

# Women's Movement Builder's School



JASS Southeast Asia—Bangkok, June 20-24, 2013



## Introduction

The JASS Movement-Builder's School was designed to deepen and strengthen the knowledge, skills and capacities of facilitators and organizers from the region around facilitation, organizing, and movement-building. The school had a special emphasis on feminist popular education and power -- including a focus on patriarchy and the JASS power framework.

It brought together twenty-five women from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand in a five day intense learning and reflection process. The school included JASS support and facilitation staff from Cambodia, Canada, the Philippines, and the United States. To ensure broader participation and communication, simultaneous interpretation in Bahasa Indonesian, Burmese, English and Khmer was provided.

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## DAY 1 - Concepts of Power, Popular Education and Creating Change

### I. OPENING SESSION

#### **Learning objectives:**

- To create a safe dynamic space for learning and sharing
- To begin to bring experiences, voices and hopes into the room
- To begin to get to know each other, build relationships
- To orient the group to the process, interpretation system, and other logistics

#### Introductions

- Introduction to JASS and JASS SEA
- Circle of Introductions - We shared names, countries and organizations
- For each country, participants shared:
  - o How you greet each other and
  - o What words and gestures you use to express excitement
- We created a set of *Working Agreements* together to ensure maximum learning, collaboration and accountability such as internet use only at breaks and lunch, speaking slowly for interpreters, respecting time limits, etc.



#### **Activity: Tree of Hopes**

We created a tree of our hopes for the school that we used first to identify expectations and then at the end of the workshop to note what we had gained: each participant wrote on a colored paper “leaf” or “bud” one thing she wanted to nurture and develop both in herself and for the women’s movement during the school. We read these aloud and hung them on the branches of our Tree of Hopes.

*“I want to learn more on how to build a movement across the region as a young woman activist.”*

*“I want to know more about women and power.”*

*“I want bring back more to women in my community.”*

#### Road Map: Agenda Review

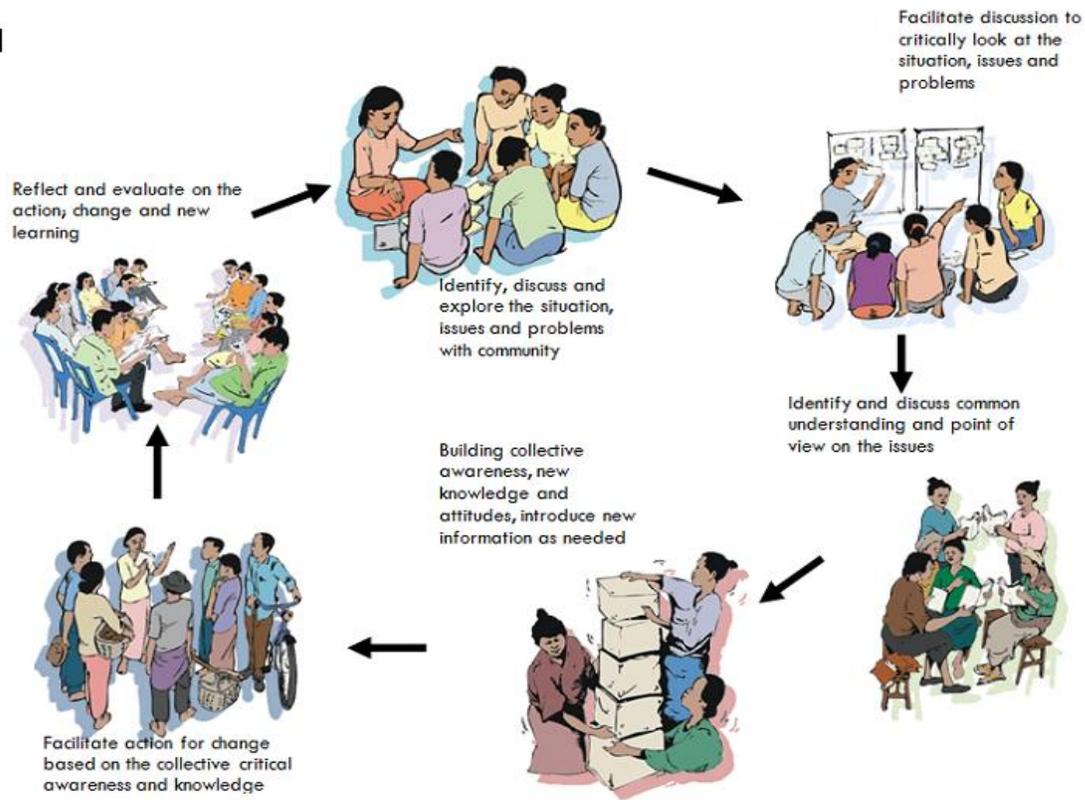
We reviewed the program in light of group expectations, our focus and objectives.

- o Day 1 - Introduce concepts of Power, Popular Education and Creating Change
- o Day 2 – Patriarchy, Gender and Organizing
- o Day 3 – Women’s Rights and Feminism, Movement History
- o Day 4 – Feminist Popular Education in Practice
- o Day 5 – Power Analysis, Strategies for Change, Movement Building
- o Cross Cutting Themes: Power, Creating Change, Feminist Popular Education

Methodology:

- We invited a focus on both content and methodology/ facilitation
- We reviewed our model of popular education: learning in practice, building collective knowledge and linking experience and work for change
- We noted that the methods and pace of the program were adapted to accommodate as best as possible the multilingual communication and interpretation needs, given we were providing interpretation in Khmer, Burmese, Bahasa and English.

### Cycle of Popular Education and Organizing



## II. OUR PLACE OF CHANGE

### Learning Objectives:

- To connect participants personal experience to their work as a facilitator seeking to catalyze change
- To remind ourselves that change involves discovery, conflict, emotion, risk

### Activity: Place of Change

We asked everyone to:

- Think of one place that you think changed you into who you are now.
- Write the name of that place on card, how it changed you and how you felt about the change
- Each woman shared something about her story of change in 1 minute, and posted her card on the wall
- We discussed: How do you feel having done this exercise?



**Group Reflection:** People's stories of change were moving and powerful – Here are a few samples.

*I joined a worker's strike and saw women who were at the forefront of the march being sexually abused and violently attacked; I saw a university friend who had been an activist lose her freedom when she got married and had to move to a strict conservative area, it made me angry and made me want to help women become active; Getting a divorce, I felt free but also sad. Learning about gender changed my path to see the importance of equality and not be so concerned about money, to want to work with other women; Learning about feminism shook up the calm waters in my head, I was confused about what I wanted to do with my life; I was attacked by a religious authority and didn't know I could stand up for my rights, now with training and meeting other women, I see what we can do.*

**Summary:** *Change is not always joyful. It can involve conflict, heartbreak, awareness of power, courage, anger, new interactions, seeing other people's realities; these experiences radicalized us, gave us an opportunity to develop our power, taught us to think critically, brought us new knowledge and the ability to take action. As facilitators and organizers, we work to catalyze personal growth and transformation, to create new forms of collaboration and power so that we can build a better future for all of us. Women's empowerment can be thrilling and exciting but also difficult. People change because of something they feel, not just something they think. We need to remember that out of these challenges and reflections can come great learning, great solidarity and important changes – which are at the heart of our education and organizing work.*

### III. PATTERNS OF POWER - Where are we today and what do we want for our future?

#### Learning Objectives:

- To explore how gender inequality is systemic, look for patterns in how it exists in different institutions and relations of power
- Begin to imagine alternative relations and visions of power
- Use popular education methodology (skit) to surface experiences of systemic power

#### Activity: Skits

By table group – create two short skits like a Youtube video on decision making and power in different arenas: the family, community, an NGO, a women’s organization and the Parliament:

1. What is decision-making and power like in this aspect of your lives today?
2. How would you like it to be different in the future?

Each group took a different arena and presented their two skits; each set of skits was followed by buzz groups and brief plenary discussion around the questions – what did you see happening; how did people relate to one another; At the end of all the skits, there was an overall plenary discussion on what people learned from the different scenarios and what futures they wanted to build



#### Group Reflections: What We Saw and Learned in Role Plays:

- *In the Current Situation:* women have no voice in key decisions, women expected to be submissive, those in power aren’t listening, paternalism, big NGO’s and academics dominate, issues of marginalized people not represented  
*In the Future:* women are more respected, open communication, reduction of power gap, yet overcoming ingrained male patterns of leadership didn’t seem easy. We need a deeper look at our strategies – for example, getting women into places of power doesn’t guarantee they will champion women’s rights.

*“Power is not always obvious but subtle”*

*“Looking at the power play between men and women strikes us that if women are in power they might not care about women either. We have to revisit our strategy of just getting women in power!”*

*“We are also caught in this same dynamic and perpetuate it”*

- *The changes we want to build for our future:*  
These included -- equality among all peoples; inclusion yet ability to recognize and respect differences; love, less greed; brave women able to decide what they want for their lives; safe spaces for women to build trust, to share and learn from one another; strong women’s organizations that help women claim their rights and participate in politics; ever larger circle of similar organizations of people from different backgrounds; ability for all to participate, advance their rights and take initiative and leadership.

**Summary:** Power relationships are deeply taught and internalized. We tend to replicate what is considered “normal”. Without real alternative models or practices, we even repeat male patterns of power and control. But we don’t want new forms of domination to rule our lives and relationships. If we want power sharing, equality, respect and safety for women - we need a deeper understanding of how power works. We have to ask ourselves: How is this person or group using power? Who is controlling the decision-making? Who benefits? What values are implicit? What patterns do we see? What change and alternatives can we envision that will make our dreams of equality and justice a reality?

#### IV. CONCEPTS OF POWER: A First Look

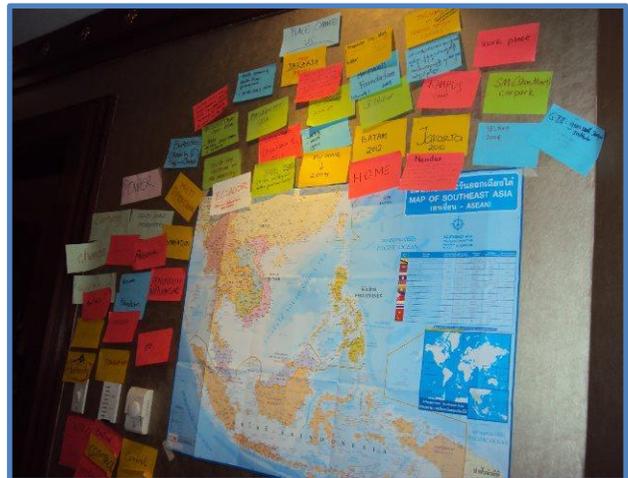
##### Learning Objectives

- Unpacking our own conflicted feelings and discomfort about power as women
- Begin to explore and define some basic analytical categories of power

##### Activity: Power - Word Association and Definition

Word Association: *What’s the first word you think of when hearing the word power?* Each person wrote their answer on a card and placed it on the floor. Words included: control, pressure, domination, money, military, influence, authority, strong, freedom, change, power within ourselves, multidimensional.

**Reflection and Summary:** Sources of power can be material and intellectual; they can come from feelings, connections, relationships, position, control over resources etc. Differences in power are often established and reinforced through norms, values, roles, behaviors, and structures, perpetuated by institutions like the family, education, law, religion, the media among others. Power is relational and dynamic, always changing. Power plays out across gender, race, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality – privileging some while undercutting and excluding others.



We know that power can be positive or negative depending on the purpose. When negative and oppressive, it generates struggle and resistance. When struggles successfully challenge the status quo, backlash often gets triggered. And the dance and struggle of power and change continues.

As women we are not supposed to have power nor to want it. In part, we reject the whole idea of power because we have experienced how it tries to dominate us and undermine our lives -- from patriarchy and militarism to unchecked corporate capitalism. Feminists and women’s rights activists have developed a variety of analytical categories to help us understand these complexities. They use the category **power over** to refer to the nature of oppressive power -- power made up of negative, repressive forces that subjugate, impoverish and threaten women and their families. They use the category **transformative power** to describe the power we have within ourselves and with others that we use in order to take action and confront these forces. This category refers to the

multiple powers we tap and develop in order to change these conditions and build more just societies and relationships. These transformative powers are often abbreviated as: *power to, power within, and power with.*

Power Over is	Transformative Power is
Exploitative, dominance	<b><u>Within ourselves:</u></b>
Exclusion and control	Hope and belief in change
Violence, or threat	Self-esteem, respect
Repression	Dignity, passion for change, empathy
Force	
I Win- you lose, master - servant relationship	<b><u>With others:</u></b>
Corruption	Unity, finding common ground across differences,
Discrimination, subordination	Collective strength, shared struggle
Cooptation	Solidarity, working together, collaboration
Hate	
Divisiveness	<b><u>The ability to take action</u></b>
Demonization	Potential of every person to act, shape her life
	Ability to create change with others

Negative, controlling and dominating forms of power along with positive transformative forms are exercised in different arenas of our lives: public (e.g. employment, politics, community organizations), private (e.g. family, relationships, friends, marriage) and intimate (our self-esteem, confidence, control over body) that change and shift according to our different contexts.

All this raises the question of what is the nature of power we want to build and how to build it.

## V. FEMINIST POPULAR EDUCATION

### Learning Objectives:

- Introduce and review principles of FPE
- Become more familiar with them by applying them to today's methodologies

### Homework Activity:

- Each group applies 2 principles in order to assess today's activities and presents their reflections tomorrow

## VI DAILY MINI-EVALUATION

### Objectives

- Surface how people are doing, feeling, learning
- Allow facilitators to get a sense of the effectiveness of the day's activities and make adjustments in plans for the following day

### PRINCIPLES OF FEMINIST POPULAR EDUCATION

- Analysis of power/patriarchy from a feminist perspective according to context and political moment
- Focus on organizing, action, transformation, intersectionality
- Experience/Reflection/Action Spiral – praxis
- Critical thinking and questioning
- Integral holistic approach: heart, mind, body
- Affirmation/production of women's knowledge
- Self-care and joy, safe spaces
- Spirituality/Inspiration/Hope
- Critical and transformative consciousness
- Multiple ways of knowing and learning – reading, writing, talking, drawing, analytical frameworks, group reflection, laughing, crying, doing, music, singing, dancing



### Activity: Four Daily Questions

- What was one of the most important or new things you learned?
- What did you really like about today?
- What would you change for tomorrow?
- What needs more explanation?

## DAY 2: Patriarchy, Gender and Organizing

I. **OPENING:** Video, Review of Evaluations, Day's Road Map

### II. REFLECTION ON USE OF PRINCIPLES OF FEMINIST POPULAR EDUCATION

#### Learning Objectives:

- Draw out collective knowledge about methodology
- Deepen the understanding and practice of popular education principles
- Assess previous day's activities



#### Activity: Reflection

- Discussed to what extent our agenda yesterday reflected each of the principles; agreed that most were present except for the one that stresses the need to examine global forces affecting our work and lives. And while we mentioned structural forces, we didn't clarify or deepen any analysis around structural issues.
- When asked if there were any important principles missing, none were mentioned.
- For a deeper analysis of methodology we discussed what it takes to create and protect a safe space for women. Everyone shared ways they had created such spaces, including: need to share stories, build trust slowly, and respect people's voices; allow for emotion, let feelings flow even though people may be struggling to tell an emotional story, don't cut them off, find ways to support them; keep a clear focus; maintain balance of power in a group; find creative constructive ways to share the space and allow for everyone to participate – from talking sticks to attentive facilitation.

*"We created an affirmative effort to give power and space to younger women...facilitated with attention to power relationships. This is what it takes to create safe space."*

*"To help ensure safe, respectful spaces and fair participation, we ask everyone to evaluate their own behavior on a daily basis with the question -- Today, how much space did I take? And how much space did I give to others?. This daily reflection helps create a more equitable sharing and greater awareness, especially among those who tend to dominate conversations."*

*" We come into a space with all the walls and obstacles already in that space. We find differences and common ground for a bridge. We need a longer time to speak and share, not just our knowledge but also our stories - time to analyze our lives, speak and listen together, give feedback. This is both self-care and safe space."*

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*"At first it is all the men that come to talk to us. But because we believe in gender equality we need to see women in decision-making. We make a point that women know a lot more about what is going on in the community. Now more and more women are leading the action."*

**Summary:** The way we create a **learning process** is deeply connected to the kind of **change** we are trying to create and the **power** we are trying to build. Starting with women's experiences, **feminist popular education** focuses on developing collective knowledge, analysis, solidarity and action. It involves understanding and demystifying the ways patriarchy shapes people's lives and reinforces inequalities.

### III. MASTER'S HOUSE: POWER AND PATRIARCHY

#### Learning Objectives:

- To understand gender inequality more deeply and see how it operates systemically in beliefs, patterns of relationships and institutional forms
- To examine how we perpetuate these beliefs and patterns
- To see how different forms of **power over** and patriarchy function in conjunction with each other
- To share various methods of unpacking gender inequality

**Activity: Masters House** –We will examine systems, patterns and beliefs that shape our experience as women. We are going to look at different areas of our lives and ask ourselves: What roles beliefs and behaviors do we learn as boys and girls/ men and women? Where do we learn the things we know?

- Each small group took an arena of life: School, Religion, Media, Government, Family and Community, Culture and tradition to answer the question.
- Wrote answers down on colored sheets of paper and constructed our paper house.
- Shared our responses and discussed patterns.



**Reflections:** What do we think about this Master's House? What feelings does it evoke? How does it play out in every day life?

*"I used to tell my mother to get out of the master's house but she said -- This is my house. You cannot have a family without a man"*  
*"This house is the world. We can't really get out. It challenges us to deal with issues in a different way – what tools can we use?"*  
*"We will become weaker and weaker if we stay in this house."*  
*"I am angry with the system. But I am also in this house. "We need an alternative house. We need to study the past and learn about power relationships."*  
*"We must ask whose interests does it serve and shake the house's foundations so we can change it. We must tear down its walls"*  
*"We can't just dwell on the negative, we need hope and inspiration to help us create something new."*

**Summary:** Where did we learn what we know? From our culture, school, society, media, friends, community, religion, boyfriend/girlfriend, family, law, politics, language, literature. Patriarchy is present in everything we do, in our sense of ourselves, how we think about sex, work, our bodies, the way we dress, etc. This is a lifelong challenge to make this change. We are not born with this thinking - it is learned. Our focus going forward: what does it mean to do the work of breaking down the Master's house?

**Discussion:** This is one way to do an analysis of patriarchy, what are other exercises that you have used to help women understand patriarchy?

- Analyzing popular sayings (Malaysia) for sexist messages,
- Developing a Gender Tree analysis that looks at branches and roots of patriarchy such as beliefs,

- institutions and behaviors (Myanmar),
- \Reviewing history with a critical lens (pre-colonial, colonial periods, to present) and the roles of women through time, showing women's movements and the positive changes we have achieved;
- Role playing – god parents asked to bring gifts to girl and boy godchildren, followed by gender analysis of differences in gifts
- Using a Spider Web exercise to analyze the interconnected patterns of power affecting women --take a news item (e.g. a rape) and ask a participant to represent the woman in the case. She is asked to sit at the center of a circle holding some long strings in her hands; the group then is asked to name the reasons why this happened (she wore a short skirt, worked late, men have power etc.); as participants name the reasons, they take a string and move back to their place in the circle; soon the woman is entangled in a web of strings; Then everyone discusses how she got into this web, how we are all implicated in the story; if we cut one string, will it be enough to change? How can we free her?



#### IV. HOW WE CONFRONT AND CHALLENGE *POWER OVER*: TWO CASE STUDIES

##### Learning Objectives:

- Share real life stories and political experiences that address some of the forces of *power over* that women face in the region – patriarchy, militarism and land-grabbing
- Deepen understanding how *power over* is used to silence women and protect elite interests; introduce notions of visible, hidden/shadow and invisible *power over*; apply that analysis to specific experiences
- Clarify how we tap into transformative forms of power to challenge *power over* in order to advance women's rights Begin to link this power analysis to strategy development

##### Activity: Case Studies and Analysis - Malaysia and Philippines

Two stories were presented:

- o Philippines– Reproductive Rights law
- o Malaysia – Pro-Democracy/Anti-Corruption

**Discussion:** We examined the cases using a power framework that allows for a deeper analysis of how *power over* operates in different forms to privilege men over women, rich over poor, certain ethnic and racial groups over others, etc. *Power over* includes some of the overriding forces in our lives – from patriarchy and militarism to unfettered capitalism -- forces that shape women's and men's potential and ability to act. In the face of *power over*, women and other marginalized groups find ways to resist and challenge these patterns of power as was seen clearly in both case studies.

While elements of *power over* are everywhere and seem impossible to overcome, experiences around the world show the opposite. Change is possible and feminist and women's rights activists are at the forefront of these struggles. They are re-envisioning the nature of power, how it operates, and the multiple strategies needed for change. Power, we know, can be exploitative and violent as well as generous, caring, and democratic. Our vision encompasses these complexities and recognizes the interconnections between

women's struggles and those of other marginalized groups. This larger vision calls for ever broader and stronger movements to transform and build new relationships of power and solidarity across gender, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality, among others. The challenge is how to analyze power dynamics and weave together a mix of strategies that support this transformation.

We have found a deeper analysis of *power over* to be helpful in developing our strategies for confronting the tangled web of patriarchy, militarism and corporate control. The ways that **power over** operate can be divided into three sub-categories: **visible, hidden and invisible**. These interact together to undermine women's voice and participation in politics and social change. They reinforce one another to keep women subjugated and maintain the status quo.

In the situation of women, **visible power** refers to the biases found in observable formal government decision making institutions, its rules, policies and authorities. These operate to favor men and other elites such as corporate forces. These are used to maintain male privilege and elite control through the legal system and, in the Philippines case, to try to stop the passage of a reproductive health law.

Reinforcing visible power, a **shadow or hidden power** operates to control the political agenda and protect private and other elite interests that aim to subjugate women and other marginalized groups. Strong organized forces such as multinationals, militaries, political parties, and religions work to silence people who challenge their interests by name-calling, threatening their safety and controlling information. The Filipino Catholic church and others worked to restrict the women's health agenda and prevent women from voicing their concerns and exercising their rights. They did this by calling them demons and baby killers and attacking the legitimacy of women's organizations, their leaders and allies.

**Invisible** forms of *power over* work to shape and control how people think by promoting ideas and belief systems that are internalized and accepted as normal. Operating largely on a sub-conscious invisible level, these beliefs are manipulated to reinforce the idea of women's subservience and men's right to control women's behaviors and bodies. Institutions of education, the family and religion interact to strengthen these beliefs and norms. Ideologies such as patriarchy and neo-liberalism are other ways invisible power is exercised. In the Filipino case, long-held religious and sexist beliefs were used to try and undermine support for the reproductive health law.

When women work to defend or advance their rights, they inevitably confront these different uses and practices of *power over*. To overcome them, they draw on a range of strategies that tap forms of **transformative power – the power to act and change** their lives and societies. To do this, they develop and strengthen **power within themselves** (self-worth, critical thinking skills, a sense of hope etc.) **and power with others** (collaboration, coalitions, social movements, solidarity, etc.)

Filipina feminists and women's rights activists used a variety of strategies to confront the different ways *power over* operates in their context. They focused principally on challenging forms of **visible power over** – on passing a law. To do this their strategies tapped *transformative* forms of power, especially **power with others**. They built coalitions, organized petition drives and research, did lobbying, media work, and mobilizing -- all in order to pressure lawmakers. They were successful in getting the law passed which is a huge tribute to women's activism. But, as to be expected, the forces of backlash have raised their ugly heads. Opponents are now seeking an injunction from the Supreme Court. How women's groups sustain their struggle will be an ongoing challenge – one that requires not only pressuring formal power but strengthening grassroots voices and organizing as well as consciousness-raising and solidarity. **Power within** becomes the foundation for all of this work. These more comprehensive strategies attempt to address the complex nature

of how *power over* works and how its visible, hidden and invisible forms operate.

**Presentation: Three Faces of Power: Power Over**

We reviewed a basic framework, sometimes called the three faces of power, that describes different ways *power over* operates to maintain the status quo and prevent women from participating in political action. While the framework is presented in a box format, life never can be contained in these neat categories. It is always messy. The different forms of *power over* are constantly interacting, reinforcing one another and morphing to adapt to shifts in the context.

To complete the framework, we added some of the main strategies used to promote social change and justice and challenge *power over*. All these change strategies reflect different types of *transformative power*. Each one interacts with the other and reinforces women’s ability to take action (their agency). However, the major type we use to confront *visible and hidden/power* tends to be *power with others* – the collective power we gain from working together. The principal way we address *invisible forms* of power and patriarchy tends to be *power within ourselves* – the individual and personal power we gain from developing our self-esteem and sense of worth and dignity, our critical thinking skills and awareness of how power operates, our skills and knowledge, etc.

**Three Faces of Power Over: Our Change Strategies** (adapted from John Gaventa)

Power Over: Visible, Hidden, Invisible	Power to act: Our Change Strategies: Power within and with
<b>VISIBLE</b> – Biased formal decision making structures, rules, and laws that privilege men over women, rich over poor, etc. (seen in lawmakers, courts, policies, budgets, electoral processes, etc. )	<b>Advocacy and lobbying</b> , election work, court cases, budget oversight, media, research, reports etc. -- pressure to overcome unfair laws, policies and practices and promote alternatives
<b>HIDDEN/SHADOW</b> – powerful players often working in the shadows to control the political agenda and protect elite interests by silencing, threatening, and discrediting women, their organizations and their leaders	<b>Organizing, mobilizing</b> , alliance building, leadership development, public education, work with media, do research, expose secrets, strengthening social movements and NGOs focused on justice, solidarity, etc.
<b>INVISIBLE</b> – use and manipulation of invisible internalized beliefs, norms, and values to legitimize existing power relationships and structures including patriarchy, militarism and unfettered corporate control	<b>Question power, break the silence, engage hearts and minds:</b> feminist popular education, consciousness-raising, critical thinking, power analysis, democratic practice, affirmation of vision and hope, promotion of values, ideas, worldview based on rights, justice and dignity

**Reflection:**

*“Most power is hidden or invisible.”*  
*“Many NGOs have focused on visible power alone – advocacy, elections, rights. But without work on other two faces of power, does not produce results”*

**Summary:** We need to engage and confront all the ways that **power over** operates – from visible and hidden power to invisible. We need to create comprehensive strategies to challenge the patterns and practice of power that subjugate women and perpetuate patriarchy, militarism and unchecked corporate control. By tapping **transformative power** – power with others, within ourselves and the power to act -- we can build and reinforce new and more egalitarian and democratic practices of power. To be effective long term, we need multiple strategies -- strategies that break the silence, expose truth, promote critical awareness and thinking, use diverse media to educate and motivate, mobilize alliances and direct action, and organize to build community and solidarity. For too long we have tended to focus on visible power and the short term. We have paid less attention to challenging hidden/shadow and invisible forms of power that is necessary for long term success and change.



IV. Homework: Prepare for Next Day’s activities – Timeline / Building Our History  
 Each country group asked to identify 4-5 pivotal moments in their country’s history that shaped women’s lives and struggles, write them on separate cards to be placed on an historical timeline the next day

Daily Evaluation

### DAY 3: Women’s Rights and Feminism, Movement History

**I. OPENING** - Energizer, Evaluation Summary, Day’s Road Map

**II. METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION** – Facilitating For Deeper Understanding

**Learning Objectives**

- Exchange knowledge and experience among participants about their work as facilitators
- Modeled transparency in our process

**Activity:** Buzz Groups and Discussion

- What are the ways you share stories in your own trainings?
- What are the kinds of questions you ask to help people go deeper?

Discussion:

*We invite stories by telling our own...ask open ended questions...ask them about their feelings.”  
 We use media /codes as a trigger for their stories – then ask: what did you see happen, what is your opinion of it, how would you handle that situation, etc?  
 We use drawing pictures/body outlines, ask people to touch the part of their body they most like, in order to get at deep level of personal stories and scars .  
 When strong emotions surface, we wait so person has a chance to express their feelings, allow them to recover and then we express our empathy together.*

**Summary:** One of the important roles of the facilitator is to synthesize and keep the road map clear. If you don't do that you end up with techniques but no deeper understanding of power and strategy. We are peeling "layers of the onion" about power, change and feminist popular education as a strategy to both challenge and build new kinds of transformative power.



### III. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

#### Learning Objectives:

- To understand dynamics of power as they evolve over time by looking at significant events, and people's movements
- To understand local, regional, global links
- To see relationships between women's movements, feminism and other social movements
- To reflect on the different kinds of questions needed to generate a good analysis

#### Activity: Timeline - Defining Events and Analysis

Framing question: What have been some important global events/moments affecting women's lives, our rights and broader struggles for justice?

- Valerie and others put some key global events and social justice movements on the timeline; participants added others, including important regional events and justice struggles, noting the role of feminists and women's rights activists and their movements.
- Each country group then put up their set of defining events, movements and women's struggles

#### Reflection on Timeline: Power, social movements and women's movements

The timeline shows the struggles between different forces in the world -- struggles over resources and control and over whose voices count. If we dig deeper we can see how some of these forces use *power over* to exclude and marginalize certain voices like women and the poor. The values and visions of society that these forces espouse are principally driven by a narrow set of self and corporate interests. Rejecting notions of the collective good or the public commons, they rationalize and justify their individual superiority and wealth.

These social, political and economic groups compete to maintain their position and supremacy in the world and use *visible, hidden and invisible power* to do so. How? *Visible:* They compete to control the visible formal rule-making institutions and laws of society, frequently buying elections and officials. *Hidden:* They work to control the political agenda and discredit and threaten any voices that challenge their private interests and authority, often trying to hide those interests from public scrutiny. *Invisible:* And they use

norms and beliefs to manipulate how people think, reinforcing unconscious ideas about what is right and normal and who voices should count.

In the face of these forces and their use of *power over*, we see resistance. Colonialism and imperialism tell the story of the North's quest for resources and control that has been pervasive. Yet its interventions and actions have led to independence and liberation struggles. In response, forces of power and capitalism have morphed to find new instruments of exploitation -- from free trade agreements to privatization and structural adjustment policies. To challenge current economic crises and inequities new waves of struggle emerge. People are mobilizing globally, building on the long history of movements, past and present. The list is long -- anti-colonial struggles, human rights movements, anti-slavery, environmental, peace, women's, anti-nuclear, labor, LGBT, among others. Women have been the backbone of almost all of these movements and continue to be so. Often unrecognized, feminist movements have been at the forefront of change yet they are attacked and demonized. In spite of these circumstances, feminists and other activists continue to challenge injustice. Increasingly, feminists are looking to create visionary approaches of change that rest on new forms of inclusive, loving and collaborative power and sense of environmental stewardship.

- As a way to reflect on facilitation skills, buzz groups brainstormed a series of questions that they would ask as facilitators to help others make meaning from this timeline -- specifically to help them understand how power and change have operated and the link between events at different levels.
  - *What do you see here and what do you feel about learning this history?*
  - *Who are the major actors in this timeline at different levels?*
  - *What are the patterns and similarities that brought about changes?*
  - *What linkages do you see among the timeline histories and players?*
  - *What are the most significant moments/conditions that have produced advances for women?*



#### IV. FEMINISM: FEMINISM, WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

##### **Learning Objectives:**

- Unpack the negativity associated with feminism and links to power over/invisible power
- Explore the contributions of feminist movements, the leadership of women and how they have engaged visible, hidden and in visible power

**Activity:** Part 1 -Quick Word Association: What is the first word you associate with feminism?

*“Radical, man haters, slut, ball buster, beauty haters, aggressive, wild, lesbian, communist..”*

Part 2 - Buzz Groups and Reflection: What do you think feminism is really about? And why are women seen as extremists? Why don't some women want to be seen as feminists?

*“Women’s organizing for equality and justice ...demanding equality but not sameness, a complete change in all areas of life... freedom, liberation for all...challenging systems that abuse power, constructing new systems.”*

*“Men don’t want to lose privilege...scared of change...women are questioning the established order...yet women can be afraid about being judged or marginalized, stigmatized.”*

**Summary :** This is how *power over* works – not only through biased laws but by name calling – discrediting and demonizing us, seeking to limit our actions through fear and prejudice.

- We have to push back, stand up, be unified, and project a positive, creative vision of feminism. We can see all 3 Faces of *Power over* at work in the timeline through our struggles, our gains, inevitable backlash, new challenges, and new movements.
- We need to be inspired by our struggles and achievements. Too often they remain unrecognized by history, since the historical record tends to be written by men. Even women are unaware of these stories of women’s struggle and hope.



Daily Evaluation

## DAY 4: Feminist Popular Education in Practice

### I. OPENING: Energizer, Evaluation Summary and Road Map

### II. FEMINIST POPULAR EDUCATION IN PRACTICE

#### **Learning objectives:**

- Gain a political understanding of feminist popular education as part of organizing for change
- To apply the principles of feminist popular education to an actual situation
- Practice designing/facilitating FPE activities, probing questions and “critica amorosa”

#### **Activity:** Facilitated Presentations and Reflection

In small groups: as part of an on-going organizing effort to build the individual and collective power of women, develop a popular education process that eventually will lead to action.

- Define a specific real life problem that women want to solve and the specific women who want to solve it.
- Design and facilitate a 10 minute activity using codes/media that is part of your overall process, using us as your group
- Present the next steps of your organizing process according to the popular education cycle, tell us how this will lead to action. Insert popular education cycle slide



Feedback: After each session we offered “critica amorosa” (loving critique), asking a set of probing questions to help improve facilitation and the design of learning activities and approaches:

- Reflection questions: how did the process work, did their codes/ media selections work, did their questions help you go deeper in understanding the problem, did they engage you, did it link to organizing next steps?
- To the presenting group we probed about their process- how they identified an issue, what they learned, if they found a way to actually engage the community
- Back to the whole group – do these challenges happen to you too?

#### **Reflection:**

*“We saw how to use codes/ media to bring issues into a living process with our communities and start dialogue (e.g self ranking gender scale, role plays, video, community mapping, seasonal calendar, generative questions).”*  
*“We helped surface some difficult issues and invited reflection.”*

*“These are good tools but we need to be selective, be very familiar with code/media before using it”*

*“Need critical questions that are sharper... bring in power analysis, more peeling the onion – WHY do we behave this way, WHY are women dying, WHY are wages different, etc.”*

**Summary:** Feminist popular education is a fundamental part of our movement-building and approaches to change. It starts with women’s real life problems and is guided by feminist ethics and analysis of power. Grounded in critical, probing questions, it help us think more deeply about our lives and act more effectively to change our world. Often using codes that represent women’s experiences like drawings, photos or skits, it challenges us to examine and question what we know personally and incorporate the wisdom and experience of others. As facilitators we also introduce additional knowledge that allows women to develop fresh perspectives and create ever more transformative awareness, analysis and action. Together we build on what we know to create new knowledge and understanding.

While valuing all kinds of people, feminist popular education especially values who we are as women and human beings, tapping into the fullness of our lives – how we feel, think and move. Thoughtful examination of the hard realities of power and patriarchy is complemented by moments of laughter and joy to inspire and sustain us. By encouraging critical thinking about the forces of inequality, feminist popular education lays the foundation for action and transformation. By making connections between the body, mind and spirit, it legitimizes our multiple intelligences and challenges *power over* in new ways.

It offers us the opportunity to imagine and create different kinds of power that are grounded in collaboration, equality, and reciprocity. This vision and practice are fundamental to movement building. Through the long-term process of building social movements, we are forging alternative power. We are not making a parallel NGO world that imitates oppressive systems and relationships. Rather, we are working to build democratic culture and structures based on egalitarian values and principles as well as critical consciousness. Popular education often uses a technique that asks “but why?” to encourage critical thinking and analysis. The whole way *power over* works is to deflect such processes that question and challenge the status quo; it works to stop people from doing any kind of thoughtful analysis.



### III. POPULAR EDUCATION - what does it have to do with organizing?

#### Learning Objectives

- To deepen our understanding of popular education and power – individual and collective
- To explore how FPE works to challenge invisible power - breaking silence, building solidarity and critical consciousness

#### Presentation and Discussion:

#### FEMINIST POPULAR EDUCATION (FPE)

Individual	Collective
Breaks the silence, allows me to speak my truths, to understand power dynamics, to know that my voice and experience count, that I am not inferior, not to blame	Surfaces heartfelt shared problems, identifies solutions, connects problem-solving to an analysis of power and collective action
Helps me find and use my voice, ask questions, work with others; tap my creativity, joy and hope; develop values, skills, knowledge and multiple intelligences – mind, heart, body	Nurtures sustained involvement and collaboration, democratic and dynamic leadership, synergies between people and groups and develops new knowledge
Affirms that I am not alone, there are others too,	Builds trust, solidarity: spurs joint action
Instills a sense of <i>agency</i> (belief and desire to act and change the world), activism, rights, and justice	Develops motivation and ownership, a shared vision and practice of transformative power

**Summary:** Feminist popular education (FPE) is a powerful tool we use in our organizing because it helps create a safe space for women to gain a sense of their individual and collective power and develop community. Deep inside ourselves we have internalized much of the oppressive views about women’s roles and place in society -- in other words, invisible power. This is why feminist popular education is so important. It helps women discover how to break the silence, how to speak out. On the first day of the workshop, some of you asked why women don’t support each other. How can we do that? When done well, FPE generates trust and solidarity, teaches us to build collective power, shared forms of leadership, and an acceptance of difference.

Daily Evaluation

## DAY 5: Power Analysis, Strategies for Change, Movement Building

### I. OPENING: Energizer, Evaluation Summary and Road Map

### II. REVIEW OF POWER SUMMARY:

- If we want to be movement builders then we need to think not just about addressing a problem but also about shifting and transforming power. We know that changing laws and winning elections are important but insufficient. The problem is deeper. We need other strategies over time to build alliances, organize people, strengthen their critical thinking, and build a movement.
- A look at social change movements shows us that they have done three things:
  - Mobilized people to address a deeply felt problem (e.g trade unions to stop abuse of workers)
  - Help us gain recognition of our rights and forms of power we didn't have before (civil rights, women's rights, workers' rights)
  - Changed the way we think about power
- Power can be positive or negative depending on its purpose/use. We are building power to, with and within vs. power over. We are confronting power in all 3 Faces (see earlier charts).
- Popular education is designed to unleash and affirm power to, with, within. We are taught to believe that expertise is the answer. It does not connect or build the women's power. How we present information and engage women can either support or block their sense of power. Information is important but it is not a substitute for organizing and power.
- We need to start with where a community is, finding something concrete. Change comes from a process of discovery, of conflict.
- We are not here to help someone else. We are here to help each other.



### III. POWER ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

#### Learning Objectives:

- Practice doing power analysis in all 3 Faces of Power (see earlier chart)
- Practice developing strategies for change that address a deeply felt problem AND build women's individual and collective power over time.

#### Activity:

Goal: Working in country groups practice creating a long-term strategy for change and power

1: Using the problem from Day 4, analyze how **power over** in all 3 Faces (visible, hidden and invisible) is at work and prevents women from acting together to solve it.

Analysis Questions:

- Visible: What are the current laws, polices, government decision making processes or (lack of) laws, policies and processes affecting this problem either pro or con?
- Shadow/Hidden: Who are the current players or organized forces that silence or undermine women's voices and actions on this problem? What are they doing to keep women quiet and keep their issues and problems off the political agenda?
- Invisible: What beliefs/norms prevent women from demanding change or speaking out about this problem? What beliefs/norms prevent society from thinking that this is even a problem?

2: Map out a variety of strategies and actions that address these different forms of **power over** using feminist popular education approaches, organizing, alliance building, etc.

3. Present your strategies for change.

**Summary:** Our work ahead is to connect all of what we have done and talked about to movement-building over the long term. No single organization or effort can do all of this. We need to build collective power with alliances locally and regionally. And we need to support the development of powerful women with feminist ethics and analysis at the center or we will get nowhere. Our work will have to go beyond stakeholder analysis and simple awareness-raising to power analysis and organizing. We have information on our website and we will share this with in a follow up packet. The challenge is for you to help shape and expand these processes in your own context.



#### IV. NEXT STEPS

##### JASS

- We will share our methodology and follow up packet
- We will support you in sharing tools, insights, etc.
- We will explore on line courses, and other ways to facilitate learning from each other

##### Myanmar

- Possible exchanges among countries given the ASEAN chair goes to Myanmar, and upcoming youth forum
- Could we do something together across the region – like One Day One Voice?

##### Indonesia:

- We want to bring this methodology to regional issues
- We will hold a consolidation meeting for all that went to workshop

##### Malaysia

- How about a SEA specific FB group to share tactics, share challenges?

##### Cambodia

- We will integrate this knowledge into this work to create local organization
- Let's keep our connection among the 5 countries that came here

##### Philippines

- Like exposure/integration trips among our countries



## V. Closing Reflections and Fruit from Our Tree of Hopes:

*"Now I don't think of feminism as scary anymore. It is just men that are afraid that women will rise. I am a woman and a feminist who works for women's rights."*

*"I know that change requires risk and sacrifice. It is emotional."*

*"A woman can be more dangerous than a shotgun."*

*"I was losing my confidence. But I have found solidarity here. I feel reborn in myself."*

*"Now I understand the word feminism which makes me happy."*

*"I never attended a meeting like this. I never heard the word feminism before. I also never analyzed power before. Within 5 days I changed. I don't want to go back, I want to discuss more!"*

*"I have experienced many kinds of diversity of gender here. It shocked me first, then I learned a lot."*

*"I am feeling powerful now."*

*"I see now that I am an agent of change. In these days of conversation I found my home."*

*"The feeling I have strongly is that I must always work with women and link to environmental work."*

*"I have new spirit and new family. I have understood the most important part of my life. Now when I feel weak or fearful, I can draw on all the women here as sisters."*

*"This space allowed me to participate and learn more"*

*"I learned a lot from the participants which means that the facilitation was really good."*

*"I know I am on the right track. This is the work I have to do."*

*"We need to stand up and lead change, rise up, we don't need to wait."*

*"Being here I feel stronger. The women's movement is strong."*

***"To see this tree bloom gives me great hope."***



This report was written by Alexa Bradley in collaboration with Valerie Miller.