This toolkit's political framework

In this chapter:

Radios. Television. Cell phones. Laptops. Desktop computers, digital cameras. Technology changes the way that we live our lives, the way that we interact with one another and it expands the possibilities for interaction beyond our local communities and national borders.

Cell phones

Desktop computers

Radios

Television

Laptops

Digital cameras
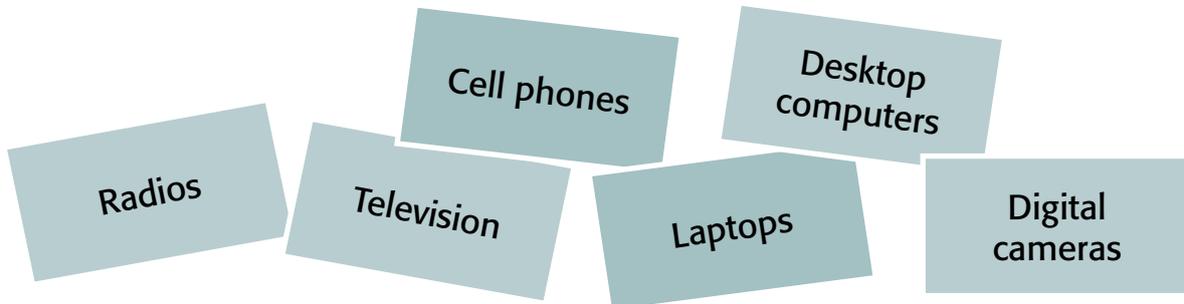
ICTs, from mobile phones to computers and the internet, have become more and more part of our everyday lives and work. These technologies provide many different ways for us to communicate, create groups and communities, and feel connected to others. Whether you live in Blantyre or Bulawayo or Biera, you will have come into contact with some form of communication technology.

For many, ICTs represent an opportunity to communicate in ways that were not possible even twenty years ago.

"My cell phone is the only way for me to communicate with people in my organisation and in other networks. It is important for my work. Someone may be stuck somewhere and need my help. Because I have my cell phone with me, they can call me and I can help them as an activist. Also, someone can send a message to tell me to check email to find and print a document they have sent me. (The printer and laptop are not mine but the cell phone is). In the past it was difficult for me to access emails – I could go for two weeks or even more without using the internet. But on my new phone I can look up information on the internet and share it. I can go on Facebook. I can even get the news. Of course, I have to buy airtime to pay for using the internet. A cell phone doesn't store much information, not as much as a laptop. A cell phone is easy to for someone to steal. But, still, it is very useful to have one." – **Tiwonge Gondwe, Women Forum in the North, Malawi**

2.1 Women's voices and representation

When you open a magazine or newspaper or watch the news, you'll notice that there are few stories about women and even fewer written by women. Women's stories, experiences and realities are often excluded and ignored. The stories we hear about women often shame and blame without giving room for their points of view and agency. For example, many of the stories published in Zimbabwe's H-Metro newspaper, a popular tabloid, tend to blame women and shame them for violence they experience. One story published in H-Metro encouraged the idea that a woman dressed provocatively in church "deserved" to be verbally, physically and sexually abused by her pastor because she was "tempting a man of God".

The framework of these stories is not an accident. They are the result of editorial policy-political choices made by those who have the power to decide what stories we hear and how we hear them (newspaper owners, editors, etc.).

Activist conversation: Women and the media in Zimbabwe[7]

Media is a powerful weapon; it sheds light on issues that are in the dark. What are your thoughts on the current context and mainstream media in Zimbabwe?

Chibairo – *Today media in Zimbabwe is propaganda against womanhood, feminism and power as women. We see the bad things about women in the media. If you look at H- Metro there is only bad things about women or you see the powerful women who have made it into politics. It is as if there is nothing happening within the communities. The media divides us from ourselves. We need our own voices to speak to what women are doing positively for women.*

Natasha – *Seen but not heard. Please remember this. I was engaged to review the media code of conduct and there is nothing about regulating reporting on women. There are more gruesome stories about women, more witches, rapists, "small houses". But women are not the only one committing crimes. Women are quoted as sources in newspapers less than men. But there are more stories with women depicted in them. They are seen but not heard. I would like to hear a women commenting about women witches. It is important to think outside mainstream media especially for feminist activists. Our context is highly politicised, often you need to get global support to tell your story, and find alternative ways to bring out narratives that are more objective and that get out to the public.*

Winnet – *Mainstream media protects the interests of the Master's House [referring to patriarchy/rule by men]. How many editors are women? Our voices and stories and issues will be negated because editors are men. Mainstream reflects the stereotypes: women as hookers, rapists. The faces of the women rapists were everywhere when the story broke. But every day men are raping. The media protects the interests of the Master.*

Chibairo – *Ownership of the mainstream media is highly political. The state owns the media; this is synonymous with Mugabe [Zimbabwe's President 1980-current]. Whoever owns the media dictates the kind of coverage and orientation. Women can also own the media. But this is hard.*

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7.   JASS Zimbabwe Feminist Movement Builders School 2013

Women's stories are often silenced online, just as they are in the offline world. We can take the power back by writing about our own lives online, narrating and representing their stories in their own ways.

Young black lesbians from Alexandra township spoke out when they made digital stories, harnessing technology to tell of their own experiences in a series of short movies – My Life, My Story, My Terms: Queer women from Alex speak out.[8]

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8.   http://www.apc.org/en/blog/my-life-my-story-my-terms-queer-women-alex-speak-o

Black women and ICTs

For black African women, the stories that we hear about ourselves and our bodies are extremely biased. We asked women from across the African continent to share their feelings about how black women are portrayed in the media. Nearly every woman who shared her perspective mentioned how beauty in many post-colonial African contexts, from Nigeria to Morocco to South Africa, is always defined in relation to European ideals.

> *"[Black women] are also not allowed the space to be beautiful in the traditional sense (with skin often being lightened)."* **– Tiffany Mugo**

> *"We don't often see [black] women who sport their natural hair, skin—there is a mainstream idea of beauty and all in the mainstream must adhere to it." –* **Nebila Abdulmelik**

This means, light skin = beautiful, dark skin = ugly or even dangerous. More Eurocentric features are prized over those considered to be "African". "Good hair" (straight and long) is more desirable than "bad hair" (kinky, afros) even braids and other styles that are considered too ethnic. These perceptions of beauty are so widely accepted that women across the continent have turned to lightening creams and other body modification products, some of which can be detrimental to health e.g. skin bleaching lotions that lead to scarification, and some cancers.

While these ideas of "beauty" are not without complexities—they are just the beginning of the story as Tiffany Mugo, a feminist writer says, "black women are often [portrayed as] oversexualised or victims which is infuriating". This hypersexualisation covers a broad spectrum ideas of what black woman should and should not be allowed to do, think, feel and be. From pervasive images of motherhood and women solely as machines for reproduction to women being viewed as sexual objects that exist solely for male pleasure. These images affect women around the world but there is a need to understand how they apply specifically in our local contexts.

"Often it is the problem that black women are seen as not being empowered and any that are an anomaly rather than the norm. The 'black woman' [if we can use this generalised blanket term for how the diversity of black women is so often diminished] is a victim of culture (please see most stories on the girl child within Africa), the 'good woman' who is married and heterosexual and seeking to have children (often witnessed in local newspapers in the form of how-to guides and articles shaming women for seeking alternate paths)." **– Tiffany Mugo**

We live in a society where women are seen as less worthy than men. In this world, women are often subject to restrictive binaries—"good women" vs. "bad women"—that proscribe our behaviour, defining everything from what is appropriate in terms of dress to how and with whom we choose to have sex. These rules are that much more difficult to confront and overcome for black women.

In southern Africa the development industry has generated and perpetuated specific images about black women as victims who are incapable of being agents of change in their own lives. These images are often part and parcel of how development and non-governmental organisations write and think about the people they represent. Our job as feminists and activists is to destabilise and disrupt these images and celebrate the resilience and power of women to change themselves, their communities and the world, wherever they are situated.

Ideas about black women have their own regional and national flavours wherever you go, influenced by how religion and culture intersect with social norms and values, economic status, political contexts. Across the board, they tend to impact everything from the choices that women make on what to wear and for many young urban women, the possibility of being harassed on the streets for dressing "provocatively" is ever-present. For many of us, the consequences of stepping outside of these rules can be violence, backlash, discrimination and stigma.

For South African activist and co-founder of SAY-F (South African Young Feminist Activists), Wanelisa Xaba, as a woman "you become aware of how

your body is read… It's [particularly] complicated for black women because we're criminalised or we're hypersexualised. Either way our bodies are being read. In Johannesburg a few years ago a woman was stripped in a taxi rank. And there was a lot of this 'respectability politics of dress', that if women have to dress in a certain way and if they don't, they 'deserve' to be raped or attacked or shamed. It's policing women's bodies and [in South Africa I find] I'm monitored because I'm a woman but I'm also monitored because I'm black."

Women across Africa are fighting back against these negative and destructive stereotypes. Nana Darkoa, the founder and curator of the blog **Adventures from the Bedrooms of African Women**, uses her platform to shatter stereotypes that African women are just passive actors when it comes to sex. Through her blog, she offers a safe space where the complexities and challenges of African sexualities are discussed by black African women. Zanele Muholi, a photographer and visual activist, is using media education to put forward the stories of lesbian, bisexual, and trans women in the public arena to show that there are many different ways to "be a woman" and to "be a black woman" whatever one's sexual orientation or sexual identity.

2.2   Technology in our lives

Just as technology is changing our daily lives, it is also changing the way that activists mobilise. Activists around the world are making use of ICTs and the internet to inform and mobilise. One major example of the power of ICTs for activism is what we saw during the revolutions in Arab nations in 2011 when citizens used mobile phone communications and social media platforms to activate large networks in protest marches that led to the toppling of governments in both Tunisia and Egypt.

ICTs have opened up new opportunities to mobilise in vast numbers, allowing us to link our struggles and share huge amounts of information.

In 2014, Kenyan women took to the streets to march against street harassment and violent attacks on women for wearing mini-skirts and other supposedly

inappropriate articles of clothing. They used the hashtag #MyDressMyChoice on Twitter. Soon, the hashtag had generated a global outcry, with thousands of tweets coming in from around the world of women and men standing in solidarity with Kenyan women in the struggle against violence.

Similarly black students in South Africa protesting the lack of transformation at the University of Cape Town used the hashtag #RhodesMustFall to bring down the statue of British coloniser Cecil John Rhodes at the centre of the University and sparked solidarity protests at university campuses across the world.

Technology opens the door for localised struggles to become global rallying cries.

Hashtag

A word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#) used on social media sites such as Twitter to identify messages on a specific topic. You can ask your Twitter "followers" to use the hashtag in critical messages and reach many more people across the world. If someone searches for that hashtag on the internet they can read the related messages.

For women, and other marginalised people including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTI), the internet can be an empowering space that allows for the exploration of identity, sex and sexuality. For example transgendered women and men use a popular transgender site to share their struggles in transitioning, including treatment options, unlearning dominant gender norms, celebration of achieved milestones and exchange of experiences of discrimination faced.[9]

However, it is important to understand that the internet in and of itself is not always a safe space and can, like other ICTs, be used as a way to perpetuate violence, discrimination and oppression. For example in 2011, in Cameroon, Jean Claude Roger Mbede[10], was arrested for sending an SMS to another man

9.   http://erotics.apc.org/research/erotics
10. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Claude_Roger_Mbede

saying, "I'm in love with you". When the text message fell into the hands of the police, he was arrested on suspicion of homosexuality, and subsequently found guilty and sentenced to three years in prison.[11]

Feminist communication rights activists are working in many spaces to ensure that women's rights are at the centre of policy and regulation that govern technology and the internet, challenging the existing inequalities in the manufacture, production and governance of the internet which regulates how we communicate. For example at the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), gender activists have started the Gender Dynamic Coalition which works to ensure that gender is included in the deliberations and outcomes of the IGF. They have created a gender score-card which is used to monitor and assess the level of gender parity and inclusion at IGF workshop sessions.[12]

The rights we have offline – and that we fight to protect, for example, freedom of expression- we take with us when we go onto the internet. We have the right to meet and protest offline, as we do on the internet. It is important to imagine the internet we want and ensure that women are fully participating in the decisions around technology and that we are able to assert and protect our rights.

2.3 Our context and the digital divide

Across southern Africa as in much of the world, the gap between men and women, rich and poor, urban and rural is growing wider. It is more difficult for citizens, especially women, to access resources, rights, services and justice.

Conservative religious and cultural traditional practices define the way many Africans live and determine what is acceptable for women to do and not do. Violence against women in its many forms has increased. Women's organising has brought about changes in many countries (for example the right to vote or laws that protect our rights) but we still face many challenges. Rights and women's rights in particular are under attack, and in many places, activists are in danger.

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11.   https://securityinabox.org/en/lgbti-africa/digital-threats-african-lgbti-community

12.   http://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/igf-gender-report-cards

Because women are seen as the carers of families, we are at the frontline of these struggles in all areas of life – for water, for housing, for decent work, against the exploitation of natural resources like coal – and for access to and control over technology.

The **digital divide** we see when we look at access and usage of ICTs mirrors the divide between rich and poor, North and South, men and women –those with money and other privileges can access ICTs more readily.

Within the digital divide is a gender divide which finds women having less access and ability to use technology given lower levels of education, literacy and employment.

In Africa, women are 23% less likely to own a mobile phone[13]. According to the International Telecommunication Union, 16% fewer women than men used the internet in developing countries in 2013[14]. That figure jumps to 45% in sub-Saharan Africa, partly due to the costs of mobile broadband making up a higher percentage of women's limited income.

The majority of women in southern Africa are poor and live in rural areas – where technology infrastructure is scarce.

13. http://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GSMA_Women_and_Mobile-A_Global_Opportunity.pdf
14. https://www.itu.int/net/pressoffice/press_releases/2013/05.aspx

In social movements, we are further separated by race, class, geographic location, sexuality, (dis)ability and so on, which influences our capacity to access and use these transformative tools. As we consider which ICT tools to use, therefore, we need to make sure that they fit our audiences and contexts.

Many women do not have easy and **meaningful access** to these tools. We must talk about "meaningful access" because access is not just about having the tools and being able to pay for the connection, it is about being able to have the confidence, knowledge and ability to use them effectively and safely. We should be mindful to not create divisions between those who have access and those who do not and work to build our collective capacity to use a range of tools and take steps to ensure access for everyone.

ICT tools and spaces are not neutral. Many tools are developed and designed by men in the North for the purpose of making money. This means that they often do not take account of the realities women face in access and use of technology. Being aware of this helps us understand these tools and to shape and adapt them for our use.

Women shaping technology in Africa

As we know from our activism, women are often written out of history. An important aspect of a feminist approach to technology is to acknowledge and promote the women who have shaped, invented and contributed to technology.

In Africa, our modern pioneers include Dorcas Muthoni, who promotes free and open source software[15] use and mentors young women in technology careers. She was inducted into the Internet Hall of Fame in 2014.[16]

Ory Okolloh co-founded the crisis – mapping platform called Ushahidi[17] and the Asikana Network[18] which is an organisation that seeks to empower women and girls through technology.

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15. Known as FOSS. See Chapter 4 The internet and ICTs as political spaces and tools for more information on FOSS.
16. http://www.apc.org/en/news/dorcas-muthoni-joins-internet-hall-fame
17. (http://www.ushahidi.com/)
18. (http://asikananetwork.org/)

Online versus offline?

As technologies have become more and more integrated into our daily lives, the lines between "offline" and "online" life have blurred. Many of the issues and concerns that occupy activists in real life take on different yet familiar forms in the online world.

*The **offline world** is the physical world in which our bodies live. The **online world** is the world that internet opens up to us in which we also live. These worlds are not separate and what happens in one can impact what happens in the other.*

Increasingly the offline and online are becoming blurred and intersect in interesting ways. Digital technology has become another factor that shapes our social, political and cultural world. We can choose whether to become an online actor e.g. producing online content or engaging in debates in the online world but whether we are online or not, it impacts on us.

The online world often replicates and sometimes worsens the offline world's existing opportunities and inequalities for women.

Social media posts can reach thousands of people instantly. This means that private information like your home address or a photo of you at a protest can be shared without your consent or control.

*"Technological advances mean that women must be prepared to deal with new avenues for violence and need to be equally prepared to reclaim technology to further their own social justice struggles including of combatting violence and overthrowing patriarchy." – **Shereen Essof, Just Associates, South Africa/Zimbabwe** [19]*

19. South African Country report on Violence against Women and Information and Communication Technologies
http://www.genderit.org/sites/default/upload/south_africa_APC_WNSP_MDG3_VAW_ICT_ctryrpt_1.pdf

Harassment, blackmail and stalking are violences against women that also happen online.[20]

Governments and non-state actors are using surveillance to track activists. Our privacy can be undermined when we use the tools and spaces in an unprotected way. Sexual and reproductive rights activists are particularly targeted.

Chapter 4.1: Being secure when you use technology and the internet

Since our offline and online worlds are linked, we can use both offline and online communication strategies to make lasting change.

What would a feminist internet look like?

Feminist communication rights activists work to map and claim women's rights in this online world. A major part of this is imagining what a feminist internet would look like and working towards this.

Chapter 4.3: A feminist internet

Feminist communication activists like the Association of Progressive Communications Women's Rights Programme are also encouraging cross-movement work so that feminist practices and principles of technology are included in women's rights agendas. They are bridging the gap between feminist movements and internet rights movements. There are many intersections and strategic opportunities to work together as allies and partners.

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20. https://www.takebackthetech.net/know-more

2.4   Who's got the power?

Fundamentally communications and technology are embedded in a larger context of inequality and power[21] – who has power, who does not, how it is used and for what. As activists we need to understand how power is working in our lives so we can challenge the negative power dynamics that stop us from achieving our social justice objectives. This understanding will make our communication strategies and use of ICTs much more strategic and impactful.

Power

The ability to achieve a purpose and bring about desired change. It includes the ability to secure access and control of resources including financial (money), human (our bodies), material (land or seeds or food) and intellectual (knowledge and skills). Power can be both positive and negative depending on who has it and how they use it.[22]

A feminist movement building approach to ICTs confronts power in the use, access, development and impact of communication technologies and helps us to make smarter and more strategic choices.

Power dynamics in our daily lives are often complicated. From our most intimate relationships and families, to our workplace and larger community, we have to navigate power differences and dynamics. This is also true in communications and social media – from the tools we use and the access that we have, to the media and messages we both produce and experience.

Understanding how power works in the use of ICTs, particularly for women, is the first step that allows us to use these tools strategically.

What are the things about our context that make it hard for women to access the use of a computer or the internet? These factors could be linked to how much money it costs to buy data for a cell phone or regular electricity cuts

21. This section is adapted from
    http://www.justassociates.org/en/resources/mch3-power-concepts-revisioning-power-justice-equality-and-peace
22. Ibidem

that make it impossible to use the computer at your local internet café. Or they could be about society thinking women should not be using technology or learning about it.

If we want to develop good, effective strategies that will bring about change, we need to understand and identify the power dynamics in a given context. We need to ask: **Who has the power?**

A useful way to begin to think about how **power** operates when it comes to communication is to understand that there are many different ways in which power can be expressed. Often, we tend to think of power as negative, the **power over** someone else to coerce, dominate, exploit – or take away a person's freedom or rights.

But power can also be a **positive force** for personal growth, sharing, connecting, and collective action for change. In terms of communication, using our power can be speaking out and telling our stories, challenging the *status quo*, putting forward our ideas, making the case for change and galvanizing people to take action. So we also need to ask: **How can women claim their power in this context?**

There are 3 forms of positive power[23]

1. *"Power within" is our own sense of self-worth, the thing that tells us we are important and that we should look after ourselves.*

2. *"Power to" is our ability to take action to change our world (agency).*

3. *"Power with" is the power we get from acting together (collective action).*

Together these forms of power make us a force to be reckoned with. Importantly, power with can make us safer and more powerful than acting alone. We want positive power to build strong movements for social justice.

To really get at who holds the power when it comes to information, communication, technology and media so that we can better strategise as activists, we need to understand the different *faces* of negative power.

23. Ibidem

There are three faces of negative power[24]:

1. **Visible (making and enforcing the rules)**

Visible power refers to formal decision-making bodies (governmental, legal) – budgets, policy, law, policing; including biased laws and undemocratic decision-making processes.

Actors could include governments or policy-makers.

2. **Hidden (Setting the agenda)**

Hidden power refers to powerful actors behind the scenes that are highly influential and that influence who gets to the decision-making table or what issues get put on the agenda and the outcome.

Actors could include newspapers/media owners, multi-national corporations or Churches/non-state actors who have influence over the State.

3. **Invisible (shaping thinking, values and what is "normal")**

Invisible power refers to influential or internalised beliefs, including cultural norms, values, practices, ideologies and customs that shape public thinking and debate. Dominant norms and ideologies are often skewed towards a particular group's interests (e.g. a belief system like sexism which benefits men and oppresses women).

Actors could include anyone in society including traditional chiefs, religious leaders, family members and ourselves!

If our movement building strategies only take on one or two forms of power, we will not be successful. Good strategies combine challenging all forms of power – although perhaps in different ways and at different times. Invisible power is the most critical to challenge in terms of changing hearts and minds (attitudes).

24. Ibidem

POWER ANALYSIS

To identify visible power we ask "who decides?"

Often our communication strategies focus on impacting policy and opinion at the government, the United Nations or other international/national levels of decision-making power. These individuals and groups have *visible* power. They are visible in that it is easy to identify them and in many cases they are seen as "legitimate" decision-makers because they are "representing us".

To identify hidden power we ask "who influences?"

However, there are many other actors who are less visible but hold a huge amount of influence. This is *hidden* power. For example big companies like Shell influence our governments' policies on the extraction of natural resources; the Church, especially the Catholic Church, may influence policy on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Our communication strategy can help expose the influence of hidden power.

It is important in our communication strategy that we contend with the realities of both visible and hidden power. Otherwise we may, for example, get a law changed but the law is not implemented because the government has been influenced by the hidden power.

To identify invisible power we ask "what are the norms and values? And who benefits?"

There is another form of power that we need to think about. We cannot see it so we call it *invisible*. Invisible power includes the norms and values that define what we should and should not do.

For example, the idea that women should not speak out or be seen on public platforms is not written in law but we may be taught it in our families and communities. It may seem so normal for us that we think the same. This is a critical form of power because however natural it may seem, there is a group that is benefitting from these ideas (often men) and a group that is not (often women). Our communication strategy can interrupt social norms and create space for new ideas and beliefs to be voiced.

In order to have a successful communication strategy we need to make sure that we **understand and challenge all forms of negative power and build our positive power**.

For example, if we want to make sure that all women have access to safe and affordable sexual and reproductive health services services we could carry out the following power analysis:
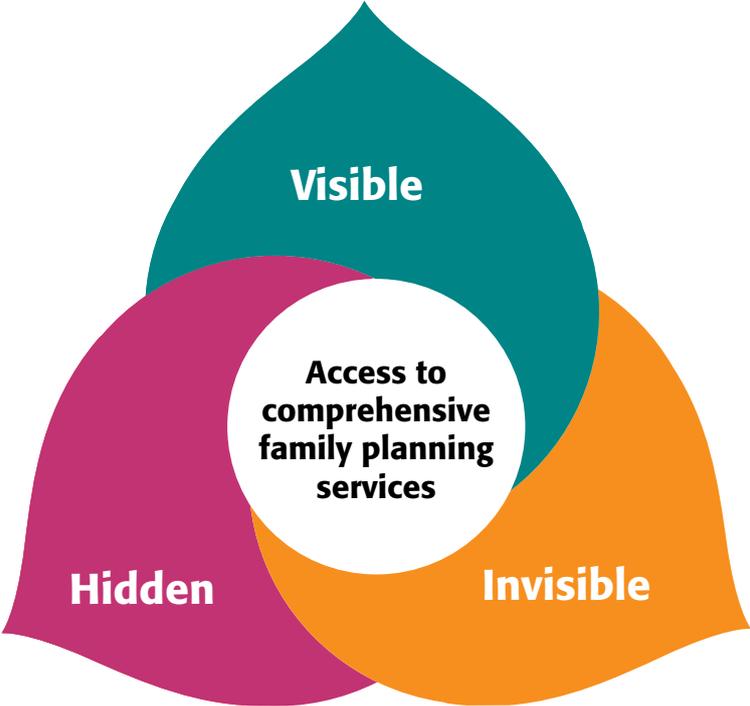
Hidden The media determines what kind of content we can access online, on TV or in newspapers; as well as whether we can find out about different types of contraceptive or whether stories are written condemning women for using contraceptives.

Visible The state decides on the law that determines whether and how women can access services and what those services look like.

Invisible Healthcare providers refuse to provide terminations based on their personal beliefs despite legal provision.

You will see later in the communication strategy section, that this becomes important when we think through who our strategy is directed at (our audience) when we need to ask **who has the power?**

Chapter 3.3: Developing your communications strategy Audience (page 73)

We need to ask what face of power we are targeting with a particular communication:

- *Are we challenging particular interests/positions (visible/hidden power)? What influence/power do they have over the issue we are organising on? What can we ask/persuade them to do about it?*

- *Or are we challenging particular ideas? And what ideas/messages do we want to communicate?*

This will help us think about how we are tackle all the faces of power in our communication and our broader movement building work.

2.5 Challenging negative power and building positive power

Our communication strategies need to be based on our understanding of how power works in our lives and communities, how it is shaping the issues we care about and how we can use communication effectively given all of this to strengthen our organising.

We need to build movements that confront inequality, mobilise our numbers and strategise to make change in a context of visible, hidden and invisible power.

In this toolkit, we argue we need to build *feminist* movements in which we recognise the diversity of women's experiences, solutions and voices—putting them at the forefront of our organising.

JASS' Change Theory[25]

With the power of our numbers—organised around common agendas— women can better challenge inequality and violence, transform power, and make strides in ensuring justice and peace for all.

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25. http://www.justassociates.org/en/change-theory

From this premise, JASS equips women individually and collectively by structuring and sustaining safe spaces where women:

- *deepen their analysis of power and injustice in their lives and their world*

- *gain and generate new tools, information and strategic skills*

- *renew energy and spirit*

- *spark and deepen their organising*

- *practice and innovate new forms of power, leadership and organisation*

- *strengthen political relationships of trust*

- *develop common agendas to address needs, rights and safety and*

- *build vertical and horizontal links across identities, sectors, issue silos, and locations.*

Once women are equipped in these ways, JASS believes that they are better able to:

- *mobilise and amplify political influence*

- *generate and demand resources and freedom from violence*

- *respond to urgent situations, and protect frontline activists and*

- *resist injustice and ultimately transform power in both the personal and public arenas.*

Communications is a key part of movement building. Feminist communication strategies as part of broader organising have the potential to amplify women's voices, shift attitudes and connect local struggles to global solidarity.

If we understand how power works and what kind of impact we want to generate, we can use feminist communication strategies to challenge the *status quo*, and make our movements bigger, mobilising more people to join our struggles and to take on our messages.

Our communication strategies become targeted and specific, capable of reaching out to huge numbers of people because we understand how to
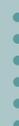
increase our reach and develop messages that challenge the way people think and what they do.

In a world where the media and communications are subject to control from a wide range of forces, being able to understand those forces and develop sharp responses to them in our organising will only make us more effective.

When we make choices around how to communicate and which ICT tools to use we should ask ourselves some questions to ensure that our communications is challenging negative power, building positive power and is feminist in content and process.

We should ask ourselves

- What interests and positions (hidden/visible power) are we challenging?

- What ideas (invisible power) are we trying to challenge?

- What ideas are we trying to communicate?

Chapter 3.3: Developing your communications strategy

Principles for feminist communications

We must ensure:

- we produce content in a democratic manner. Women take the lead. The process serves to build positive power

- women's experiences and stories are visible. Women are telling their own stories. They are agents in their own stories. Our communication responds to the context and the issues that sit close to women's hearts

- respect for diversity across multiple lines e.g. sexuality, location, class, ability, race

- inclusion of the voices of marginalised people e.g. women, LGBTI, sex workers

- ICTs chosen are appropriate to a southern African context

- ICTs are secure and will not put women at risk

- skills are shared and everyone in the organisation is equipped to use the technology safely

- informed and continuous consent of any quotations, videos, interviews and photographs

- your organisation has planned for the human capacity, skills and money to support your communications

NOTES