

Mapping of Feminist Movements and Actors In Portuguese Speaking African Countries



Feminist mobilisation across Portuguese-speaking Africa is vibrant yet deeply contextual, shaped by colonial legacies, authoritarian governance, economic precarity, and patriarchal norms. This infographic draws on a comprehensive mapping of feminist and women’s rights movements contextual analysis across specified countries below to understand how feminist actors organise and to strengthen support, visibility, and sustainability for their work.



Grassroots leadership



Informal networks



The critical role of feminist consciousness rooted in lived realities

Countries Covered



Angola



Cape Verde



Equatorial Guinea



Guinea Bissau



Mozambique



São Tomé and Príncipe

Whose Voices are Captured

48
Organisations

60
Feminist actors

There is a diverse ecosystem of organising



Under conditions of political restriction, linguistic marginalisation, and economic fragility, feminist organising in Portuguese-speaking Africa continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience, creativity, and political vision.

Across urban and rural landscapes, formal and informal collectives are reclaiming agency through culturally rooted, community-led approaches to justice, healing, and liberation.



Explicit feminist actors

They have a specific, although contextual ideology



Gender-focused organisations

They work on women's rights in general.

In some contexts, outrightly adapting a feminist positioning poses significant threats to the welfare of activists and institutions.

This reflects how feminist identities are often strategic, adaptive, and sometimes concealed due to political repression or cultural conservatism.

What is shaping movements

The legacy of Portuguese colonialism in the Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa (PALOP) countries carries a distinct historical trajectory that continues to shape the socio-political and gendered realities of these nations.



**Authoritarianism
+ Surveillance**



Donor practices



**Resource
exploitation**



**Exclusion of
women**



**Intersectional
inequalities**



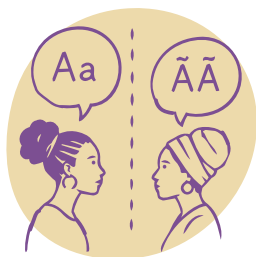
The digital divide

When our stories are archived in our own language and voices, we claim space in history.
~Angolan Feminist.

State hostility limits the ability of feminist groups to organise openly
~Mozambican Feminist.

There is a diverse ecosystem of organising

What is holding movements back



Language Exclusion



Lack of funding and limited sustainability



Access barriers to resources



Exclusion from support



Civic Restrictions



Institutional and organisational Barriers



Fragmentation and disconnect

Women are the first to feel the drought, the first to act, and the last to be heard.

~Cape Verdian Feminist.

Movement strategies

Feminist actors across Portuguese-speaking Africa are employing diverse and innovating new strategies to organise, connect, and resist. Their strategies are visionary, reimagining justice, care, and power from the ground up.



Digital and diaspora organising



Arts and culture



Regional solidarities



Youth-led initiatives



Capacity building



Legal advocacy

Feminist organising is not project-based. It is the long haul.

~Funder.

The internet is our meeting place. It's where we build community when we cannot find it in physical spaces.

~Cape Verdian Feminist.

Movement priorities

Movements are advancing interconnected struggles, here are six priorities emerging from movements.



Economic freedom

They are increasingly raising their voices about women's exclusion from formal financial systems and social protection.



Fighting gender based violence (GBV)

They confront GBV through survivor-centred advocacy, legal reform, community education, and strengthening access to justice and protection.



Women's leadership & political participation

They are pushing for reforms as they remain significantly underrepresented in key decision making spaces.



Feminist justice



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

They advocate for bodily autonomy, safe abortion, menstrual dignity, and comprehensive sexuality education.



Climate feminism

They are connecting environmental justice with creating work, displacement and food security highlighting the gender impact of the climate crisis and need for community led adaptation strategies.



Inclusion of gender diverse people

They are increasingly advocating for gender-diverse people facing widespread stigma, exclusion, and criminalisation.

We are still here. We are surviving.
And that is resistance.

~Equatoguinean Feminist.

What does the future require



Strengthen movement resilience and sustainability at grassroots level.

- Provide long-term core funding for unregistered and community-based organisations
- Identify community-based organisations and unregistered groups. Provide them support to apply for long term core funding.
- Support core funding for feminist organisations to cover wellbeing infrastructure, including salaries, rest cycles, and mental health services.



Ensure linguistic inclusion and accessible, low-barrier grant-making

- Set up a Portuguese-speaking-language support desk, staffed with Portuguese-speaking grant and movement officers.
- Translate calls for proposals, tools, reports, platforms, and resources into Portuguese, Spanish, and Creole where applicable.
- Develop low-barrier grant-making platforms and processes that are accessible to grassroots and non-English/Portuguese-fluent applicants.

We are not less political or less radical.
We are just excluded by the power of language.

~Angolan Feminist.



Invest in collective care, healing justice, and mental health support programmes.

- Create a feminist care fund to resource emergency support, psychosocial care, and community-based healing practices—particularly for activists facing violence or burnout.
- Build sustainable and trauma-informed feminist ecosystems. Where there is trauma-informed care, collective healing, and burnout prevention for feminist leaders and organisers.



Connect feminists with a Solidarity & Safety Fund to protect activists and support underground organising

- Reduce risk for frontline activist
- Map and validate existing solidarity and protection funds (regional and international) suitable for feminist and LGBTQIA+ activists in restrictive contexts.
- Create and distribute secure, multilingual guidance (including oral/audio formats) on how to access and use the fund, particularly in low-connectivity and rural settings. tivists and ensure continuity of resistance efforts.

Feminism only makes sense when there is unity among women... no woman should walk alone.

~Bissau-Guinean Feminist.



Fund national feminist assemblies where diverse actors (youth, elders, LGBTQIA+, rural voices) can collectively identify inclusion gaps and propose feminist strategies.

- Support multilingual documentation and translation of mentorship stories, assembly findings, and feminist knowledge into accessible formats (audio, local language, visual).



Fund oral storytelling, translation projects, and feminist research on inclusion gaps.

- Amplify underrepresented feminist voices and knowledge systems.
- Launch a micro-grant scheme for community-based organisations to document feminist experiences through oral storytelling, especially among rural, older, LGBTQIA+, and disabled women.
- Support translation of feminist research and advocacy materials into local languages and Creole variants to expand reach and understanding.



Support Portuguese-speaking delegates and publish position papers at global forums

- Position Portuguese-speaking feminists in global decision-making arenas.
- Provide dedicated funding and accompaniment for participation in AWID, CSW, African Feminist Forum, and Portuguese-speaking summits.
- Support production of position papers, manifestos, and communiqués authored by Portuguese-speaking feminists.

Conclusion

Feminist movements in Portuguese-speaking Africa have remarkable strength, diversity, and resilience of feminist organising.

Despite varying political landscapes, economic conditions, and historical legacies, feminist actors they are advancing transformative agendas rooted in care, justice, and community-led action.

The time is ripe for deeper investment in long-term structural support, knowledge production, and inclusive regional convenings.

Strengthening Portuguese-speaking feminist movements is not only a matter of equity, but a vital contribution to the broader pan-African and global feminist struggle.





With Support From



www.awdf.org



African Women's
Development Fund



[the_awdf](https://www.instagram.com/the_awdf)



[@awdf01](https://twitter.com/awdf01)