



AFRICAN WOMEN UNITING FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE JUSTICE!
The beginnings of a regional women-led campaign

Brief concept to guide national consultative workshops, February to April 2016

1. What is WoMin?

WoMin, launched in October 2013, is an African gender and extractive alliance, which works alongside national and regional movements and popular organisations of women, mining-impacted communities and peasants, and in partnership with other sympathetic organisations to:

- ❖ Research and publicise the impacts of extractives on peasant and working class women
- ❖ Support women’s organising, movement-building and solidarity
- ❖ Advocate and campaign for reforms that go beyond short-term reformism to contribute towards the longer-term structural changes that are needed
- ❖ Advance, in alliance with numerous others, an African post-extractivist, eco-just, women-centred alternative to this dominant destructive model of development.

WoMin’s emerging vision is of an Africa in which all women exercise control over the lands they use, livelihoods, natural resources, bodies and cultural heritage. WoMin’s mission is to build women’s movements to challenge destructive extractivism and propose development alternatives that respond to the needs of the majority of African women. Our approach and areas of content focus are:

WoMin approach and areas of focus

Approach

- Feminist political education
- Women’s organising/movement building
- Women’s solidarity
- Feminist research
- Women-led, grassroots-driven campaigning
- Cross movement alliance-building

Areas of focus

- Fossil fuels, energy and climate justice
- Consent and democratisation of socio-economic decision-making
- Extractivism, militarisation and Violence Against Women

***AFRICAN POST-EXTRACTIVIST, ECO-FEMINIST,
 CLIMATE JUST ALTERNATIVES***

2. Why a women-led, women's rights regional campaign on fossil fuels, energy, and climate justice?

Some of the reasoning underpinning the proposal for this campaign are:

The Problem

- As the primary producers and processors in agriculture, women carry the brunt of the major environmental damages – oil spills, the acidification of rain, soil pollution etc. – arising from the extractives and energy industries, which undermine production and negatively impact on food production.
- As those performing the bulk of care work within families and communities, women are currently coping with the externalised short to medium term costs of ill-health and increased poverty and hunger of fossil fuel extraction and combustion, as well as the long term impact of climate change. They represent the most obvious group to nurture as leaders of social struggles.
- Women carry very particular impacts of the violence and militarisation associated with the extractives industries. This includes high levels of inter-personal violence and violence against women (VAW) in artisanal mining sites and in the settlements adjacent to extractives industries; the gender-specific violence which accompanies state and corporate repression of artisanal miners and communities resisting dispossession and dislocation; and in more general terms the violent denial of the livelihoods of communities who stand in the path of rapacious extractives industries.

The Solution

- Because of the structural position of women in society and the key roles they perform – food production, care work, the management of communally-held natural resources etc. – women hold a powerful vantage point to inform our collective thinking about the development alternatives.
- Women do not generally benefit from employment in the extractives industries and are therefore more likely to see beyond the short term benefits of high risk, and poorly paid jobs.
- Despite the powerful potentialities of women's contributions to struggles against fossil fuel extraction, combustion and refining, solidarity and support organisations working on the extractives, natural resources and environmental justice terrain have generally neglected a women's rights and women's organising focus. And this paucity of support has been exacerbated by the limited presence of women's rights organisations and women's organising efforts on terrains of struggle addressing economic justice: land and natural resources, energy etc.
- In the absence of such organising WOMIN has set out to begin to build an African gender and extractive alliance, and regional campaign.

3. What would make a women-led women's rights grassroots driven campaign different to other similar campaigns?

Some initial ideas to be explored through a paper to be presented and discussed at the end-April regional campaigns strategy meeting are that the Campaign must:

1. Be women-led, for women, by women with support from men in communities
2. Adhere to the principles of equality, democracy, accountability and transparency
3. Ensure that women in communities are fully informed and participate equally in decision-making processes of the campaign at different levels
4. Support the participation of women by providing childcare support - children and women's care responsibilities should not be a hindrance to women's activism!
5. Reclaim the voice of grassroots women so that they speak for themselves rather than through the voice of a 'mother organisation'
6. Be inspired by and draw from women's lived experiences, alternatives and demands to develop our campaign positioning and interventions

7. Challenge patriarchy, including such aspects as rape and sexual harassment, which extractives organisations typically do not address
8. Work to develop women's position and strengthen their power in the family, community and society more generally; women's organising and women's solidarity will be the key vehicles for building women's power
9. Be inspired by and draw on the "uniqueness of African womanhood" such as creativity, care, the commons etc.
10. Commit to building an African sisterhood (a wide interconnected movement of African women) through the campaign.

4. A very initial campaign concept

4.1 What are we trying to achieve through the campaign?

- In summary, the intent is to build a campaign which is rooted in grassroots struggles which are led by women, which supports women's organising and movement-building as defined in specific localities and at the national level, and which also unifies women's struggles across localities and countries through a common set of political demands to be pursued at different levels of the campaign.
- The main objective of the campaign is to support women's movement-building and organising towards a future in which African women enjoy climate, energy, food, gender and development justice. The attached declaration from the October 2015 Niger Delta meeting outlines what these different forms of justice mean in practice.
- Over the next 18 months we will define a political agenda (the changes we want to achieve) for the entire campaign which is grounded in the demands of women at the local and national levels. We will not impose a political agenda from above but will build this from below. This common political agenda is critical to provide a unified frame for our organising at the regional, national and local levels.
- Each level of the campaign will have a plan or a strategy which will have been worked out through a participatory process, will guide organising and campaigning efforts, and will be adjusted as needed on an annual or more frequent basis. This campaign plan or strategy will need to clearly spell out what changes we are trying to achieve, how we will achieve these changes and who we will ally with. The various campaign plans and strategies at different levels will be guided by a general campaign framework to be agreed at the April 2016 regional campaigns strategy meeting. This regional strategy will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis when the campaign partners meet.
- Importantly, the campaign is NOT working to build the identity and profile of a single organisation. Hence, WoMin will play a leading role in building and sustaining the campaign, but the campaign is not a WoMin campaign. If the campaign is to build organisation and movement, including by creating new intersections between organisations and struggles, the campaign needs to be a political platform of partnership between many organisations. The partners will look different in each context and the nature of the platform and its relationships will hence look different but the principle of wide collaboration and ownership is a critical one that will guide the campaign at all moments.
- The development of a campaign which will be built into a movement of women who have a critical, feminist approach to their struggle obtained through the feminist political education school.

4.2 Where will we build from and what might be the role of different actors?

- The regional campaign will be rooted in four priority countries in 2016 – the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa – budget permitting. From the middle of 2017, we will 'phase' in two to three more countries to the campaign following a similar approach to the process that will have been tested in 2016.
- In each country, the campaign will be built in specific localities/geographies where there are community organisations and movements or local NGOs which are willing to deepen or support women's organising and campaigning on the themes of the campaign.

- In each country, there will be a national ‘lead’ for the campaign, which WoMin would partner with. (See attached document on what will be its role)
- WoMin’s contribution to the national lead organisation would be: campaigns guidance and advice; linking local and national efforts to campaigns, advocacy and organising efforts regionally and internationally; providing research support and resource materials; and financial assistance (including a significant contribution to a national campaigner, campaign running costs, budget for campaign actions etc.).
- At the regional level, we will have a draft regional campaigns framework to ‘frame’ the scoping out and development of campaigns at the local and national level in each country. This framework will be informed by: (a) discussions had at the January 2015 and October 2015 WoMin Coal and Fossil Fuels meetings; (b) two global exploratory consultations with allies and potential partners; (c) WoMin commissioned papers on women and energy and a feminist orientation to campaigning; (d) four national level campaign planning workshops, with all of this feeding into a regional campaigns strategy meeting planned for 25-29 April 2016. The campaigns framework will be finalised by end-May 2016.
- At each level of the campaign we will seek to build a political platform which brings together a range of organisations and movements bridging the environment, women’s rights, natural resources, climate, work etc.
- We need to give very careful thought to the campaigns decision-making structure/s and accountability. Since we are committed to building a campaign which is genuinely women-led and led from the grassroots this must inform our thinking about representation, structure and accountability:
 - a. In each **locality** then, there will be need to designate a clear women-led structure (and this doesn’t have to be a ‘new’ structure) which will represent and drive the campaign locally. Each local structure must be supported to meet, have open debates, operate democratically and accountably and strengthen its members. This structure would nominate one or two representatives to a national campaigns structure.
 - b. At **national level**, each country would need to establish a national women-led campaigns structure. This may be located within an existing network, alliance or campaign if the local organisations and other participating organisations consider this appropriate. All local organisations playing a central role in the campaign must be represented as must key national allies and partners. NGOs should represent a small proportion of the total membership of this national structure.
 - c. At **regional level**, we will nominate an interim regional campaign working group at end-April 2016 to oversee the development of the campaign in 2016. National campaign structures should nominate replacements to the regional campaigns structure as the campaigns and their accountability structures clarify over the course of the year. We would nominate a new regional campaigns structure in 2017.

4.3 How will we go about building the campaign over the next year?

WoMin is committed to building the regional campaign from the bottom up, and there is hence a deliberate process of developing campaign strategies from the local to national and ultimately to the regional. This is an iterative process with each level of the strategy needing to be ‘in conversation’ with the other. We are looking at a long lead time (2016 and part of 2017) for campaigns networking, scoping and development - the campaign would only be launched in the second half of 2017, and at this time would draw in a new layer of countries. The following broad steps are envisaged:

Step	When?	Who leads?	Who inputs?
Light first consultations with regional and national partners on the campaign concept	At the consultative meeting of 23 November 2015, at the COP in Paris as well as through bi-laterals conversations in January 2016	Regional Secretariat	Potential partners and allies at regional, national and local levels

Research and consolidation of a discussion document on a feminist/ women's rights centred approach to campaigning. This document will present a few case studies and point us to organisations that have built different 'models' for feminist campaigning.	Draft mid-March 2016 Final draft to be distributed to participants – one week before regional strategy meeting	Regional Secretariat	To be discussed at regional campaigns meeting in April 2016
Eco feminist transformative analysis of energy in Africa: an exploratory paper	Commissioned end-October 2015 Launch at regional campaigns meeting – end-April 2016	Regional secretariat	To be discussed and launched at regional campaigns meeting in April 2016
WoMin 'Building Energy Resilience' Resource – a series of resource sheets on the ABCs of energy, why energy is a women's rights question and a few select simple energy solutions which can be implemented now	Commissioned September 2015 Launch at regional campaigns meeting – end-April 2016	Regional secretariat	To be discussed and launched at regional campaigns meeting in April 2016
National campaign consultation meetings	End-February to mid-April 2016	Regional secretariat	Key national and local organisations in each country, lead national organisation and WoMin secretariat and Board
Recruitment of WoMin regional campaign lead	Starts January 2016, have staffer in place by 1 May 2016	Regional secretariat	WoMin key national allies and Board
Regional strategy meeting with regional, national and local partners/ allies to build a draft regional campaigns framework and architecture which will 'frame' the work ahead	25-29 April 2016	Regional Secretariat	WoMin Board, regional allies and leading organisations/confirmed partners in SA, Uganda, the DRC and Nigeria
Regional campaigns framework finalised	End-May 2016	Regional campaign oversight structure	WoMin secretariat, regional allies, national and local partners
Intensive focus to building in country A – formalising partnerships, scoping research, local workshops in specific localities, national 'training' with national and local allies, building local and national campaign strategies etc.	June to September 2016	Regional Secretariat with lead national organisation	National and local partners, and Secretariat
Intensive focus to building in country B and C drawing on lessons and practice established in the work in country A	August to November 2016	Regional Secretariat with lead national organisation	National and local partners, and Secretariat
Start building in country D with an approach informed by practice in other countries	October 2016 to February 2017	Regional Secretariat with lead national organisation	National and local partners, and Secretariat
Start consultations and planning process with two to three more countries	October 2016	Regional Secretariat with lead national organisations	National and local partners, and Secretariat
National level consultation meetings in 2 to 3 new countries	January to March 2017	Regional Secretariat with lead national organisations	Key national and local organisations in each country, lead national organisation and WoMin secretariat and Board

Regional campaigns review and planning meeting	April 2017	National Coordinators and Regional Secretariat	National and local partners, and Secretariat
Launch of regional campaign	October 2017?	National Coordinators and Regional Secretariat	National and local partners, and Secretariat