

WoMin supported in-country exchanges

A brief guide for proposals

3 July 2014

Background

In 2014, WoMin has budgeted for an exchange to Latin America. The costs are, however, extremely high and only a few activists will be able to join this exchange. After some consideration, it is thought better to invest this budget in exchanges between groups of women impacted by extractives activities in various countries that WoMin is linked to. This will support your participatory action research and most importantly your local organising/movement-building objectives. We will continue this support into 2015, and possibly beyond.

Purpose of exchanges

Exchanges are a critical tool in our efforts to support women's organising and movement building. Exchanges, if *well-designed*, are powerful in that they simultaneously support local organising, they help deepen awareness and knowledge (consciousness), they build bridges between organisations of women from different geographies, they build solidarity between women and therefore offer support to the building of wider movements of women. Read together, the power of exchanges is potentially great!

WoMin is committed to supporting exchanges between groups of organised women in different geographies with a view to ***deepening organisation and supporting the building of a movement of women struggling against destructive extractivism***. Our focus is to grassroots women and to movement building of affected women as they, and not our NGOs, will be the ones that must drive change. Movement will help build their power and their voice.

Timing of exchanges, budget available

The exchanges must be implemented and reported on before 30 December 2014. WoMin can support up to \$4 000 per exchange process.

A few ideas to consider in your exchanges

Here are some ideas to think about as you build these exchanges:

1. Open and democratic selection of the participants to the exchange by all members of the grassroots organisation/s participating in this process. The participants that are selected should receive a mandate from their organisation – what questions should be explored through the exchange, and how will they bring the knowledge back to the organisation? The supporting NGO may need to assist here. Think about how participants can document the exchange so that when they report-back the experience can be 'alive'. Think about giving women disposable cameras, and encourage women to keep diaries if literacy levels allow this.
2. You can have more than one organisation send participants to a community for learning and exchange. This will give depth and richness to the exchange process.
3. Time should be spent carefully preparing the participants (on both the sending and receiving side) so that expectations are clarified and the programme is designed to meet the needs of both groups.
4. WoMin would like to see exchanges happening in communities and not in hotels. If possible, participants should be hosted in local homes, with support to host families to feed their guest/s. You will need to figure out with host organisations what is feasible and less likely to cause conflict in the community. If local hosting is not possible then please consider alternatives like church accommodation, or schools, or accommodation in technical or training colleges. Participants should spend time in formal processes like meetings and field tours, but it is also important that time be set aside for participants to spend time with their host families. Knowledge is gained in many different ways and not just through the formal exchange process.

5. You should think about creating a public space in the host community/ies so that women can speak and share their experiences to the wider community. If it is possible to coincide an exchange with a local action so that women are supporting each other to take action, this would be ideal.
6. Make sure that you build in time in your exchange programme for collective reflection about what people have learnt from the exchange, what new questions have emerged, what actions women would like to take in their communities and together, how they can continue to support each other and what the next steps are to continue building this wider movement of affected women.
7. Please think about how you can involve local community radio or newspapers so the 'messages' from the exchange can get out to a much wider audience. If you think the formal mainstream media might have interest, find the 'story' or the message that will interest them and try and get them to cover an event or an activity of the exchange. It would be great if you could encourage a young/student filmmaker to accompany all or part of the process on a voluntary basis.
8. It is critical that participants make formal 'report-backs' to their organisations. Think creatively about how to do this. If women have taken photos this would be an excellent way of telling the story. If a young film maker has accompanied the process, you could show some of the footage.

Proposal

Please submit a one to two-page proposal covering the following elements:

- a. Name of organisation/s supporting exchange and contact people
- b. Dates of the proposed exchange
- c. Background to and purpose of exchange addressing:
 - Information on context that will help us understand why the exchange is needed and how it fits into/supports a broader programme of ongoing work with women in affected communities
 - Which 'communities' will participate in the exchange? Why have you selected these communities?
 - Where will the exchange take place?
 - How many participants will there be?
 - What is the focus and purpose of the exchange? What are the outcomes you expect from the exchange?
- d. Design of the exchange (see also section above on 'key ideas' to consider in your exchanges)
 - Explain in brief how you are thinking about the exchange - what you see as the key activities, how you will prepare the participants and support debriefing to their organisations, how the exchange could be documented etc.
 - What is your thinking about how to ensure that the work started and ideas generated through the exchange could be sustained?
- e. Budget:
 - Please break down the budget into clear line items – transport, accommodation, meals, stationery etc.
 - For each line item please break it down further so we can see your calculations. For example, breakfast x 25 participants x 3 days @ USD 4 per person.

Reporting to WoMin

WoMin will need to report on to its own funders and we therefore require a brief report – not more than 3 pages – accompanied by some images and testimonies from participating women that we can use in our onward reporting.