustained mobilisation. These different strategies can be a source of division. Those who believe in one way of making change may believe that the other strategy is ineffective. However, there is great potential strength when these different forms of power can be brought together in support of common goals.

“There are different levels of the fight on inequality in my country. Some of us prefer to do the critical engagement with the governments. For example, to encourage the National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights, where we know that it’s actually not legally binding, but it’s [something]. On the other hand, some of the movement is really focused on organising communities, to present or to build our own system. What we are thinking about [is] an equal and fair and just system that’s run by the communities. So it is something that we are hoping to be an alternative, but it has to be started by the community. That’s why we are fairly focused on the grassroots movement to build that.”

-Interviewee, Indonesia

A critical driver of collaboration is when groups realise that they cannot influence systemic change on their own. They may keep being able to hold back some negative changes, but to really aim at transforming power relations, they need to work with others who can bring different kinds of power together.

"I have got more and more reenergised in this space over the last decade. I realised the work that I was doing previously with lots of organisations whose work was really important for me, but I was not doing the work of transformation. You go in and do your job and try to get people to think about how they could hold back the worst excesses in what's going on. But it was a very big shift for me to say there will be an endless stream of need if we don't start to tackle some of the underlying and systemic issues and if we don't work together."

-Interviewee, Australia

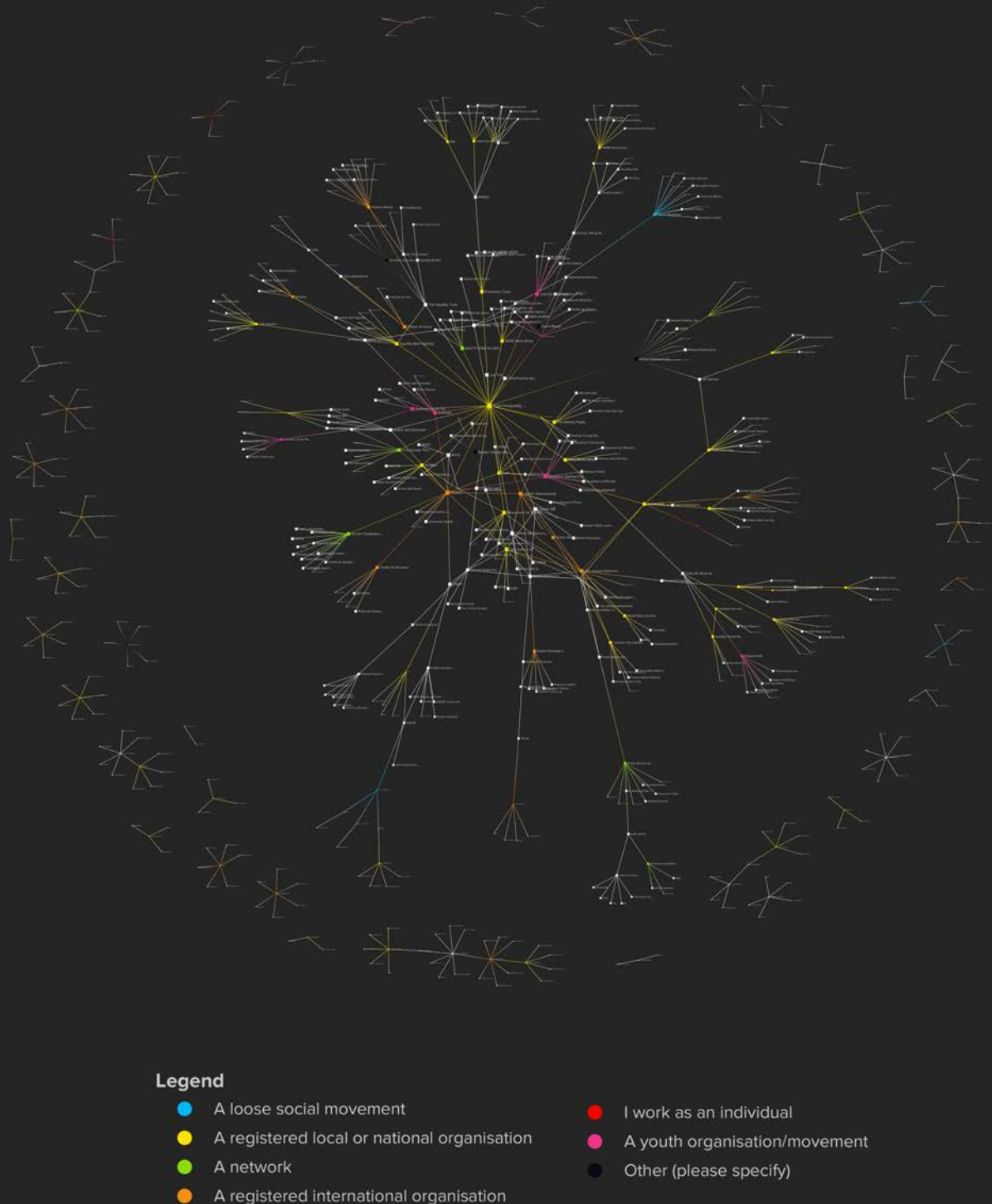
The Fight Inequality Alliance bring groups together that organise around daily impacts of inequality with those who also work at 'elitist' advocacy levels around their common causes with an explicit commitment to supporting and enabling the leadership of the grassroots groups, women and young people. One of the strategic challenges in doing so is to find complementary roles and a power dynamic that can prioritise grassroots leadership, organising and concerns that connects with the systemic causes and solutions effectively. This can lead to transformation rather than making only small, incremental changes.

International connections and the questions they raise

Many groups are finding ways to collaborate across movements and our survey showed connections between those working locally, and those at national, regional and international levels.

From our 138 survey responses, we looked at how those who responded were connected to other groups within inequality movements in their countries and internationally. Unsurprisingly, international networks such as Fight Inequality Alliance and the Global Alliance for Tax Justice or large INGOs like Oxfam, ActionAid were the most common points of connection represented by the brighter dots in the middle of the constellation in the image on the next page. (The survey was done partly through the networks of Fight Inequality Alliance and so may lean towards a bias for the group. However, 40% of respondents did not have a prior relationship with the Alliance.)

Fight Inequality Alliance Social Network Analysis



However, we also found local groups who were strongly internationally connected and acted as significant points of connections for other organisations to engage internationally. As discussed earlier, many national capital based, highly educated, English speaking organisations and leaders are better connected. In some countries, there is a productive role they play in sharing information and resources and brokering international support for local struggles. However, it does not work well consistently, with many local groups feeling shut out of international connections.

Our social network analysis showed many groups that were outside of the larger networks of connection. As shown in the image above, there is a constellation of groups to the left that are not integrated into the relationships of the larger group. In particular, looser social movements (which were a smaller percentage of the overall sample) appear on the edges of the international movement in our social network analysis. There are many factors that may contribute to this including their domestic political contexts, past experience of international cooperation, and the likelihood of international connections to contribute to local impact and access to resources.

Groups may be more or less able to engage with international networks depending on their local political context and potential security concerns. Increasingly, many governments are targeting groups for their international connections and funding, branding them as ‘foreign agents’ in order to stifle their activities. More broadly, an analysis of the structural conditions that affect NGO involvement in international policy processes (often facilitated through networks and alliances) highlighted democratic political regimes as the key factor determining an organisation’s ability to participate alongside their access to resources.¹¹

Groups make strategic choices about whether and how to engage regionally or internationally, based on their own priorities and strategies. We spoke to activists who do not participate in regional or international spaces because they feel the issues they face are unique to their country, or they cannot see the value of engaging at the regional or international level. This may be driven by direct experience. In Rhize’s report *Understanding Activism*, over 1100 activists from ten countries were as likely to have had bad as good experiences working with outside actors including INGOs, foundations and international networks and alliances, in large part due to a failure to respect their local knowledge and agendas.¹²

Participation in regional or global alliances and networks can be of varied benefit for local groups and can take significant resources. A study in Latin America demonstrated mixed results for local groups in leveraging their participation in global advocacy networks for positive local impact. Participation resulted in long-term empowerment of some groups but also in the implosion or demobilisation of other local groups as they assumed technical and political responsibilities as part of international networks. However, they lacked resources to meet new responsibilities, resulting in failure and a loss of legitimacy.¹³ This raises important questions about how the participation and leadership of social movements and local community groups is resourced and enabled within national, regional or global networks and alliances.

Despite the potential challenges and questions related to whether or not to collaborate, especially internationally, most groups did want to work more closely with others in common cause, or who could support their struggles.

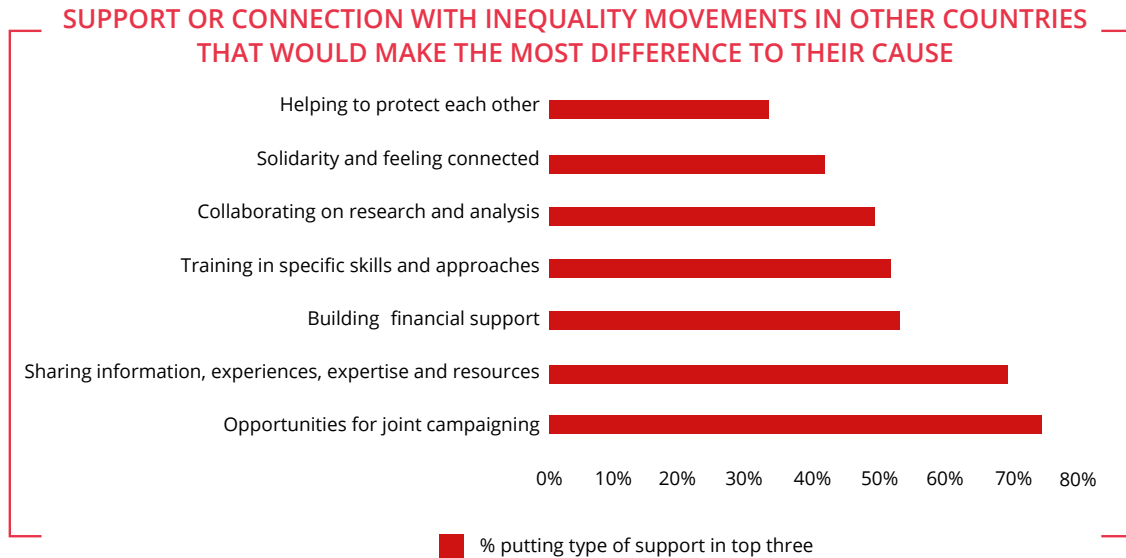
¹¹ Marcel Hanegraaff, Caelesta Braun, Dirk De Bièvre, and Jan Beyers (2015), ‘The Domestic and Global Origins of Transnational Advocacy: Explaining Lobbying Presence During WTO Ministerial Conferences’, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 48(12), 1591–1621.

¹² Rhize (2017), *Understanding Activism*, Rhize.

¹³ Maria G. Rodrigues (2011), ‘Rethinking the Impact of Transnational Advocacy Networks’, *New Global Studies*, 5(2).

“To widen horizons of the struggles” – international connections, networks and alliances

Activists and organisers want international connections and relationships that can support their struggles, help them learn and feel solidarity from other places.



The survey reflected a strong desire to work together on pursuing “Opportunities for joint campaigning including targeting international actors or institutions or building international visibility or support.” Of the respondents, 74% chose this as part of their top three forms of support and connection they wanted from groups in other countries. The inequalities that people are fighting are frequently international in nature or are common between societies. At a large scale, many see themselves as part of international struggles for workers’ rights and economic liberation or for decolonisation or feminism. To work in alliance takes building a common view and also coming to know and be in relationship with each other.

“I think the struggle for economic liberation is a global struggle. Because capital is global we have to build an international movement to counter capitalism.”

–Interviewee, South Africa

“I think that problems are not national, they are international. So it’s very important to have an international alliance so we can tackle the problems we have about inequality. It’s very important to know each other, to bring everybody together and understand other peoples’ problems and international inequality too.”

–Interviewee, Brazil

"We definitely see the struggles are interlinked with neoliberalism - that has become a global problem. It's not something that can just be micro-managed at a local level. But this is very difficult because authoritarians and dictators, they just get on a plane, they have a meeting, they make these decisions and they have all these resources to affect those decisions very fast. If we are not really organised it becomes really hard to fight. The logistics and finances of sustaining that cooperation across borders across continents is very hard, but we try our best to do what we can."

-Interviewee, Uganda

In response to a survey question about what international connections could enable: "Rapid and long-term deployment of campaigns that become relevant under current political conditions of increasingly far right policies (which seem to be feeding off each other across borders)."

-Survey respondent, Latin America

At a more direct scale, many communities facing displacement due to large-scale development have found important support from groups who can target companies or their financiers in their home countries and through mechanisms unavailable to local communities. Groups want support to make their particular struggles more visible in other countries, where there is a chance for people to see and act on the impacts of their companies and investments on overseas communities. For example groups in India working with allies in Europe to campaign against a nuclear power plant being developed by a French company and to work to delist Indian mining company, Vedanta, from the London Stock Exchange. In some cases, intermediary groups play a critical role in brokering and building the connections between groups in different countries (for example, the Asia Europe Peoples' Forum). There are many other examples of these kinds of connections happening or where groups are seeking that support for their cause.

"We support the Flower Pickers' Union in Uganda. Eighty-six percent of Uganda's flowers are exported to Netherlands and many of the companies are Dutch owned. They stole land, pay people a dollar a day and they deny maternity leave. And there are all sorts of working condition violations. We have some allies in the Netherlands and Denmark who do campaigning from the side of the consumer. We were just in a meeting with colleagues before I had this call with you from Denmark about the next step ahead of Valentine's Day and Mothers' Day."

-Interviewee, Uganda

“International movements play a big role especially on corporations. The mining sector where I mentioned where they fail to pay taxes - in a network of international movements you are able to communicate with organisations not just locally. For instance, we had a mining company polluting water - most got sick and people died. It was hard for us to bring that up. If we could pressure them from London where they are listed, the international organisations could have done a better job. We would be able to attract necessary support. That would have prompted the copper mining company to pay for its crime.”

-Interviewee, Zambia

Local and national groups can benefit from connections to international groups. Local groups can often be seen as more legitimate or gain new forms of political or other access based on their association with international groups which governments or business may take more seriously. This is one instance where a pooling of different kinds of power can be used to serve local groups. However, it is worth noting that doing so does not question the underlying system that privileges international actors over local ones.

“We gain a certain leverage in Indonesia when we associate ourselves with a global alliance. Because the government looks at that. It’s hard to gain the attention of the government, but once we collaborate globally they tend to listen to us more. Yesterday the tax department director saw that we are part of this global alliance and he invited us to discuss research.”

-Interviewee, Indonesia

“The support that they get from the international community [is important]. Through the international media, the business owners follow Tunisian news closely. This makes the movements look serious and more consistent.”

-Interviewee, Tunisia

“This will enable our organisation gain more visibility and clout to engage with policy makers at a higher level, stimulate wider public interest in the cause and increase pressure on the policy makers to act. Expeditious action will address inequalities faster and deepen the value of our work.”

-Survey respondent, Nigeria

Successful movements build common cause through common vision and values in a way that creates belonging, common purpose and solidarity. This can be essential to building power, leadership and activating people. People are still working out what the different forms of practical solidarity look like, from taking action in their own political and economic context, to sharing the message to increase visibility, to striking in support of others. This is likely to continue to evolve.

“The positive energy, that’s the first thing. The common belief that an alternative world is possible.”

-Interviewee, Indonesia

“We are a solidarity movement but we can’t do it alone because there are so many things that happen around Africa. So many injustices and pressures. Countries in Europe and the US should stand in solidarity with us. And it’s not like they are coming to help; it’s more of a unified movement. I think that global alliances are important for us to support. Understand that we have different fights. We all need each other.”

-Interviewee, Tunisia

“What I’ve learned from my experience is that anger is a very significant fuel for us to move. But our movement will be more structured and effective when we have hopes. So being together in these events is not only giving opportunity to learn about strategy, but to get the more positive energy so I can continue my own struggle.”

-Interviewee, Indonesia

They are also keen to learn from each other—69% of the respondents put in their top three forms of support sharing information, experiences, expertise and resources. 52% selected training in specific skills and approaches.

“Spaces for strengthening our capacities, learning communities, and exchanges contribute a lot to organisations, communities and peoples.”

-Interviewee, Mexico

“To learn from the strategies, struggles, resistances in other countries. And it’s great that it’s [the Fight Inequality Alliance’s 2018 annual global gathering] conducted in Brazil because I know that Latin America has very progressive social movements. So we can exchange and learn together. There’s already something that I can bring home to my Indonesian colleagues.”

-Interviewee, Indonesia

“I think the most critical thing is the question of experience, knowledge, skills and resources. So that people can look beyond their own shores to see that what is happening in their country is not unique. They can learn from failures outside [their country] and also the successes. I think that’s a major contributing factor: to widen the horizon of struggles.”

-Interviewee, Ghana

“Learning from others and creating community across contexts is hugely important and helpful. It allows learning to happen more quickly. Relationships are resources. It would also make the work ultimately more sustainable (and probably with fewer resources because we'd be collaborating).”

-Survey respondent, USA

“Speak more fearlessly, learn what other movements are doing differently and implement what can be workable for us.”

-Survey respondent, Zambia

There is real vitality and dynamism in the inequality movements worldwide and great potential for increasing the work to influence common systems of oppression and structures of power that operate across borders. At the same time, there is also work to be done in common, on how power operates and who participates and leads within these movements. These are important areas for the Fight Inequality Alliance to continue to convene conversations and action across the growing movement.

Questions for reflection:



How connected is your organisation or movement to other movements?

What do you most want to gain from international connections and alliances, and what do you contribute?

What kinds of connections and support would best serve your cause?



CONCLUSION

This study gives rich insight into how the dynamic, resilient, brave and bold movement fighting inequality around the world is growing, evolving and achieving success in very challenging circumstances. It also provides direction for the Alliance on how and why movements want to collaborate further to fight inequality and achieve systemic change. It gives clear learnings for activists and organisations on strategy, organisational development and transforming power dynamics internally and externally.

Our hope for this report is that it serves as a practical tool for the Alliance in reflecting, learning and developing from the lessons and questions contained here. We also hope to engage funders, academics and other allies in the fight against inequality further in the role and perspective of grassroots activists and movements in this struggle, and how their efforts can be supported.

We hope that this effort is the beginning of an ongoing research and learning process as the Fight Inequality Alliance and wider movement continues to grow and adapt. The research process also raised a number of questions that could be the basis for further study and exploration, including developing feminist practice within movements, how movements are dealing with issues of sexual harassment and abuse, deeper learning from the successes where movements are holding and gaining ground and developing a more comprehensive understanding of 'organised society' (beyond civil society) that includes all of whose civic rights are denied.

The energy and dynamism within the movement is the fuel we need to create transformative change. We hope that this report helps to further energise our struggle.



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APPENDIX: RESEARCH APPROACH

At this stage of the development of a global alliance of communities, movements and organisations fighting inequality, we wanted to:

- Make the wider inequality movement more visible and accessible to the Fight Inequality Alliance and vice versa
- Start to create a baseline of the state of inequality movements that can inform ongoing research and analysis of how the movement changes over time
- Better understand and share what is inspiring, driving, enabling and constraining inequality movements around the world
- Inform learning, training, peer support and other movement building activities based on the interests and needs of activists and movements

These motivations informed our key research questions:

- What are the forms, approaches, targets, experiences and successes of inequality movements around the world?
- What is enabling and constraining the success of inequality movements?
- What do inequality movements want and need from other countries, the global alliance or other actors to support their struggles?

As this is a movement resource and the start of an ongoing process, the research approach needed to build on and strengthen relationships at the local, national and global level, take an ethical approach, pay attention to potential safety and security issues, and ensure that processes are easily updatable, replicable and appropriated at the grassroots level.

The methods we used:

- Survey work based on Rhize's Movement Mapping Tool with Fight Inequality Alliance members and allies to start to map the landscape and understand key trends and needs in more depth
- Interviews with key players in inequality movements (40 interviews across 23 countries/geographies to date)
- Testing mappings and analysis with movement members and LSE's Atlantic Fellows 2018 cohort

A key choice in the research design has been to try to achieve an overview of movements across a wide number of countries. Another is to involve current members of the Fight Inequality Alliance and to also explicitly try to reach those who are not engaged in the Alliance but are involved in inequality movements in their countries.

This is very much the start of a longer-term process of learning about inequality movements around the world. Our conclusions are limited by the sample of survey respondents and interviews and the lack of significant samples in specific countries.

Nonetheless, with inputs from approximately 178 people from 23 countries, we do have new insights into the shape, emergence, successes, challenges and connections of movements and organisations within the broader inequalities movements globally.

