



Alquimia: The Alchemy of Cross Pollination in Movement Learning

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Abstract:

We explore the meaning, significance, and specific practices of feminist pedagogy of the Alquimia Feminist Leadership Schools. We show how these schools, convened by Just Associates (JASS) in Mesoamerica and nurtured from the experience of JASS globally, contribute to strengthen movements and movement leaders (largely indigenous and rural land defenders) and examine how Alquimia creates safe spaces and uses feminist popular education to challenge and transform aspects of power that marginalize, demean, and threaten women and their communities, while catalyzing imagination and action for long-term social justice and change agendas.

Keywords: Feminist Pedagogy, Popular Education, Movement Building, Epistemic Communities, Lifelong Learning

Preamble

Knowledge is not a point of arrival. It is a point of departure, a point of departure for more learning. Popular education does not try and standardize consciousness/thinking, which we see as an important idea to abandon. It is not the classical partisan political training that so many receive. Knowledge is intended to provide critical tools, and engage conceptual

frameworks as tools to enable a reading of the present that can shed light on past experiences that can point to the future (Ardón 2021).

We are two women thinking about knowledge, learning, and movements – relationships that sit at the intersection of our work at Just Associates <1> and in this conversation are the echoes of multiple knowledge processes and experiences of other colleagues in JASS and those of the women with whom we work. Shereen Essof is the Executive Director of JASS from Zimbabwe, and Patricia Ardón is the Regional Director of JASS Mesoamerica from Guatemala. We each bring years of feminist movement building support and organizing, feminist pedagogical, popular education curriculum design, and facilitation experience from different locations in a constellation of feminist practice through academia, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and within and alongside social and women’s movements.

Our shared starting point in this piece is the central question: what is the meaning and significance of feminist pedagogy and learning within movements? From there, we explore what constitutes feminist praxis, and what is the rich vein of alliance building and cross-pollination of public feminisms and feminist scholarship that exists and is possible between and among a range of sites and locations as part of the movement project? Because we are “speaking” across contexts, and our mother tongues are different, we start with the recognition that we enter from different doorways with implications for language, reference points, histories, and meaning-making. This, a cross pollination in itself, is also what interests us. We have crafted this paper out of numerous conversations <2> and through written reflections to enable the greatest freedom of form and clarity of expression. We hope that the intertwining of our words and voices offers the complexity of insight and inquiry we experienced in exploring the importance of pedagogical praxis and learning within movements.

Learning, Knowledge, and Movements

If we want to explore the relationship between learning, knowledge, and movements we would need to begin by acknowledging that each of these are highly political terms that should be looked at through the lens of geopolitics, history, and struggle. Decolonial, feminist, anti-racist, queer, and anarchist traditions demonstrate the exclusions and violence at the heart of the emergence and reproduction of racism and capitalism and how these systems are all built upon alienation and separation that is deeply gendered (Fanon 1963; Foucault 1980; Holloway 2002; Mama 2001; Hill-Collins 2002; hooks 2003; Anzaldúa 2007; Lugones 2010; Tamale 2013). The violence against women occurs through relationships of power-over (Miller et al. 2006) that includes hierarchy and competition. Such violence is reproduced through a spatial logic of separation, division, and dispossession, all deeply authoritarian given it involves a view of the world that is reflective of the interests of those in power (Freire 1972).

Feminists demonstrate that these alienated relationships become embedded in our hearts, minds, and bodies (Lorde 2000; Hill-Collins 2002; Anzaldúa 2007). This alienation impoverishes our world our relationships with each other, and ourselves. These alienated relationships create binaries such as teacher/student, man/woman, black/white, hetero/queer, rational/emotional, mind/body, urban/rural, and these relationships reinforce received understandings of how power and privilege accrue as a result of our intersectional identities (Crenshaw 1991). This systemic inscription of people in relationships of power and privilege necessitates deep work on the part of movements to disrupt, dismantle, and heal the resulting social realities and decolonize our minds, imaginations, sense of self, and sense of possibility. This political commitment and work are both part of and necessary to our liberation.

Majority world feminists in formal and informal learning spaces pay attention to movement learning, centering pedagogical approaches that support the deconstruction of power and privilege, the unlearning of hegemonic relationships, as well as practices and

recouping of knowledge in ways that weave new knowledge and more equitable, liberated ways of being.

Feminist Popular Education

Pioneered by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, popular education is a people-oriented and guided approach to education (Freire 1972). By centering participants' life experiences, this approach affirms the dignity of all participants and recognizes that everyone in the room is both a teacher and a learner in developing critical consciousness. This approach attempts to inspire people to look at their world from new perspectives, empower people to think for themselves and enable them to create change. Critical consciousness fosters an in-depth understanding of the world and encourages collective action against oppressive elements in a struggle for human dignity and liberation.

Another unique feature of popular education is its use outside traditional formal education settings. By adapting to participants and their context, popular education may be used in the community, in people's homes, or even in outdoor settings, to name a few non-traditional sites. This approach meets people where they are at, both literally and with respect to their lived experiences.

Therefore, Feminist Popular Education (FPE) (De Montis 1994; hooks 1994; Walters 1996, 2006; Miller et al. 2016), begins with women's intersectional lived experiences as a way to deliberately invert dominant ways of understanding knowledge and the accompanying power dynamics, to recognize and value the knowledge that comes from that lived experience and women's own analysis of their conditions.

FPE is the engine of JASS's movement building work. In Mesoamerica, the Alquimia (alchemy) Feminist Leadership School brings FPE as an approach and methodology to life in work with largely indigenous and rural land defenders. Behind the name is an intentional meaning that captures the essence of feminist pedagogy. The school is called 'Alquimia' to

give the sense that knowledge is constructed collectively by building on the wisdom and knowledge of all participants and facilitators. Some of the learning components, like the school curriculum, are structured, but content is never imposed.

Participants are protagonists of the entire process, starting with the design and planning and leading to the organization of the training processes (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

Alquimia is called a 'school' because it encourages a systematic and intentional education process. This is done in formal and informal ways with partners and allies to generate knowledge together. Participants see the school as 'feminist' because it seeks to challenge, contribute, and transform the intersecting oppressions that women face in all spheres of their lives due to gender, race, class, ethnicity, age, environment, sexual orientations, nationality, and more. The alchemy of the school lies in the co-construction of process and the pooling and cross pollination of intent and knowledge, across people and spaces, to pave the way for the transformation of women from spectators to actors in their lives (Boal 1979).

In this paper, we would like to explore feminist movement pedagogy looking at feminist popular education as represented by Alquimia through five frames: Thinking about power; embracing multiplicity and complementary forms of knowledge; heart, mind, and body; conceptualizations of space; communities of practice.

Thinking About Power

For Alquimia, the relationship between self and social transformation, the personal and political, and the individual and collective is critical when thinking about teaching and learning. The relationship between self and social transformation starts with learning to question and challenge the explanations for why things are the way they are (Kilgore 1999). The sharing of experiences of power and inequality by an individual woman is a means to lay bare what is actually a systemic story of collective destabilization. The personal is fierce and becomes

deeply political. Alquimia places value in knowing history as a way of destabilizing the power and hierarchy of knowledge and, as such, seeks to reclaim hidden histories.

The history we learn at school is not always useful as it is a history of the dominant. We need to listen, create, and believe in our own stories, questioning and challenging ourselves, querying inherited knowledge and legitimize perceptions and knowledge that flow from us and others, and the processes we promote (Ardón 2021).

Alquimia questions the ways of doing and learning by provoking epistemological rupture, moving from magical consciousness to critical consciousness and change, placing a value on cognitive dissonance in the process. This commitment to unlearning is one of the main commitments in Alquimia. To unlearn what we have learned and learn a new way of being and living requires the development of ‘new eyes’. The reading of history is essentially a critical exercise. Alquimia speaks of ‘unlearning’ history as a way to shed preconceptions and find new ways of seeing the world. Unlearning has a political-epistemological meaning; getting rid of that which is asserted as rigid and immutable truth. History is not an immovable truth.

It is not for nothing that the indigenous people, for instance, do not trust the Kaxlanes or Ladinos, non-indigenous people, in Guatemala. They filter the information they get from them because it symbolizes historical domination, the domination exercised by the Spanish invaders during years of colonization. They trust the white God but shift him, tailor him to their own purposes and beliefs, a trait of resistance (Ardón 2021).

There is a continual contestation between those who hold oppressive power and those who seek change. For Alquimia, this necessitates creating safe spaces to do this counter hegemonic work, it requires a leveling of power relations between ‘teachers’ and ‘students’ and an interrogation of systemic power. Alquimia uses a power analysis framework (JASS: 2022) to both make visible and address the interconnected systemic oppressions women face in their home, family, community, and organizations. This allows participants to see how power manifests and allows for the transformation of oppressive power relations by building positive forms of power at the individual and collective level, helping construct political identities of resistance and transformation.

Transformative power is mobilized to build movement which is derived from building collective knowledge, vision, and strength that fuels people and movements to confront, engage, and ultimately change oppressive forms of power to advance a vision of care and repair for people and the planet. Power over and transformative power are not seen as two distinct arenas in Alquimia; they are present everywhere. Just as power over can be present in our own organizations and leadership, transformative power is possible in the cracks and opportunities for change that are found in the dominant structures of power.

Through a range of methodological approaches (We Rise 2016), transformative power is explored through five dimensions: power within: a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge; power to: the unique potential of every person to speak, take action, shape her life and world; Power with: the collective strength that comes with finding common ground and community with others; Power with: expressed in alliances and solidarity that multiplies individual talents, knowledge, and resources through collaboration for a larger impact and Power for: the combined vision, values, and demands that orient shared and collective work, and that inspires strategies and alternatives – the world we seek to create.

Embracing Multiple and Complementary Ways of Knowing

Cross fertilization in Alquimia takes place through the constituting a collective and embracing multiple and complimentary ways of knowing. Alquimia deliberately brings women together across identity divides, geographies, and issues to build bridges across differences and strengthen movements. Alquimia believes that there is a need to stretch ways of thinking and to break out of hegemonic silos. Some of the critical questions posed include: How do we see and respect each other? How do we find common ground? How do we come to trust each other?

For Alquimia it is important not to idolize marginality and to break the idea that marginality is the basis of unity. Marginality isolates, meaning you run the risk of not being able to see ‘the other.’ It can prevent you from connecting across struggles:

Marginality should not be an identity symbol. We can embrace our marginality because we are contesting oppression and defending ourselves. We can create a ‘ghetto’ within which we communicate with each other and from which we relate to those in power. We need to recognize this natural tendency and explore ways to move beyond this in order to forge alliances (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

In forging these alliances, Alquimia works with a range of partners and allies within movements, civil society organizations, research institutions, and universities to contribute ‘new’ knowledge to further catalyze learning processes. Alquimia experiments with a range of approaches including using participatory engagements and debates, dialogue, and negotiation, reading and reflection, which all generate more complex analyses, understandings, and new personal and shared collective knowledge and agreements.

This political work requires methodologies that do not dichotomize but that instead contribute to a deeper analysis that considers diverse perspectives and differentiated and complementary contributions. The engagements have to allow for recognizing difference and recuperating everyday/cultural practices as well as embracing multiple and complementary forms of knowledge, including the affective, embodied, oral, cognitive, and cultural.

If you create space for a wide range of actors and knowledge points as part of learning, there is an implicit understanding that this kind of cross pollination will generate conflict. Feminists always argue that we need to integrate care and prepare for conflict within a group that is deconstructing power because it is an intensely demanding and emotional process (JASS and FHGR 2017; UAF – LA 2018; FRIDA 2016). How one deals with conflict in a learning space, in a way that does not reproduce dominant ways of exercising power, is critical in Alquimia’s approach:

Conflicts always arise. We have to go slow and take time to learn from one another, and address how differences of identity, position and privilege can reproduce the very inequalities that divide women. (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia)

Addressed in this intentional way, conflict can become a deep source of learning and push us to a more inclusive and nuanced, perhaps more radical understanding of who we can be, how we can be with one another, and what can change beyond the limitations of dominant thought.

Heart, Mind, and Body

Given the historical trauma and pain that comes from oppression and violence, Alquimia values emotion and embodied experience as a form of knowledge.

The whole question of care and collective care that many feminist organizations have adopted is transversal to all Alquimia processes precisely because it, the unlearning and questioning processes, awaken feelings and emotions, difficult and painful experiences. (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

At its source, these painful feelings come from experiencing inequities and the multiple violences generated from structural inequalities. In a society that seeks to dehumanize women, feeling feelings and legitimizing them, is not only a radical act but the genesis for action along with a form of caring for ourselves, individually and collectively, in a system that does not.

Feminists have contributed to a more comprehensive dimension, ‘Sentipensar,’ feeling – thinking, (Morreás and de la Torre 2002) in which all levels of consciousness and unconsciousness are brought into play. In Alquimia, there is a commitment to reclaim the knowledge that exists outside the circumference of rational thought and break with what limits thinking and practice.

We need to consider how to create a movement that unites spirit and body and reclaims related social practices. On this level, it is important to break the resistance to a holistic and interconnected sense of ourselves before talking about alliances and movements. (Ardón 2021).

This way of thinking allows Alquimistas (participants of Alquimia) to draw on more than the rational and combine poetry with science and music with silence. Caring for ourselves as whole beings – heart, mind, and body – is about acknowledging the dynamic interaction of these in our lives and pedagogies to ensure that creativity and joy become fundamental ingredients that contribute to how we think about learning and how we learn. The incorporation of artistic and playful expressions that generate contagious, passionate, playful, joyful, and liberating learning for women and men serves to re-weave the social fabric by recouping our humanity and creating communities of care, trust, and solidarity.

Alquimia understands that the realization of deep transformations requires time, commitment, and the work of many:

We have to do it collectively. The challenge of doing it with joy, something that is apparently so simple, becomes something extremely transgressive, and very important (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

These intangibles in the alchemy of movement learning work contribute immensely to creating the conditions for imagining and creating new realities and ways of being and how movements learn and move together.

Conceptualizations of space

The spatial cross pollination and the importance of teaching and learning can be explored in three ways through Alquimia. First, feminists take the creation of safe space seriously, and Alquimia promotes ‘political agreement’ among participants that determine the construction as well as habitation of the space. Alquimia creates safe spaces for women to bring their whole selves, by encouraging them to be, be together, express themselves, discover others, to interact, partake in levity, and build knowledge. Alquimia creates conditions that enable women to speak openly about their pain, dreams, and hopes by centering respect, compassion,

and curiosity. Creating safe spaces enable women to recover and gain strength and find the tools to support and sustain them when they return to their communities.

Alquimia takes into account how women's multiple roles have the potential to impact their 'membership' in Alquimia:

We need to create spaces that consider the intimate, private sphere, and its impact on women's participation (individual and collective care, safety, care of children). We need to strengthen individual and collective protection and engage with women at times that accommodate their needs. We consciously incorporate spontaneous and heart / mind / body elements in the conceptual and methodological work and try to build safe and loving spaces (Internal document – Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

There is a tacit understanding that the learning space has to mitigate the replication of the violence and vulnerabilities perpetuated against women, and the backlash Alquimistas may experience when they are perceived to be engaging in learning and / or acts of transgression.

Second, Alquimia understands that the "school" is a "space" in which different knowledge processes and learning happens informally and formally. The former include: Virtual dialogues; Escuelas vivas or Live Schools which happen in the moment of a current event or protest action – short, on the streets and in real time; leadership strengthening and movement accompaniment in response to specific training requests or specific needs of allies and movements. The latter, Alquimia as a yearlong modular course (or more) combines formal (in situ) and experiential learning.

The Alquimia course has been formulated through cross pollination – design, curriculum development, and methodology – with participants (largely indigenous and rural land defenders), supporting allies and organizations as well as JASS. It is adapted to accommodate shifting contexts and movement needs. The curriculum includes modules on: Power; Alliances and addressing conflicts between women; The history of women's struggles (contextualized); FPE methods and techniques to scale-up learning; Women's strategic and

collective leadership; Self-care, bodies, protection, and safety; Economic Justice for women among others that arise from the contextual needs of the participants.

Using the pedagogical approaches outlined above, courses have been conducted at a regional level, starting in 2013, with the participation of indigenous and rural women activists and defenders from the Mesoamerican region, stretching from Mexico to Panama. National courses have been carried out in Honduras, 2018 to 2021, and Guatemala, 2020 to 2021. Mexico implemented their first course in 2021. These courses have strengthened the strategic leadership capacity of women. At present, the political facilitator's course has been implemented to complement leadership strengthening and enrich capacities for training within the organizations and movements. In Honduras, the Alquimia school was accredited with the Women's Rights Centre and the Department of Social Work of the National University and in Guatemala with the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences.

For many women being able to say: "I am going to university" can invoke respect, different to saying: "I am going to a feminist workshop." which can provoke resistance amongst families and communities (Internal document - La Escuela de Alquimia de JASS).

Whether in formal or informal learning spaces, the approach remains collaborative, ethical, systemic, intersectional, historical, dialectical, and holistic.

However, there is a third way Alquimia understands space in terms of how and why we learn. In this consideration, the 'school' is understood not just as a physical place, a learning course, or a once-off event, but conceived as a space for ever-evolving learning and knowledge production built from the activities developed in the different areas of movement work (Melero 2018; Cooper 2009). In this understanding, the movement is the ongoing site of sustained engagement and continuous learning. The actual work of strategy development or tactical actions like protests or blockades can be seen as critical sites where learning takes place in the day to day.

The School As The Movement

The idea of the ‘school as the movement’ and an organizing principle has been echoed by other movements such as Abahlali baseMjondolo, the shack dwellers movement in Durban, South Africa; The Kurdish women’s movement of Rojava (an autonomous region) in northeastern Syria; and the Piqueteros (picketers), a radical mobilization of unemployed workers in Argentina.

Abahlali baseMjondolo, maintains that: “everyone thinks” (Pithouse 2008, 37). Thinking results in understanding and in new knowledge. In November 2005 the ‘University of Abahlali baseMjondolo’ was born, driven by the movement, and supported by a range of movement allies including media practitioners, academic activists, and legal practitioners. Abahlali has long recognized that it is the assertion that they think that they have a right to speak and be listened to, that is most threatening to hegemony. As one of the leaders of Abahlali remarked in 2006: “They [power holders] come for us when we try to say what we think” (Abahlali baseMjondolo: 2006).

The women of the revolutionary movement in Rojava believe that the ideological battle, the more significant battle, takes place in the classroom and is fought with pens (Espinosa 2020). Jineology, which informs their ideological orientation, stems from the umbrella word ‘Jin,’ meaning women, and derived from ‘Jiyan’, meaning life (ECR 2020). It is an epistemological process promoting women’s freedom. It challenges knowledge as a patriarchal concept, and proposes itself as a method to explore questions collectively (Dirik 2015). The Institute for Educational Science, established as part of the revolution, is tasked with designing a new curriculum to reflect the self-administration’s broader attempts at challenging the capitalist patriarchal regimes that precede and surround it.

The Piqueteros in Argentina argue along the same lines, that every person, woman, and man, has a voice and a vote, and everyone can express their opinion. It's not like no-one knows anything but that we all know something. (Sitrin 2003, 477). For the Piqueteros, building community kitchens, organic gardens, bakeries, and popular libraries is a threat to the hegemonic order because:

... they are about new and other ways of thinking and gaining consciousness. The Piqueteros believe that the state is afraid of women who think, afraid of women with a conscience, and so they respond with violence. Yet they know that women are able to do many things through their work, their thoughts, and their ideas. This is leaning. This is also a revolution. (Sitrin 477, 2003)

This understanding of the 'school as the movement' is dynamic because not only is it emergent (Forte 2018), but it also combines and integrates multiple characteristics as evident through Alquimia. It is context specific, fluid, gendered, highly political, intersectional, embedded in the day to day, tacit and not always recognized as a site of learning (Foley 1999). Despite being evolutionary and cumulative, it is not linear (Foley 1999). The emancipatory pedagogical practices start with the reality of knowing and recognizing the context and needs, interests, affections, intuitions, wisdom, and knowledge that participants, facilitators and other resource people have in order to create synergies, mutual learning, new knowledge that is critical not just for survival but that allows us to change our worldly reality. In doing this there is also a commitment to:

generate theory from feminist praxis and to interrogate power, build solidarity and reciprocity in ways in which care for self, other and the earth/cosmos become central to our action on the streets and the bigger processes of transformation. (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

This understanding of learning means that learning occurs in multiple spaces, based on the needs of movement actors. It is transversal and involves multiple allies and contributors across sites who cross fertilize it through supporting movement thinking, learning, strategy, and action, and herein lies the catalytic nature of alchemy at large.

To focus on learning and knowledge production in this way invites a recognition of movements as ongoing sites of imagination, creativity, engagement, and power building (Hope and Timmel 1984; Motta and Esteves 2014; Melero et al. 2018) that support the construction and unleashing of liberatory / radical identities and relationships, resist subjugation and invite transformation while at the same time serving as educational and knowledge building spaces (Foley 1999, 2001; Choudry 2009, 2015; Delgado 2011a, 2011b; Cox 2014; Kapoor 2017).

Further, this recognition allows for an expansion, but also a challenge, to received understandings of how, where, when, and why learning takes place and knowledge is produced (Feminist Africa 2008; Choudry 2009; Cooper 2020) and a potency that the knowledges produced have the potential of influencing and completely transforming our world in several ways: from the creation of new frameworks for the analysis of socio-economic and political realities; the redefinition of concepts and theoretical frames; participatory learning; the production of tools, curriculum, and methodologies (Cox 2014; We Rise 2016) and technological access.

For Alquimia, learning and struggle are not solely about individual identity, access, recognition, or rights, but about how one thinks about teaching, learning, and perspectives of knowledge that have to do with the model and logic of life itself. This is rooted in commitments to solidarity and reciprocity in which care for self, other but also for the earth/cosmos are seen as central to processes of transformation - buen vivir (Salazar 2015).

Communities of Practice: Cross Pollination and Social Transformation

As indicated then, the school by its very nature must invest in the growing of deep political relationships of trust, of revolutionary love and comradeship as central to community

building. Furthermore, it must also invest in forging strategic alliances across a range of sites and actors, in catalyzing, strengthening, and advancing the goals of the movement project. While the idea of alliances is good, they are ultimately only acquired in practice. Alquimia sees joint actions as a way of better seeing.

what elements and formations are involved and how [do] each of them offers learning? There are always emerging actors, the old and the new - young people too matter in the equation (Internal document - Que es la Escuela de Alquimia).

This often involves experimentation, navigating synergies and conflicts, in how to create and develop expanded and shared political purpose out of difference, across sites, and geographies while crafting new pathways for social and political relationships with others once removed from, but as key to the school or the feminist political project. Whoever cares about creating change has to abandon the idea that they are going to change the world as an individual, making great sacrifices. For Alquimia, when you look at the complexity of change and movements, it doesn't depend on individuals, it depends on an 'us'.

We must recover a kind of pendulum thinking, the coming and going of people and ideas, to create a permanent spiral of learning, ideas forever evolving and being challenged. (Ardón: 2021).

Escobar has termed these deliberate and cultivated relationships “meshworks”, notable in that their ontologies are not fixed or rigid and that they represent the diversity of our world that results in especially fertile, fluid and adaptable, heterogenous and overlapping interconnections that engage in both vertical and horizontal networking and are interlinked with other hierarchies and networks, and yet maintain their characteristic plurality without imposing uniformity (Escobar 2008; Stephen 2007). In this, we believe lie the roots of communities of practice or epistemic communities (Okech 2020), the broad range of people, practices, and the ongoing commitment, engagement, and solidarity with the movement by allies wherever they may be located, rooted in shared ideological principles and praxis in ways

that feed, cross pollinate, and catalyze shared feminist political goals across sites as part of a bigger transformatory vision for our world.

Biographies:

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Patricia Ardón:

Feminist, with interest in social anthropology, co-founder of Just Associates (JASS) and regional director of JASS Mesoamerica with over thirty years' experience with grassroots movements throughout Central America. Member of the Alquimia School and advocate for women's rights and peace building worldwide.

Notes

1. JASS (www.justassociates.org) is a feminist movement support organization dedicated to building the voice, visibility, and collective power of women for a just and sustainable world for all. We equip and strengthen the leadership and organizing capacity of women leaders and their organizations in Mesoamerica, Southeast Asia, and Southern Africa. We strengthen women's organizing strategies to transform the systems, structures and beliefs that perpetuate inequality and violence in four areas of their lives: Bodies, Voice,

Resources and Safety. Founded in 2002, JASS was built on long-standing relationships of political trust and solidarity, grounded in shared ideas about how change happens - a learning community of activists, organizers, popular educators, and scholars, connected by years of experience in common struggles for social justice and human rights.

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