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Advancing Learning and
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MOBILISING FOR CHANGE

HOW WOMEN'S SOCIAL MOVEMENTS ARE TRANSFORMING GENDER NORMS

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Contents

1 Introduction

6

2 Impact of
feminist and
women's
movements on
gender norms

12

3 Impact of
women's
participation
and leadership
in broader
movements

40

4 Conclusion

48

Acronyms

ADFM	Democratic Association of Women – Morocco
ALIGN	Advancing Learning and Innovation on Gender Norms
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDEM	<i>Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer</i> (Information and Development Centre for Women) – Bolivia
GM	genetically modified
GMAC-UIF	Gender Monitoring and Advocacy Coalition for the Unemployment Insurance Fund – South Africa
ILO	International Labour Organization
INMUJERES	<i>Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres</i> (National Institute for Women) – Mexico
MIWUSA	Migrant Workers’ Union of South Africa
MLUML	Women Living Under Muslim Laws
MST	<i>Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra</i> (Landless Workers Movement) – Brazil
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OCNF	<i>Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional del Femicidio</i> (National Citizen Femicide Observatory) – Mexico
PIL	public interest litigation
SADSAWU	South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union
TPLF	Tigray People’s Liberation Front
UN	United Nations
VAT	value added tax

Display items

Boxes

Box 1: Definitions of different types of social movements	8
Box 2: Framing and strategies of the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union	13
Box 3: CIDEM's work against community gender-based violence in Bolivia	17
Box 4: Legal or policy reforms on gender-based violence attributed to advocacy by feminist movements	24
Box 5: Menstrual activism in South Korea	30
Box 6: Feminist bridge leaders in the Soulaliyate women's movement in Morocco	33
Box 7: Framing gender demands within movements: the Bodhgaya movement for land rights	41
Box 8: Negotiating participation: women in Ethiopia's Tigray People's Liberation Front	42
Box 9: Impacts of the participation of Mayan women in the struggle against GM seeds in Mexico	44

Figures

Figure 1: Pathways to changing gender norms	8
Figure 2: Scales of change	10
Figure 3: What strategies are used in each pathway to gender norm change?	22

Tables

Table 1: Examples of areas in which feminist and women's movements have achieved legal and/or policy reform	26
Table A1: Searches performed	53

1 Introduction

It is well recognised that social movements are key agents of social and political change, and especially of transformations towards social justice (Whittier, 2007; Weldon, 2011; Bhattacharjya et al., 2013; Temper et al., 2018). As social movements shape, and are shaped by, gender roles and relations, movements have also been, and can be, important sources of transformation towards gender equality and justice (Whittier, 2007).

There exists a wide and growing evidence base on social movements, as well as a vibrant discussion in academic literature on the trajectories and impacts of women's movements and feminist mobilisation. However, despite a growing recognition of the importance of norm change in achieving gender equality and justice, few studies focus explicitly on the ways in which these movements contribute to changing gender norms (the implicit rules about gender by which most people abide). This gap in literature may be due to: the difficulty in measuring norm change, determining causal links and tracking change over necessarily long timeframes. As a consequence, while women's and feminist movements have aimed at and contributed to changing norms, exactly how this happens remains under-explored, including how their mobilisation contributes to changes and the routes by which these changes happen.

This Advancing Learning and Innovation on Gender Norms (ALIGN) Report aims to fill this gap by collating available research on women's and feminist movements, as well on broader social movements with significant leadership and participation of women, in various regions across the world. Attention is specifically paid to movements from the Americas, across Northern Africa and the Middle East, as well as the rest of the African continent, drawing also on evidence from South and Southeastern Asia.¹ The report presents an analysis of the framing, strategies and pathways through which gender norm change is sought by these movements, as well as of the factors that contribute to, and hinder, the desired gender norm change. In doing so, the report aims to show how a norms framing can expand our understanding of women's, feminist and other social movements, as well as to provide important insights for activists and supporters of these movements.

The analysis is based on a review of academic and grey literature. Relevant literature in English and Spanish was mostly identified through searches on Google Scholar, reference snowballing and the authors' previous knowledge of literature on social movements (for a more detailed discussion of the report's methodology, see Appendix 1). The report primarily aims to highlight the activism and leadership of women outside large economies, and therefore draws mostly on literature from across other continental regions. It does also, however, include cases from high-income countries where these add key evidence or insights.

¹ ALIGN seeks to amplify and synthesise learning on this topic with a particular focus on evidence from contexts which remain marginalised in global discourse, or those where contributions often are excluded from international research agendas.

1.1 Conceptual framework

As most of the existing literature is not framed in terms of gender norms, the report proposes a framework through which the impact of women's, feminist (or anti-patriarchal)² and other social movements on gender norms can be understood.

First, because of the different forms, goals and motivations of each type of movement, the report differentiates between women's movements, feminist movements and social justice movements (see Box 1). Noting that these terms can be fluid and overlapping, the report utilises the terms in accordance with that used by the relevant sources of information.

Second, the report understands 'gender norms' as the different sets of formal or informal rules that shape gender roles and relations. While gender norms vary across contexts and time periods, social norms related to gender have been generally built upon a binary understanding of gender (women-men). Gender norms are, thus, the social rules that are prescribed unto individuals according to their sex and (perceived) gender identity, which in turn influence their personal and social attitudes, expectations and behaviours. As these norms are embedded in formal and informal institutions, gender norms can be understood as the basis on which gender (in)equality is enacted and (re)produced (George and Samman, 2020; Harper et al., 2020). Thus, a focus on how patriarchal gender norms are contested and sought to be transformed offers a lens to understand how social movements can bring about long-term social changes and the complexity of producing these changes.

Third, while the report's overarching focus is on the impact of social movements on gender norms, reviewing the influence of the political mobilisation of diverse groups of women across different regions requires an intersectional understanding of identity and social justice struggles. Intersectional theory maintains that gender is not constructed, nor operates, in isolation from other social categories embedded in other interlocking systems of power (such as race, ethnicity, age and sexuality) (Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2009; Mollett and Faria, 2013). Therefore, where possible, the report also pays attention to women's diversity, highlighting where gender struggles are tied to other struggles for equality and justice, and where gender norms intersect with other social norms pertaining to other axes of identity, such as race, sexuality, class and so on.

² Various women's movements choose not to label themselves as 'feminist' but do work to contest patriarchal institutions and norms. This is the case, for example, with indigenous women's movements across South America, which tend to identify as anti-patriarchal rather than feminist (Paredes, 2008; Cabnal, 2018).

Box 1: Definitions of different types of social movements

Women's movements: Social movements mostly comprised of, and led by, women, where women participate on the basis of their gender (that is, their identity and interests as 'women'). Women's movements may have feminist, non-feminist or even 'anti-feminist' interests and goals.

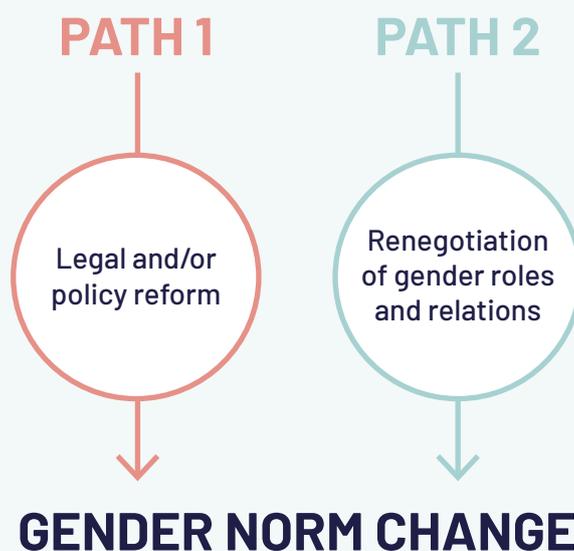
Feminist movements: Social movements seeking to improve the situation of women by resisting gender inequality and injustice, while at the same time challenging gendered expectations and roles, to demand an end to sexist oppression. As a result, feminist movements tend to work mostly with women and for women. However, they may also work with men.

Social justice movements: Movements aiming to address and transform societal inequalities and injustices. They may focus on a single issue (for instance, environmental protection, peace and democracy, workers' rights or land rights) or have a wider scope that links various issues. They may include gender equality as an area of focus, but usually within a broader agenda.

Sources: hooks (1984), Molyneux (1998, 2000); Beckwith (2000); Weldon (2002); Bhattacharjya et al. (2013); Horn (2013); and Weldon and Htun (2013).

Based on this conceptual standpoint, this report finds that existing evidence suggests women's participation in social movements – regardless of whether they are explicitly concerned with gender inequalities or other social justice issues – can, and have, promoted gender norm change through two main pathways: 1) legal and/or policy reform and, 2) renegotiation of gender roles and relations (see Figure 1). This binary division of how social movement action translates into impact is by no means exhaustive and does indeed obscure a more complex reality. However, it is a useful framework for highlighting the main pathways while acknowledging that these can, and often do, overlap.

Figure 1: Pathways to changing gender norms



1. Pathway 1: Changing laws and policies pertaining to women's rights

The state 'is a site of struggle which represents gender relations as well as reconstructs them' (Walsh, 2009: 50; see also Molyneux, 2000; Waylen, 2007). As such, legal and policy frameworks 'establish and reproduce a particular normative and social order', as Htun and Weldon (2012: 549) argue. Changes in legislation are thus shaped by emerging changes in moral codes and social expectations, and, in turn, these legal and/or policy changes solidify and institutionalise these new moral codes and expectations (Marcus and Harper, 2014). As a result, legal and/or policy change pertaining to women's rights does not only reflect changes in gender norms but can also drive them. This occurs as legal and/or policy change enacts and demonstrates the principle of gender equality and justice, as well as provides specific incentives or disincentives for actions (Ramisetty and Muriu, 2013). Disincentives include not only the legal consequences for breaking the law but also the social stigma associated with breaking the law and going against encoded social expectations. However, as discussed in Section 2.5, the impact that legal and/or policy change can have on gender norms depends on its 'legitimacy, procedural fairness, and how the law is originated and enforced' (Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014: 64).

2. Pathway 2: Renegotiating gender roles and relations

Social movements can also spur gender transformations by contesting and undermining the social beliefs and behaviours that underpin gender inequalities in everyday life – whether held by men or women. While these changes can be related to the legal and policy sphere, they may also involve different spaces. They are important to distinguish, as they are more widely linked to cultural change. Changes on this pathway are achieved through cross-society activism and action that aims to challenge dominant social beliefs and practices, and to transform social gendered expectations of oneself and others. Efforts targeted at changing widely held beliefs and attitudes can address a range of issues, such as divisions of labour, women's lack of mobility, men's authority in the private sphere, menstrual stigma, female sexuality, motherhood and so on. Change through this pathway may also occur as a result of social movements providing women with the necessary vocabulary to express gendered experiences, and with access to new knowledge, skills, connections, support and spaces (Campbell, 1996; Agarwal, 2002; Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez, 2018; Harper et al., 2020). This can lead to transformations of gendered identities, as well as to more just (re)constructions of gendered social relations.

Change through these two pathways can be located as operating across five connected scales: international, national, community, interpersonal and individual (see Figure 2).³ Change at one scale may also impact other scales to establish new social norms and social dynamics. Legal and/or policy reforms tend to produce change at the macro scales – the international and (sub)national (or even regional) scales – and the effect can gradually influence social behaviour (see Sub-section 2.3.1). The renegotiation of gender roles and relations can take place across all scales. While this often involves work at the community, interpersonal and individual scales, it is important to recognise that this micro-level work also takes place within macro-level institutions (such as international agencies and national governments). This happens, for instance, when women challenge dominant gender roles and relations within institutional cultures. Cultural change is also often driven by activists outside of institutional spaces, and its effects can trickle up and be reflected in changes in international and (sub)national frameworks (see Sub-section 2.3.2).

Thus, while the two pathways of gender norm change are separated for analytical clarity; they are closely interrelated. Movements may pursue both simultaneously, and the pathways may intersect (i.e. people who alter their gendered beliefs and attitudes may become important actors in producing change through legal and/or policy reform) and overlap (i.e. institutions that are influenced by legal and/or policy reform – such as schools – may be targeted by efforts along both paths).

Figure 2: Scales of change



Source: Adapted from Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1986).

³ These scales have been adapted from the socio-ecological model developed by Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1986).

1.2 Structure of the report

The report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 discusses feminist and women's movements working on a range of issues related to gender equality and justice across various regions, and their impacts on gender norm change. It discusses how these movements have engaged in both pathways of norm change, the framing of goals and strategies they have used, as well as the contributing and hindering factors they have encountered. The chapter presents several cases in more detail, as examples of gender norm transformation, and discusses three issues that stand in tension with the desired norm change of feminist and women's movements: the participation of men, the impact of conflicts and crises, and existing backlash against gender equality.

Chapter 3 discusses how women's participation and leadership in broader social movements – such as those for land rights, cultural autonomy, environmental justice and democracy – impacts gender norms. It finds that women in broader social movements drive changes to gender norms mainly through renegotiating gender roles and relations. The chapter examines how this has been done by women participating in a variety of social movements, the framings of goals and strategies they have used, and the contributing and hindering factors they have encountered. Chapter 3 also presents some cases in detail as examples of gender norm transformation.

Chapter 4 summarises the key points of the report, highlighting the main takeaways and suggestions for future research.

2 Impact of feminist and women's movements on gender norms

This chapter examines how feminist (or anti-patriarchal) activism and women's movements seek to transform gender norms. Most of the cases discussed here are of feminist women's movements – that is, movements that seek to directly challenge gender inequality and sexist oppression (see Box 1). Such movements include those for women's land rights, menstruation rights, inheritance rights, and rights to bodily autonomy and integrity. However, the analysis also includes women's groups that may not always have an explicit feminist agenda, such as the domestic workers' rights movement and women-only environmental movements, as these struggles can also effect changes on gender norms even if gender inequality is not one of their main concerns.

The chapter begins by discussing how various women's and feminist movements have framed their goals. It then discusses the strategies – or types of actions – used by these movements to bring about the desired changes, mapping which of these strategies are used in each pathway of gender norm change. It goes on to provide examples of movements that have promoted gender norm change through each of the two pathways: legal and/or policy reform, and renegotiations of gender roles and relations (see Section 1.1). The chapter concludes by discussing the factors that either contribute to or hinder change, the participation of men in these spaces, existing backlash on gender norm transformation and the impact of crises and conflicts on gender norm change.

2.1 Framing of feminist or women's rights goals

As Cagna and Rao (2016) highlight in their multi-country study, the goals of feminist and women's movements, and the ways in which these goals are framed, should be understood as the results of internal processes of negotiation among different constituencies of women within movements.

As Fish (2006) shows in the case of the South African domestic workers' struggle (see Box 2), one way of resolving intra-group tensions is to frame goals in a broad-ranging way. Appealing to wider gender equality commitments – or even more broadly to human rights or social justice commitments – rather than focusing on specific issues can be more effective in building unity among women's constituencies and even coalitions with other feminist and non-feminist actors.

Box 2: Framing and strategies of the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union

Domestic workers in South Africa have collectively organised through unionisation since 1977. However, it is only since the 2000s, when the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU) was relaunched, that their collective organisation has been constant and of a higher profile. The union was reactivated to contest how the newly recognised gender and labour rights in the country's 1994 Constitution were being nullified in practice because of discrimination based on race, class and (in the case of labour rights) gender.

SADSAWU aims to challenge the lack of attention to the legal rights of black women and women of colour, who comprise the majority of domestic workers. In terms of gender norms, by demanding legal reforms that guarantee domestic workers' rights, the movement contests the devaluation of female labour and female care work in the domestic sphere. More specifically, the movement challenges the devaluation of racialised female labour and racialised female care work in the household.

As part of its strategy, SADSAWU has been working with what Fish (2006) calls 'South Africa's gender machinery', namely three governmental offices: the Commission on Gender Equality, the Office on the Status of Women, and the Parliamentary Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women. Fish (2006) also documents how SADSAWU has framed its work around broad gender equality commitments and how this has allowed it to be part of national coalitions, such as the Gender Monitoring and Advocacy Coalition for the Unemployment Insurance Fund (GMAC-UIF), as well as of international coalitions. As Fish writes, SADSAWU's membership of GMAC-UIF has been crucial, as it afforded domestic workers 'a pivotal space to network with other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who were representing their cause' (ibid: 124). By being part of the coalition, SADSAWU's members were also able to inform NGOs 'about the practical realities of policy decisions in ways otherwise unavailable without the representation of domestic workers' experiences present at the decision-making table' (ibid.).

Moreover, Fish notes that, within these coalitions, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the international instrument most appealed to, and thus a crucial instrument for advancing their struggle.

SADSAWU has achieved many improvements to date. It has achieved changes in social security policy, with the domestic work sector now included in the National Unemployment Insurance Fund, as well as South Africa's ratification (in 2013) of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention 189 on domestic workers. These victories have been achieved despite several barriers experienced by the movement, including financial strains because of difficulties in collecting union dues where there is no central employer; limited resources, which make running membership campaigns simultaneously with other union actions unfeasible; and the entrenched racial and gendered power inequalities that surround domestic work, which often results in failures to enforce legislation or accountability measures, to the benefit of employers.

It should be noted that since the relaunch of SADSAWU, various other organisations have emerged as key actors in the domestic workers' rights movements, such as the Migrant Workers' Union of South Africa (MIWUSA, formed in 2013) and Izwi Domestic Workers Alliance (formed in 2018). These organisations do not necessarily form a united front with SADSAWU. In fact, there are some tensions between MIWUSA and SADSAWU because of the different ways they approach and frame domestic work – MIWUSA differentiates between the vulnerability of migrant and domestic workers, while SADSAWU does not.

Sources: Fish (2006) and Vanyoro (2021).

Another way to resolve intra-group tensions is through what Levitt and Merry (2009) term 'norm vernacularisation'. This involves a process of appropriating and adapting a global discourse – in this case, that of feminism and/or women's rights – to a local context. Adapting a women's rights discourse to a local context not only highlights the diversity in how gender justice may be understood and approached, but also allows movements to present meaningful and localised interpretations. This can help activists avoid the backlash that sometimes accompanies perceived foreign influence on women's issues and enables them to craft a unique analysis that diverse groups of women, within a particular setting, can rally around.

Cagna and Rao (2016) illustrate this with the case of Indonesia's feminist movement against gender-based violence,⁴ in which Muslim feminists framed the issue in relation to Islam's principle of '*sakinah* family' (an honest and peaceful family) in order to appeal to religious women's organisations and create a unifying agenda. By framing gender-based violence as in opposition to the principle of *sakinah*, Muslim feminists also aimed to convince Indonesian national leaders of the need for a law to criminalise violence against women. This example thus also shows that vernacularisation is a way to not only resolve tensions within groups, but also appeal to constituencies in power and to society in general.⁵ Adapting the framing of women's rights to specific contexts can allow women to strategically anchor their demands in local moral values, minimising the possibility of gender equality measures being perceived as incompatible with important moral principles.

However, vernacularisation may also limit the potential of gender norm change. For instance, Baig (2016) highlights how Muslim migrant women residing in Hong Kong appealed to end violence against women on the grounds of its impact on family stability. While this framing may curtail violence, it does not challenge the lack of recognition of women's rights to bodily and psychological integrity.

Norm vernacularisation, moreover, may not be adequate to resolve all intra-group tensions. Literature on feminist and women's movements makes clear that differences between women often lead to the creation of separate feminist organisations that deal with specific issues experienced by different constituencies of women. As Britton (2006) notes, this may have strategic and practical benefits for the political success of women's movements, as it generates agendas that are issue-centred rather than broad-ranging. On the one hand, this allows movements or groups not only to have more concrete goals, but also to utilise often meagre resources in a more efficient way. Yet, on the other hand, division may compromise the capacity of movements for political unity and broad-based action.

The tendency for feminist movements and goals to atomise, or sub-divide, is often due to the difficulties more marginalised groups of women face in having their experiences and demands heard or recognised within broader feminist movements. This exclusion means that they can have little choice but to organise on their own. Cagna and Rao (2016) and Htun and Weldon (2010) suggest that women's movements may choose to strategically focus on issues that are deemed less controversial or divisive – both within movements themselves or across society at large.

⁴ The term 'gender-based violence' appears extensively across gender research and is used here to situate this report within the current literature. However, the authors would like to acknowledge ongoing feminist debates which question the generalising and expansive way in which the term and acronym GBV is used.

⁵ For more examples of norm vernacularisation, see Razavi (2006), de Lange et al. (2012) and Baig (2016).



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Feminist demonstrators at the National University of Colombia perform 'A Rapist in Your Path' to protest against violence against women and femicide in Bogota, November 2019.

As a result, more dominant or popular mainstream feminist and women's movements, which tend to be led by more privileged women, can sometimes reject or neglect the demands of specific groups of women who experience intersectional oppressions. This is because they perceive them to be marginal or 'controversial' (which is similar to how broader social justice movements sometimes perceive gender issues, see Chapter 3). Many women also fear that pursuing these agendas could alienate support for their cause. While focusing on more marginal or less mainstream issues and sub-dividing to pursue different agendas can enable movements to achieve progressive change in relation to these causes, such strategies manifest the limits to the solidarity and unity between different constituencies of women. This is because, when changes advocated for by mainstream feminists do not address the concerns of women who have been marginalised, conditions tend to only improve for those more privileged women in society (Davis, 1982).

2.2 Strategies for gender norm change

The most common strategies used by feminist and women's movements, according to the literature reviewed, are: street occupations, knowledge creation, media coverage, educational workshops, lobbying governments, appeals to state obligations deriving from international conventions, the use of judicial measures, alliances with state institutions or political actors, the formation of national or international networks, and service provision. Each of these activities work along a continuum of transformative change, as the strategy in question may not directly lead to changes in beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

Occupying the street

Occupying public space – be it through protest and rallies, camp outs, fairs or signature collections – is a widely used strategy for pressuring the state to effect change and/or for raising awareness about a particular issue. In fact, activists have increasingly used art to occupy the street and other public spaces to call attention to feminist demands. For example, Las Tesis, the Chilean urban feminist collective based in Valparaíso created a song and dance performance called *Un Violador en tu Camino* (*A Rapist in Your Path*) that has gone viral throughout South America and the world. It has become iconic in the region to perform the routine at feminist street protests to call out male violence against women and femicide (see Serafini, 2020).

The patriarchy is our judge
That imprisons us at birth
And our punishment
Is the violence you **now** see

It's femicide.
Impunity for my killer.
It's our disappearances.
It's rape!

And it's not my fault, nor where I was, nor how I was dressed.
And it's not my fault, nor where I was, nor how I was dressed.

And the rapist **was** you.
And the rapist **is** you.

– *Las Tesis: A Rapist in Your Path (Un Violador en tu Camino)*

Likewise, when the Mexican national government erected fences around state buildings in anticipation of the 2021 International Women's Day protests, the feminist movement in Mexico City responded by turning the fences into an artistic memorial for all the women who have been victims or survivors of 'femicide'⁶ (*feminicidio*) and gender-based violence (El País, 2021). Evidence suggests that disruptive protest such as occupying the street tends to be used in conjunction with other strategies or actions, such as lobbying governments and producing new information.

⁶ Following Felman-Panagotacos (2021), the Spanish Castellano term of *feminicidio*, referring to the gender-based murder of women, is here translated into English as 'femicide' rather than 'femicide'. Fregoso and Bejarano (2010) argue for the use of this translation, as speaking of femicide highlights gender as a social construct. The term *feminicidio* emerged in Mexico in the 1990s in response to the wave of murders of women in Ciudad Juárez on the Mexico/United States border (Garwood, 2002; Segato, 2016).

Producing new information

Producing new information that addresses crucial gaps in knowledge about women's experiences is sometimes used as a strategy to raise public awareness, promote behavioural change and/or advocate for legal or policy changes. For example, in Mexico, Central America, Ecuador and Bolivia, women's organisations have been carrying out vital research to document rates of violence against women and to inform policy advocacy work (see Box 3 for an example; see also Chiriboga Mosquera, 2018; OCNF, 2020). In Ecuador, Chiriboga Mosquera (2018) documents how producing information about gender-based violence surveys, was crucial to the success of feminist organisations in having gender-based murder – or femicide – typified in Ecuador's Penal Code (Código Integral Penal del Ecuador). In some cases, as with Ghana's feminist movement, producing knowledge may be done in partnership with universities and/or individual academics (Ampofo, 2008). Knowledge can also be produced in collaboration with international organisations, in particular with United Nations (UN) agencies (Loose and Vasquez, 2017; Creamer and Simmons, 2018), and/or demanded from state institutions (Azcue and Patiño Aráoz, 2018). The information produced by feminist organisations and/or collectives may then be shared on the street (Winterbottom et al., 2009; Roh, 2019), such as with the Chilean feminist newspaper *La Primera*, or via printed, broadcast or online media (Razavi, 2006; Ampofo, 2008; Azcue and Patiño Aráoz, 2018; Gutiérrez, 2018; Martins, 2020). For a discussion of the use of broadcast media, see Nasruddin (2021), and on the use of online platforms and social media, see ALIGN (forthcoming).

Box 3: CIDEM's work against community gender-based violence in Bolivia

The Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer (Information and Development Centre for Women, or CIDEM) has been a crucial actor in Bolivia's feminist movement against gender-based violence. Alongside offering integral psycho-socio-legal support services to survivors, since its establishment in 1983, CIDEM has also been documenting femicides and the government's response to them. The research and archival work carried out in a project called Observatorio Manuela has been vital to CIDEM's efforts to raise awareness, influence law reforms and pressure for the prosecution of gender-based violence crimes. Besides producing information, the organisation was also embedded in feminist networks, which allowed it to work with grassroots assemblies, the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (a state-funded ombudsman), international cooperation agencies and other feminist organisations.

From 2008, CIDEM ran a national campaign to criminalise femicide, which culminated in 2013 with the reform of Law 348 in Bolivia's Penal Code to include femicide in Articles 83 and 84. CIDEM also ran various campaigns, such as 'Campaña por el Derecho a la Educación' ('Campaign for the Right to Education'), 'Alianzas' ('Alliances') and 'Campaña Bolivia ¡Ya! Libre de Violencia' (Bolivia Campaign Free from Violence Now!).

CIDEM's work highlights the importance of having and/or producing gender-sensitive data, and especially data on gender-based violence, if legal or policy reform is to be pursued. It also highlights the importance of monitoring law enforcement, as legal and policy reform alone often fails to accomplish transformative goals. CIDEM's work shows that the existence of legal frameworks is not sufficient to deliver change, but that organisations need to continue their monitoring activities. Unfortunately, CIDEM closed its doors in 2015 due to a lack of funds.

Source: Miguel-Lorenzo (2020: 24).

Using media

The use of media as communications technology is a crucial strategy for disseminating information about women's and feminist struggles, and about particular gender issues. In the case of the former, activists use media to mobilise resources, reach wider audiences, rally allies, gain institutional support and/or legitimise struggles in public opinion (Hunt, 2019). For example, Infantes Abril (2019) shows how social media was a catalyst for the spread of the 'Ni Una Menos' ('Not One [Woman] Less') movement against gender-based violence in Peru, as it allowed the Argentina-based movement to spill over into Peru's capital Lima, and from there to various other cities (for other examples, see also Razavi, 2006; Moghadam, 2014; Prasanna, 2016). Likewise, Küçükalioglu (2018) argues that the media was crucial for the women's struggle against gender-based violence to have an impact in Turkey. For example, in 2004, *Hürriyet*, an important national newspaper, in collaboration with other actors (such as CNN Turk, the Contemporary Education Foundation and the İstanbul Governorate Human Rights Department), promoted a campaign entitled 'No to Domestic Violence' to support the efforts of the women's movement.

In the case of the latter, the media is used to raise awareness and to educate. For instance, Razavi (2006) shows how, for the feminist movement in Iran, the magazine *Zanan (Women)* – which published new interpretations by women of canonical texts – has been an effective strategy in reaching women, and in contesting dominant gender discourses and patriarchal authority (specifically, that of the clergy). For more details on this topic, see also Ampofo, 2008; Cagna and Rao, 2016; Azcue and Patiño Aráoz, 2018; Gutiérrez, 2018; Martins, 2020.

Educational workshops

Feminist and women's movements often use educational workshops to help promote changes in gender roles and relations. For example, Winterbottom et al. (2009) document the role of Tanzanian women's associations such as the Anti-Female Genital Mutilation Network (AFNET) in running educational initiatives that contest the practice of female genital cutting.⁷ Likewise, in Mexico, the feminist collective *No Somos Medias Naranjas* (We Are Not Half an Orange) challenge violence against women through educational workshops that aim to disrupt gendered myths that perpetuate male violence towards women as well as other gender-based violence. Their work also promotes healthy romantic relationships and female solidarity.⁸ Moreover, workshops can also play a crucial role in fostering change on stigmatised and silenced gender issues such as menstruation (Azcue and Patiño Aráoz, 2018; Roh, 2019) and female sexuality.⁹

⁷ The report uses the term 'female genital cutting' (FGC), as this is a term also commonly used in studies that the report draws on. However, activists and researchers use a number of different terms for this practice, including 'female genital mutilation' (FGM), 'female circumcision' and 'female infibulation'. All these terms are contested and debated.

⁸ See *No Somos Medias Naranjas* Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nosomosmediasnaranjas/>

⁹ See, for example, the 'Better sex' workshop series run by Ruth Eliot (www.rutheliot.com).

Lobbying governments

Women's movements and feminist movements, sometimes in conjunction with or led by NGOs, may choose to lobby governments for legal and policy reforms, or for more effective implementation of existing policies and laws. Alvarez (2000) shows how significant policy successes were achieved in the early 2000s in North Africa when the Collectif 95 Maghreb-Egalité (Equality in the Family in the Maghreb) lobbied governments in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia for: laws against sexual harassment, the repeal of discriminatory family laws, and parliamentary quotas to enhance women's political presence. Ampofo (2008) has also documented how Ghana's National Coalition on Domestic Violence Legislation, formed in 2003, lobbied parliamentarians as one of its strategies for legal reform.

Appealing to state obligations deriving from international conventions

Existing literature documents how appealing to international conventions has been an important strategy for legislative and/or policy change. Fish (2006), Küçükalioglu (2018) and Chiriboga Mosquera (2018) – in their respective case studies on the South African domestic workers' struggle, and activism in Turkey and Ecuador against gender-based violence – all describe the importance of CEDAW (see also Cagna and Rao, 2016). Local feminist organisations have been able to use the convention, which was signed in 1979 and ratified by signatory states at different stages, to pressure states more effectively to act against gender inequality. In South America, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (also known as the Belém do Pará Convention), adopted in 1993 by the Organisation of American States, has also been an important instrument that regional feminist movements have applied to engage states in delivering legal and/or policy change (Sagot, 2008; Walsh, 2009; Macaulay, 2021).

Judicial measures

Feminist movements usually resort to judicial processes to halt a harmful practice as soon as possible. As such, this strategy can challenge gender roles and relations, promote changes therein, and lay the ground for future legal or policy reform. At a national and subnational level, this strategy has been documented mostly in the case of Indian feminist movements and their use of public interest litigations (PILs). Bootwala (2019) examines the Indian feminist movement called We Speak Out, composed of diasporic Bohra women who oppose the practice of female genital cutting in the Dawoodi Bohra community, and documents how the movement resorted to a PIL against the practice in 2018. Likewise, Prasanna (2016) documents how the Indian Young Lawyers Association filed a PIL in 2006 to contest the refusal of women's entry to the Sabarimala temple because of 'menstrual pollution'. This strategy, as Htun and Weldon (2012) show, can also be used at an international scale to demand reparative justice and create jurisprudence that protects and reinforces women's rights. At this scale, judicial processes are mostly pursued through international instruments such as CEDAW and the Belém do Pará Convention, as, through the adoption of these instruments, signatory states acquired legally binding obligations. The Belém do Pará Convention, for example, has been crucial for referring numerous cases to, and resolving them at, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Bustamante Arango and Vásquez Henao, 2011; Jones and Manjoo, 2018).¹⁰

¹⁰ Some of the most iconic cases have been the rulings on the cases of *Maria da Penha Maia Fernandes v. Brazil* (2001), *del Penal Miguel Castro Castro v. Perú* (2006) and *González and others vs. Mexico* (2009, also known as the 'Cotton Fields case').

Alliances with state institutions and/or political actors

Allying with state institutions has been a contested strategy within women's and feminist movements, as working closely with institutional actors, or under institutionalised forms, can lead to narrowed and depoliticised feminist agendas (Alvarez, 1999; Britton, 2006; Hartmann, 2019). Evidence suggests that this strategy of forming alliances with state institutions or actors, which tends to focus on legal and/or policy reform, has been most successful in North Africa and across the African continent, as well as in East and Southeast Asia (Meintjes, 1996; Ampofo, 2008; Tripp et al., 2008; Abirafeh, 2009; Cagna and Rao, 2016; Moghadam, 2017; 2020). For instance, Fish (2006) documents how the domestic workers' struggle in South Africa has worked closely with the state's 'gender machinery' (see Box 2). Similarly, Moghadam (2020) discusses how Morocco's feminist movement has allied itself with progressive political parties – notably the Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires – in order to increase its chances of expanding women's rights within the state machinery. This strategy, while less documented in the regional literature, has also been used by feminist movements across the South American continent to varying degrees (see, for example, Walsh 2009; Miguel Lorenzo, 2010; Chiriboga Mosquera, 2018).

Creation and membership of networks

While, as the literature suggests, working with state institutions is a contested strategy, collaborating with other civil society actors is a well-supported one. Creating and participating in networks can be a strategy for demanding legal and/or policy change and for contesting gender roles and relations. Networks can increase a movement's political and social capital to advocate successfully for reforms, as well as function as important knowledge-sharing platforms through which gender roles and relations can be more successfully challenged. Moreover, networks can enrich movements through the sharing of experiences and knowledge, and through practices of solidarity-building.

Evidence suggests that creating networks at different scales – whether at the national, regional and/or international levels – is one of the most common and most important strategies used by women's and feminist movements and organisations (Alvarez, 2000; Alvarez et al., 2003; Mohanty, 2003; Moghadam, 2005, 2011; Fish, 2006; Cagna and Rao, 2016; Loose and Vasquez, 2017; Weldon et al., 2020).¹¹ At the regional level, Alvarez (2000) documents various examples of these networks, such as the regional feminist *encuentros* that began in South America in the mid-1980s, and the Collectif 95 Maghreb-Egalité, which brings together women's rights groups from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, formed in 1992 (see also Prieto-Carrón et al., 2007; Moghadam, 2020, respectively). On the issue of gender-based violence, for example, Baig (2016) highlights how diasporic Muslim women's groups have formed wide-reaching networks, such as Women Living Under Muslim Laws (MLUML) and Musawah, to strengthen and enrich their activism. Likewise, Abirafeh (2009) shows how the women's rights movement in Papua New Guinea, working against gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS, has prioritised creating networks at the international level through event platforms, as well as across donor, government, civil society and community sectors at a national level. Existing literature shows that coalitions tend to focus on gender-based violence, possibly because it is an issue that affects women across constituencies. Coalition-building has also been key for the South American domestic workers movement (Loose and Vasquez, 2017).

¹¹ For a similar argument in relation to broader social movements, see Keck and Sikkink (1998) and Urkidi (2010).

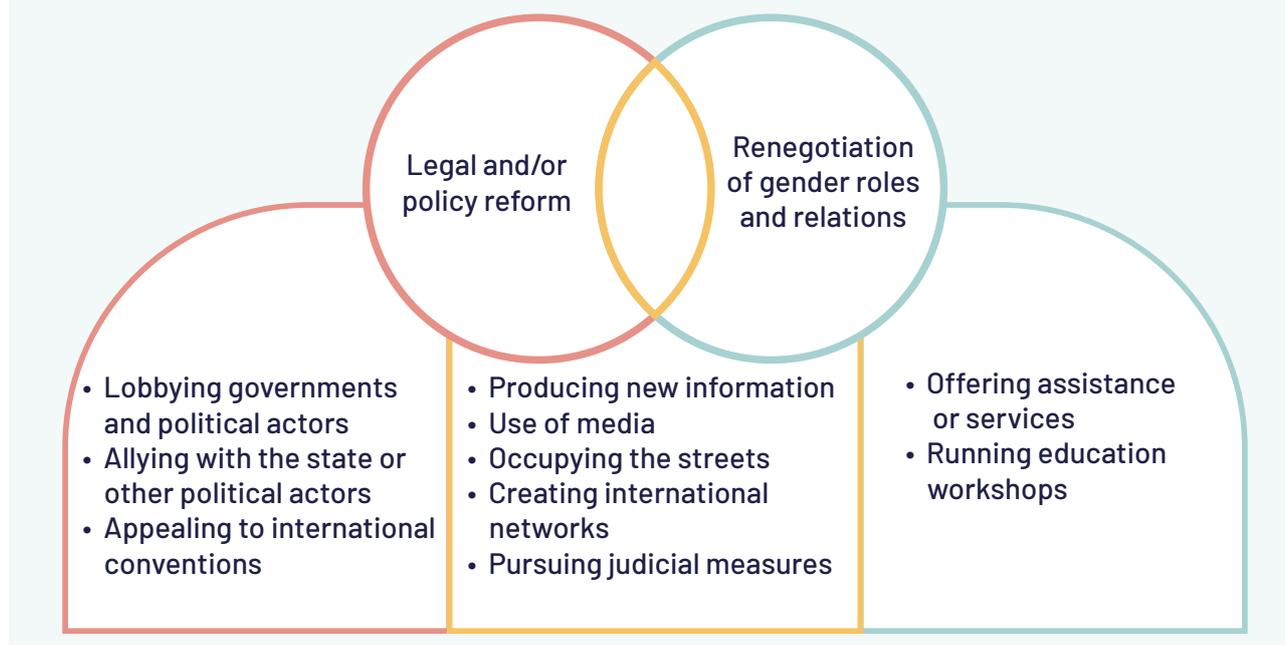
Offering assistance and/or services

The provision of assistance or services responds to both short-term and long-term goals of feminist and women's organisations. In the shorter term, it can mitigate the present impacts of sexist oppression, as is clear in the case of activism against male or gender-based violence towards women. While most feminist organisations working on this topic aim for the creation and implementation of gender-sensitive laws and policies for the transformation of gender relations throughout society, many also offer legal and practical assistance. They work with survivors experiencing any form of gender-based violence to increase their opportunities to leave any violent situation. In the long term, the assistance offered – such as counselling, legal assistance, one-stop rape crisis centres, shelters or intervention services (Britton, 2006; Küçükalioglu, 2018) – may produce some of the conditions that Htun and Weldon (2012) identify as leading to gender norm change. These services can expose women to new ideas, information and support, which can then result in the creation of spaces for consciousness-raising, along with the politicisation of women's experiences and a change in women's expectations or gendered beliefs in relation to intimate partner violence.

In Argentina, as in other countries across the South American continent, feminist activists have been offering information on safe practices for women's health. They have been raising awareness about women's bodily autonomy and giving practical support for its achievement in contexts where the criminalisation of abortion pushes women to unsafe practices (Spataro, 2018). Moreover, women's and feminist organisations may also work with other service providers – in education, health or security, for example – to promote gender norm change. This is the case, for instance, of UK Feminista, which works with schools in the United Kingdom to change attitudes around sexual violence. Across the African continent countries that attend the Forum for African Women Educationalists have undertaken similar initiatives. See also Anyidoho et al. (2021), Walsh (2009) and Medie (2013) for examples of organisations working with police forces on gender-based violence.

As discussed, many of these strategies are used in both pathways of gender norm change. Figure 3 shows which of these strategies are common across both, and which are specific to each one. While use of media is mentioned, the role of social media and online activism as a strategy to shift gender norms is beyond the scope of this report, and instead forms the focus of a complementary upcoming publication (ALIGN, forthcoming). In addition, the strategies identified are not exhaustive but based on the evidence search, meaning tactics like the feminist strike do not feature.

Figure 3: What strategies are used in each pathway to gender norm change?



2.3 Pathways to gender norm change

The following subsections discuss each of the two pathways to gender norm change (as conceptualised in Section 1.1) in turn. They locate issues that have been addressed in each pathway alongside the gender norms that activists have aimed to transform, providing some specific examples. In brief, activists usually pursue legal and/or policy reform on issues regulated by the state (such as family laws, violence, abortion, labour rights and land rights), while they pursue the renegotiation of gender roles and relations on issues (such as menstrual stigma) that are not regulated by the state, but which tend to be reproduced by formal and informal institutions.

2.3.1 Legal and/or policy change

Most feminist and women's movements have explicitly focused on demanding legal changes, such as the introduction of domestic violence laws, the decriminalisation of abortion, reform of unequal inheritance laws and reform of male-only land tenure rights, among many others. In fact, Htun and Weldon (2012) show how national and transnational feminist and women's movements have been crucial for these policy changes, particularly those related to violence against women.¹²

¹² Most relevant literature tends to prioritise impact on law and policy. Perhaps because of this being the easiest of the two pathways to track, or its unique capacity to institutionalise change, or a persisting bias that prioritises the public sphere over the private.

As discussed in Section 1.1, legal and policy change has the potential to drive gender norm change and to reconstruct gender relations (Marcus and Harper, 2014). Yet, for legal and/or policy changes to have such impacts, they need to be backed up by proper implementation and enforcement, which can be particularly difficult in the case of international legal frameworks on women's rights (George, 2019; Htun and Jensenius, forthcoming). As will be highlighted in Section 2.5, there can be a failure of enforcement or implementation due to improper allocation of funds, corruption, the persistence of sexist attitudes within government agencies, and a lack of government capacity or political will. As a result, feminist movements may have to continue to advocate for the effective enforcement and implementation of legal mechanisms even after they have become law. This has been the case for reforms related to gender-based violence in most countries.¹³

Legal and/or policy reform has been pursued as a pathway to gender norm change by movements working on a variety of areas, as will be discussed below.

Gender-based violence

One notable area in which legal reform has been pursued as a pathway to gender norm change is activism against gender-based violence.¹⁴ This may be, as Britton and Shook (2014) note, due to an understanding of legal change as a key mechanism for women to confront men's violence against them. However, as Cagna and Rao (2016) and Htun and Weldon (2012) argue, legal and policy change on gender-based violence is crucial not only because of the justice and supporting mechanisms it may provide women with, but also because it contests deeply embedded gender norms. This includes ideas about the public and the private, the 'sovereignty' of the private sphere, male authority within the domestic sphere, and violence as a dominant conflict resolution mechanism.

Activism against male violence towards women or gender-based violence also challenges norms about family and sexuality (such as ideas about honour and shame) that lie at the centre of patriarchal norms and heteronormativity. Sagot (2008) argues, for instance, that the Belém do Pará Convention was crucial for reframing men's violence against women in Latin America as a problem related to structural power asymmetries, rather than as a private family or health issue. This understanding of gender-based violence created opportunities for feminist movements and organisations to contest the dynamics sustaining gendered power inequalities. Box 4 shows some examples of legal and/or policy changes related to gender-based violence attributed to feminist movements.

¹³ For instance, while feminist groups have succeeded in pushing gender-based violence legislation in South America, rates of violence against women have remained high and organisations such as CIDEM have had to move their focus to monitoring and promoting law enforcement (see Britton (2006) and Britton and Shook (2014) for a discussion of this in the case of South Africa and Namibia, respectively).

¹⁴ In fact, Weldon and Htun (2013), examining a dataset on women's movements and policies, find that a strong, autonomous feminist movement is statistically significant as a predictor of government action to redress violence against women.

Box 4: Legal or policy reforms on gender-based violence attributed to advocacy by feminist movements

Existing literature attributes the following legal and/or policy changes related to gender-based violence to advocacy work by feminist movements.

- **China:** passage of the Domestic Violence Law in 2015, achieved after 20 years of advocacy by the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) and the Anti-Domestic Violence Network (ADVNI) (Cagna and Rao, 2016).
- **India:** amendment of the sections on sexual assault in the Indian Criminal Law, specifically the Criminal Law [Amendment] Acts of 1983 and 2013 achieved by a cluster of women's and LGBTQI organisations (ibid.).
- **Indonesia:** passage of the Law on Domestic Violence no. 23/2004 in 2004, achieved by the Advocacy Network to Eradicate Domestic Violence (JANKGA PKTP)(ibid.).
- **Slovenia:** modification of the Penal Code in 1999 to give the judicial power the authority to remove a perpetrator from their family residence, passage of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act in 2008, and the promotion of the Resolution of the National Programme of Domestic Violence Prevention, 2009–2014 (Medarić, 2011).
- **Turkey:** passage of legislation mandating government-run shelters for survivors of gender-based violence and of the Law on the Protection of the Family No. 4320 in 1998, the abolishment of article 348 of the Penal Code and the establishment of the General Directorate for the Status and Problems of Women (Küçükalioglu, 2018).
- **Algeria:** amendment to Article 341 of the Penal Code in 2004, which made sexual harassment an offence (Moghadam 2011; 2020).
- **Ghana:** passage of the Domestic Violence Bill in 2007, achieved by the National Coalition on Domestic Violence Legislation (Ampofo, 2008).
- **Liberia:** the reformulation of a new Rape Bill in 2006, achieved by the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL)(Gbowee, 2009).
- **Namibia:** passage of the Combating of Rape Act 8 in 2000 – one of the world's most progressive rape laws worldwide (Britton and Shook, 2014).
- **Morocco:** the abolition of 'marry your rapist' laws in 2014, and the passage in 2016 of Law 103.13 against gender-based violence (Moghadam, 2020).
- **South Africa:** passage of the Code of Good Practice on Sexual Harassment in 1997 and the Domestic Violence Act in 1998, as well as reforms on the Sexual Offences Bill (Bennett, 2007).
- **Tunisia:** the abolition of 'marry your rapist' laws, and legal reforms in 2017 that have resulted in one the most stringent laws on gender-based violence worldwide (Moghadam, 2011; 2020).
- **Bolivia:** the passage in 2013 of Law 348 of the Penal Code, in replacement of Law 1674, achieved in part due to the work of organisations such as CIDEM (Miguel-Lorenzo, 2010; see Box 3).
- **Ecuador:** the reform of the Integral Penal Code in 2014, which typifies the crime of femicide, and the passage of the Law for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women in 2018 (Chiriboga Mosquera, 2018; Zuleta Sánchez, 2019).
- **Guatemala:** the passage of the Intra-Familial Violence Law in 1996 and the Law Against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence Against Women in 2008 (Musalo and Bookey, 2014).
- **Mexico:** the passage of the Law on the Right of Women to a Life free of Violence in 2007, which created the 'Gender Alert' mechanism, and the reform of the National Penal Code to typify the crime of femicide (Segato, 2016; Benitez Quintero and Veléz Bautista, 2018; Araiza Díaz et al., 2020).
- **South America:** the passage in 1993 of the Belém do Pará Convention, which framed gender-based violence as the result of gender inequality and set up a follow-up mechanism to help signatory states translate the convention into national-level reform and policy (Sagot, 2008; Walsh, 2009; Bustamante Arango and Vásquez Henao, 2011).



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Women with green scarves from the 'marea verde' (green wave) movement protest for the legalisation of abortion in front of a church in La Plata, Argentina in 2020

Other areas

Table 1 shows other areas of advocacy by feminist and women's movements in which legal and/or policy reform has been pursued to create gender norm change. These include women's representation in public institutions and women's constitutional rights, family law, land rights, labour rights, menstruation and abortion.

Table 1: Examples of areas in which feminist and women’s movements have achieved legal and/or policy reform

Area	Legal and/or policy change	Norms contested
Women’s representation in public institutions and women’s constitutional rights	Moghadam (2011) documents how Algeria’s feminist movement has achieved one of the highest rates of female parliamentary participation globally, as well as an ongoing constitutional revision process. Likewise, Moghadam (2011; 2020) attributes to national feminist movements the success of the incorporation of gender equality as a principle in the 2014 Tunisian Constitution, and the introduction of a 10% parliamentary quota for women to Morocco’s Electoral Code in 2002. In Iran, Kurzman (2008) argues that the feminist movement was a crucial force behind petitions for law reform to incorporate gender equality principles.	Reforms on this issue contest gender norms that alienate women from the public sphere by emphasising their place in the private sphere.
Land rights	Deere and León de Leal (2001) argue that gender-progressive land legislation in most South American countries has been due to the work of rural women’s organisations. In Brazil, Deere (2003) highlights the success of the women’s landless movement, the women’s rural unions and the autonomous rural women’s movement in having women’s land rights included in the 1988 Brazilian Constitution. Similarly, Berriane (2016) documents how the Soulaliyate movement in Morocco influenced the government to issue three administrative circulars between 2009 and 2012 instructing local representatives to ensure that women were included among the beneficiaries of collective land, and how the Soulaliyate movement continues to mobilise to have this policy change made into law (see Box 6).	Legal reforms on this topic contest gender norms that subordinate women politically and/or economically to a male authority within the family or household.
Labour rights	Fish (2006) documents the impact of the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU) in achieving social security policy change, such that domestic work is now included in the national Unemployment Insurance Fund (see Box 2). Likewise, Loose and Vasquez (2017) documented how the South American domestic workers movement has achieved the ratification of ILO Convention 189 in various countries, such as Bolivia and Ecuador (2013), Argentina, Costa Rica and Chile (2014), Brazil (2018) and Mexico (2020). In Brazil, Deere (2003) highlights rural women’s successful mobilisation for equal labour rights (namely: social security benefits, right to unemployment and disability insurance, 120 days of paid maternity leave for women and retirement benefits), as well as for the introduction of a mandatory gender quota for union leaders in 1997.	These legal reforms contest gender norms on women’s economic participation in the public sphere, as labour rights recognise women’s formal participation in the economy and extend to them the appropriate protections. Fish (2006), for example, highlights how the domestic workers’ movement in South Africa indirectly challenges social constructions of the ‘household’ as a feminised, racialised and private space that devalues the labour that occurs therein (see Box 2).

Family law	Moghadam (2011, 2020) and the Centre for Public Impact (CPI, 2016) attribute to the feminist movements in Algeria (2005), Morocco (2004, 2007) and Tunisia (1998), respectively, changes in each country's family and/or nationality law that enabled women to pass on nationality to their children.	Reforms in this area, like those on land rights, contest the norm of male authority over women within the household.
Menstruation	Roh (2019) documents how various Korean feminist organisations working on menstrual activism and period poverty, such as Korean WomenLink, achieved a partial value added tax (VAT) exemption for sanitary products in 2004. Azcue and Patiño Aráoz (2018) document how this was also achieved by feminist movements in Kenya (2004), Russia (2017), Colombia (2018) and Argentina (2020). Gaybor (2019), Belgrano Rawson (2012) and Morgan (2015) highlight how the feminist movement in Argentina has succeeded in making menstruation a sexual, reproductive and health rights issue.	Reforms on this topic contest prevalent gender norms that make female bodily issues 'private' issues, as well as the longstanding perception of the male body as the default in policy making.
Abortion	Gutiérrez (2018), Gutiérrez et al. (2018) and Pis Diez (2019) examine how the campaigns calling for the decriminalisation of abortion in Argentina – which started in 2005 under the name of <i>Campaña Nacional por el Derecho al Aborto Legal, Seguro y Gratuito</i> (National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion) – finally succeeded in 2020, after seven attempts. Also in Argentina, López (2018) highlights how feminist and student groups were behind the passage of the Law of Integral Sexual Education.	Feminist movements advocating for safe access to abortion services not only contest dominant gender norms by promoting women's bodily rights, but also religiously influenced notions and, as Kumar et al. (2009) argue, the gendered ideals of female fecundity, the primacy and inevitability of motherhood and 'instinctive' nurturing.

Legal and/or policy change, however, may not always be a suitable pathway to gender norm change. Winterbottom et al. (2009) discuss the negative impacts of criminalisation through the case of female genital cutting in Tanzania. They argue that criminalisation of the practice (through its incorporation in Tanzania's Criminal Code in 1995, and the government's strategic plan in 2015) has only served to drive it underground, with girls being circumcised at a younger age to evade detection. Criminalisation has thus stripped the rite of its complexity and has increased surveillance over women's and girls' bodies (girls, for instance, may be checked in schools for signs of having been cut). See Tapia (2016) and Polavarapu (2019) for a discussion, in the contexts of Uganda and Ecuador respectively, on the ineffectiveness of addressing gender-based violence through criminalization.

2.3.2 Renegotiation of gender roles and relations

As outlined in Section 1.1, the second pathway to gender norm change identified in literature on feminist and women's movements involves work within all types of communities and institutions, as well as at interpersonal and individual levels, to promote behavioural change. For example, in Thorpe (2018), South African feminists describe how taking part in the feminist movement has changed their lives, as they have learnt to express anger in public spaces, overcome traditional feminine beauty norms, break the silence about rape and sexual violence, build solidarity between rape survivors, overcome narratives of self-sacrifice in motherhood and contest unequal gender dynamics within the family.

Feminist movements may explicitly follow this pathway to gender norm change, as their theoretical foundation emphasises gender as a social construct that is (re)produced through a person's roles and relations. Of the movements studied, those working on gender-based violence, menstrual activism and female genital cutting are the most explicitly engaged with this pathway.

The mere fact that so many women got together in such a big group will bring us power. Whenever women get together on something, they can generally make their wishes known.

– Khuying Suparb Vissurakarn, *Delegate from Thailand, First World Conference on Women, Mexico City, 1995*

Gender-based violence

Activism against gender-based violence explicitly contests gendered behaviour and expectations that serve to perpetuate such violence. For example, in line with the writings of Herrera Gómez (2011), the feminist Mexican collective *No Somos Medias Naranjas* challenge narratives around love that help create and sustain toxic and/or abusive relationships – such as those about female sacrifice and love’s transformational potential. Feminist organisations that work with male perpetrators of violence towards women to promote new forms of masculinity (and those run by men, as explored in Sub-section 2.4.1) are also working explicitly on the transformation of gender roles.¹⁵ Organisations that raise awareness about the importance of female economic autonomy also work on this pathway.

Moreover, in producing information on gender-based violence (see Section 2.2), organisations such as CIDEM (see Box 3) are further contesting the silence around violence against women that is complicit in its reproduction. This can be said to apply more generally to women’s advocacy against gender-based violence, not only to those organisations that produce information on the issue. Feminist advocacy on men’s violence against women raises public awareness and challenges the normalisation of such violence and its perception as a private matter (see for example, Chiriboga Mosquera, 2018; Küçükalioglu, 2018). For instance, feminist consciousness-raising speak-outs function as a method to facilitate breaking the silence around women’s experiences of violence (Kelland, 2016). Speak-outs, along with information production and sharing can provide a narrative and vocabulary that makes sense of women’s experience of violence, which in turn helps survivors overcome the barrier of ‘the absence of adequate language with which to understand, articulate, and explain their experiences’ (ibid: 730).

Menstrual activism

Groups working on menstrual activism have also explicitly targeted gender roles and relations, by deconstructing the stigmatisation of the female body and promoting women’s body ownership and body positivity (see, for example, Box 5).¹⁶ Feminist groups in India (Prasanna, 2016; Arora, 2017), Argentina (Azcue and Patiño Aráoz, 2018) and South Korea (Roh, 2019; see Box 5) – besides advocating for legal and policy reform, as discussed in Sub-section 2.3.1 – have also contested discriminatory attitudes towards women that are embedded in discourses of purity and pollution, and promoted women’s bodily autonomy and ownership. As such, menstrual activism contests not only patriarchal views on menstruation held by society at large, but also those that have been internalised by women themselves (Rajagopal and Mathur, 2017; Roh, 2019).

¹⁵ In Mexico, for instance, see the work of GENDES: <https://www.gendes.org.mx/>.

¹⁶ Menstrual activism is different from activism around sexual and reproductive rights. Menstrual activism, as Gaybor (2019) clarifies, relates to the body, to menstrual literacy and to the overcoming of taboos around menstruation.



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Messages written on sanitary pads appear across campus of Jadavpur University as a protest against sexism and patriarchy in Kolkata, India in 2015

Box 5: Menstrual activism in South Korea

The burgeoning feminist movement in South Korea began a public conversation about menstruation in 1999. Three main events have propelled this conversation.

The 'Menstruation Festival' (1999–2007) – an unapologetic celebration of menstruation – was the first time menstruation had been brought into the public sphere in the country. Painted sanitary pads hung all around as decorations and events bore names such as 'Bloody Maiden', 'Excitement over the Moon' and 'Girls Who Have it Hard'. The festival's goal was to disrupt the perception of menstruation as something 'to be concealed', 'embarrassing', 'annoying', 'dirty', 'painful' and 'maternal', and to provide a cultural alternative whereby menstruation is considered normal, natural and enjoyable (Roh, 2019: 100).

The 'Pad Up–Down' campaign (2002), created by Korean WomenLink, demanded that sanitary products be exempted from VAT, so that women could have unconditional access to these products. To back this campaign, Korean WomenLink carried out a survey on the use and perception of sanitary pads, creating the first database on women's experiences and practices in relation to menstruation. In 2004, the campaign achieved a partial VAT exemption for sanitary products. However, as diapers were also included in this tax measure, some Korean feminist groups regard the victory as co-opted, as the inclusion of sanitary pads alongside diapers frames menstruation as a maternity issue rather than an issue of gender equality.

The feminist group, Bloodsisters Solidarity, led workshops and campaigns (2003–2012) about environmental and health concerns related to sanitary pads and products. In promoting the use of 'do-it-yourself' cotton pads, they challenged notions of female purity, encouraged women to relate differently to their menstruation processes by coming into contact with menstrual blood, encouraged women's ownership over their own bodies and rejected the sexist ideas used to promote sanitary products in South Korea.

As a result of these initiatives, menstruation has gone from being a prohibited topic of discussion to a human rights concern; and from a hygiene concern to one of social justice, sexual health and reproductive rights. The Menstruation Festival, Korean WomenLink and Bloodsisters Solidarity promoted women's ownership of their bodies and the revaluation of their 'femininity', promoting in turn their awareness and rejection of patriarchy's deprecation of the female body and of women. Moreover, the women who participated in these events and campaigns experienced a process of self-empowerment and politicisation, which led them to become political actors beyond this issue.

Source: Roh (2019).

Social media campaigns, being cost-effective and wide-reaching, have been key in these efforts (ALIGN, forthcoming). One example is the '#HappyToBleed' social media campaign in India that emerged in response to the decision by the Sabarimala temple to prohibit women's entry because of 'menstrual pollution' (Arora, 2017). Yet, campaigns are not restricted to online platforms. Prasanna (2016) documents a campaign in Kochi, Kerala, which took place after a company in the area strip-searched its female employees to identify the one who had left a used sanitary napkin in the bathroom. The campaign 'Red Alert: You've got a Napkin' involved Indian women mailing used and unused sanitary napkins to the manager of the company as a form of protest.¹⁷ Activists have also used educational workshops and events to challenge menstrual stigma (for instance, in South Korea during the 1990s and 2000s; see Box 5). In Argentina, Gaybor (2019) similarly finds that educational workshops about menstrual cups (as a reusable alternative to sanitary pads) have encouraged women to relate more positively to their bodies.

Female genital cutting

Organisations working on the issue of female genital cutting also contest beliefs that underpin gender roles and relations in particular contexts. For example, diasporic Dawoodi Bohra movements have raised public awareness of this topic, which has been previously considered taboo within the Bohra community. Bootwala (2019: 225) writes:

[A]s the conversation of FGC [female genital cutting] has been brought into the public arena, it is an opportunity for women to acquire knowledge with regard to genital anatomy, female sexual function, and reproductive health.

As such, and as with menstruation, breaking existing silences around the practice of female genital cutting can promote women's bodily autonomy. Moreover, as Bootwala argues, since the practice in the Bohra community is tied to gendered notions of honour, family responsibility, dignity and sexual decency, efforts to oppose the practice inherently promote a change in these gendered norms.

Indirect consequences of political mobilisation

Many women's and feminist organisations have promoted changes in gender roles simply by virtue of organising collectively. Women have increased their self-confidence, taken up leadership positions and challenged gendered expectations (Meintjes, 1996; Kurzman, 2008; Kaufman and Williams, 2010). Moreover, this has also been the case in women's environmental movements, in which indigenous women often explain their involvement through gendered narratives (mostly related to motherhood and care) (Jenkins, 2015). The ways in which women's participation itself prompts the renegotiation of gender roles and relations is discussed in more detail in Section 3.3.

¹⁷ In these contexts, the temple's decision and the company's behaviour were not isolated episodes of discrimination against women, but rather events that reflect the dominant discriminatory attitude in the region towards women and girls because of menstruation – an attitude that is deeply intertwined with religious beliefs.

2.4 Factors that contribute to gender norm change

Empirical evidence points to various factors that may contribute to norm change through either pathway of change – the most important one being the mobilisation of other political actors. This section also discusses the participation of men in feminist movements, as the benefits (or not) of including men in these spaces remains a contested issue.

Mobilisation of other political actors

Htun and Weldon (2012) argue that feminist organisations and women’s movements have been more important than women legislators, political parties and even national wealth for influencing progressive policy and legal change. However, empirical evidence from other studies shows how other actors can also be crucial to the promotion of legislative reform. For instance, Dunckel Graglia (2016), examining violence against women on public transportation in Mexico City, shows how gender-sensitive policies (such as women-only transport) may happen as a result of the work of a state’s ‘gender machinery’ (in this case, Mexico’s National Institute for Women, INMUJERES) rather than because of the activities of feminist groups. National and international courts, such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Bustamante Arango and Vásquez Henao, 2011; Jones and Manjoo, 2018) can also play a crucial role (see also the case of SADSAWU, Box 3). Other actors, such as lawyers (Prieto-Carrón et al., 2007; Ampofo, 2008; Medie, 2013), politicians (Razavi, 2006; Cagna and Rao, 2016), academics (Lagarde y de los Ríos, 2012; Araiza Díaz et al., 2020) and elites (Razavi, 2006; Moghadam, 2014) have been critically involved in bringing about legal and/or policy change. In most cases, these actors do not get involved on their own but in coordination with, and in support of, feminist movements and organisations.

Other factors that can contribute to gender norm change include the following:

- Access to resources: Murdie and Peksen (2015, citing Bell et al., 2013) argue that access to significant resources, both financial and organisational, makes collective mobilisation less costly for individuals, increasing the likelihood of dissent and protest.
- Long-term perspective: Deere (2003) argues that a long-term view makes gender norm change more likely, especially when movements manage to stay active over many years, given that deep-seated patriarchal practices and beliefs can be slow to change.
- Existence of feminist alliances: Berriane (2016) highlights the importance of feminist alliances and ‘bridge leaders’ (discussed in Section 3.4) for the transfer of knowledge and political skills (see Box 6).
- Democratic context: Cagna and Rao (2016) and Britton and Shook (2014) highlight (in the cases of Indonesia and Namibia, respectively) the role democratic regimes can play in placing gender demands on the state’s agenda. However, processes of democratisation can also lead to ‘retraditionalisation’. This was the case in Lithuania’s post-Soviet transition, in which the family was ‘privatised’ and gender differences ‘naturalised’ (Reingardiene, 2003).
- International political climate and consensus: Britton and Shook (2014) emphasise how Namibian women’s struggle against gender-based violence was aided by coinciding with international campaigns taking place at the same time. This increased the resources, expertise and political will available to the movement (see also Küçükalioglu, 2018).

- Existence of international platforms: Htun and Weldon (2012) highlight the importance of international events, such as the four UN World Conferences on Women, the last of which (in Beijing in 1995) brought some 30,000 delegates from all over the world and exerted significant political leverage on governments to adopt women's rights frameworks.
- Autonomy of movements: Htun and Weldon (2012) also argue that it is important for movements to be autonomous from other political actors, because this allows members to set their own agendas and framings, as well as avoid being co-opted and instrumentalised.
- Spillover trend: Roh (2019) (see Box 5) shows how menstrual activism in South Korea led the feminist organisations involved to proceed to challenge and promote changes in the culture of childbirth, the culture of dieting and plastic surgery, women's health policies and abortion law, among other issues. Contesting one gender norm, then, can contribute to further gender norm changes.

Box 6: Feminist bridge leaders in the Soulaliyate women's movement in Morocco

Soulaliyate is a grassroots movement of rural women set up in Morocco in 2007 in response to the increasing commodification of collective land and the systematic exclusion of women from the distribution of monetary compensation in cases where land was seized. The movement has worked closely with the Democratic Association of Women (ADFM), an urban, educated feminist group created in the 1980s. In fact, Berriane (2016) argues that the movement emerged as a result of the interaction between the two groups of women, as the relationship provided rural women with the reputation, knowledge and connections of an elite-based organisation that is well-connected to international donor agencies and has experience of promoting legal reforms. Thus, being connected to ADFM allowed the Soulaliyate movement to become more visible and to join wider networks with other women's associations, human rights organisations, political parties and local politicians. Between 2009 and 2012, the movement achieved success, with the Ministry of the Interior issuing three administrative circulars instructing its local representatives to ensure that women were included among the holders of collective land. The movement continues to mobilise for reforms in national legislation.

The Soulaliyate movement highlights the importance of coalitions, as well as of feminist 'bridge leaders' (see Section 3.4). Nevertheless, it also highlights the tensions that can emerge within networks. In this case, rural women and ADFM differed in their time frames: ADFM prioritised legal and policy reform, and lobbying the government, while rural women preferred short-term actions that could effectively halt the process of land privatisation they were experiencing. Moreover, rural women were at times inclined to negotiate their demands and settle (for example) for smaller shares of land than those given to men. This caused major tensions with ADFM, which stressed the importance of maintaining their demands rather than compromising.

Source: Berriane (2016).

2.4.1 Involving men: an ongoing debate

Much of the literature on men and feminist movements comes from a high-income country context – mostly from the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. Moreover, most of this literature is on masculinities, their relation to men’s gender-based violence, or development of new masculinities paradigms (Pease, 2000, 2016; Kaufman, 2001; Pease et al., 2001; Connell, 2002; Flood, 2005; Ashe, 2007; True, 2012; Seymour, 2017).¹⁸ The limited global literature that addresses the role of men as co-activists and co-facilitators within feminist movements shows that including men in feminist and women’s spaces is a controversial issue with unresolved anxieties (Britton, 2006; Linder and Johnson, 2015; Burrell and Flood, 2019; Saavedra, 2020).¹⁹ There are fears that men may co-opt movements’ spaces and/or reproduce forms of violence (including micro-aggressions).

Furthermore, different strands of feminism have diverse views on men’s participation and approaches to the anxieties surrounding it, further complicating the involvement of men in these spaces (Burrell and Flood, 2019). For instance, Linder and Johnson (2015) argue that feminist movements in the United States are uneasy about including men because they fear that men who have the theoretical knowledge and advocacy skills may co-opt the struggle, and become the focus of attention and praise, to the detriment of women’s work. This could thus reproduce asymmetrical gender power relations in a space that is meant to be transformative. This is echoed by Saavedra (2020) who highlights that, because of these fears, young men in Peru and Chile engage autonomously in feminist work by participating in men-only spaces (rather than in main feminist spaces where women often prefer to remain separate). Saavedra also finds that young men involved in feminist work do indeed tend to receive more praise than their female counterparts, and even gain social capital as a result of their activism.

Besides these anxieties, there are two more issues complicating men’s participation in feminist spaces. First, while there is consensus about the advantages of having male facilitators for workshops on gender-based violence with male participants, the use of male facilitators reproduces the assumption that men will find other men more ‘authoritative’ and more important to listen to than women. Second, as Britton (2006) argues, many women’s and feminist organisations are concerned that moving towards engagement of men and boys – often because of donors’ policies – can reinscribe the marginalisation of women, as this redirects resources to male-centric training and programmes.

Despite these tensions around how to involve men without reproducing the same gender norms that feminist movements are trying to transform, male engagement holds important potential – even if this entails activism in a separate sphere to, but in solidarity with, feminist and women’s movements. This is because men can (also) challenge male privilege, undo male complicity and create spaces where women can be listened to and dialogue can occur (Morrell, 2002).

¹⁸ While most literature explicitly addressing this relationship comes from high-income countries, there are important leading efforts by organisations across the globe such as Promundo (Brazil), MenEngage (Uganda), Sonke Gender Justice (South Africa) and GENDES (Mexico).

¹⁹ Baig (2016), Abirafeh (2009), Ampofo (2008) and Ali (2006) also mention the involvement of men in feminist movements but only as recipients/participants in projects aiming to promote behavioural change.

2.5 Factors that hinder gender norm change

Evidence suggests that the pervasiveness and embeddedness of patriarchy in institutions is one of the main factors that hinder the efforts of social movements to bring about gender norm change. As backlash on women's and feminist activism, as well as conflicts and crisis, can have a negative impact on gender norm change, these issues are discussed in further detail in this section.

According to existing literature, the pervasiveness of male authority and privilege can manifest in the following ways to hinder gender norm change.

Refusal to pass new legislation and/or policies

Cagna and Rao (2016) argue that numerous factors such as patriarchal and heteronormative ideas about the family and sexuality, male over-representation in government, the separation of the public and private spheres, and gendered discourses of honour, shame and blame – watered down legislation on gender-based violence in India, Indonesia and China (see also Ali, 2006; Prieto-Carrón et al., 2007; Britton and Shook, 2014; Roh, 2019; Box 5). In Argentina, Tabbush et al. (2018) argue, the relationship between the government and the Catholic Church was an important factor in the lack of political will that prevented progress in the legalisation of abortion until 2020. Likewise, CARE (2017), examining the work of the Mata Masu Dubara structures in Niger, found that conservative forces in the country blocked the adoption of a new Family Code, as well as the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (otherwise known as the Maputo protocol). Moreover, as these authors point out, the presence of conservative constituencies can not only undermine the implementation of progressive legal reform, but also reverse legal/policy changes already achieved.



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A crowd of protesters march to City Hall in Port Elizabeth to remember women who were victims of gender-based violence. South Africa, September 2019

Co-option and reframing of women's rights

Conservative constituencies and entrenched patriarchal attitudes in state institutions can influence the framing of the legal changes sought by feminist and women's movements. This can subvert the potential of the legal and/or policy change to challenge gender norms. For instance, in Argentina, while the feminist movement has succeeded in raising menstruation as a public issue, it has been addressed as a hygiene rather than a rights issue (Gaybor, 2019). Similarly, in South Korea, while feminist organisations achieved a partial tax exemption on menstrual products, the government added infant hygiene products (such as diapers) to the tax exemption, framing the tax change as related to childbirth and maternal welfare rather than to women's rights (Roh, 2019).

Refusal to implement new legislation and/or policies

The entrenchment of patriarchal beliefs in state institutions can also result in the lack of implementation of the achieved legal and/or policy change. Deere (2003), for instance, shows how formal equality in women's land rights in Brazil did not lead to an increase in the share of female beneficiaries in agrarian reform, because deep-rooted patriarchal beliefs in state institutions continued to perpetuate discrimination against female-headed households. The same has been argued in relation to police forces and their (lack of) enforcement of gender-based violence law and policy (Walsh, 2009; Medie, 2013; Anyidoho et al., 2021).

Systematic exclusion of women from the political arena

Mobilisations for legal change are often led by relatively small groups of elite women, as Fallon (2010) concludes in relation to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence in Ghana. This is due to the systematic and historical exclusion of women from the formal political arena, which means that few have the privilege, knowledge and skills needed to advocate for legal and/or policy change (see also Ali, 2006; Baig, 2016).

In addition to the pervasiveness of patriarchal beliefs and practices, evidence also shows the following factors have hindered gender norm change:

- **Lack of institutional capacity:** Documented in numerous studies (Ali, 2006; Fish, 2006; Ampofo, 2008; Abirafeh, 2009; Gutiérrez et al., 2018; Küçükalioglu, 2018), this is a key barrier to promoting gender norm change through legal and/or policy reform. The importance of institutional capacity is also emphasised by Walsh (2009), who argues that the presence of gender-focused state institutions or bodies increases the likelihood of implementation and enforcement.
- **Colonial framings of women's rights:** In the case of campaigns against female genital cutting in northern Tanzania, Winterbottom et al. (2009) argue that campaigns tend to be ineffective and counterproductive when they frame the practice as 'backwards' and 'traditional'. This framing, permeated with colonial power dynamics, not only reproduces unjust power relations but also creates a dichotomous choice between gender equality and culture.

- Existence of customary law: Bennett (2007) shows how the existence of customary law in South Africa may have hindered gender norm change through legal and/or policy change. This can happen when, in practice, formal laws are in tension with cultural norms or customary legal codes, thus rendering individuals and their communities vulnerable to different expectations from the principles encoded in formal laws.
- Fear as a barrier to mobilisation: Thorpe (2018) shows how feminist and women's activism can have significant personal and social costs. Mobilising against patriarchal norms and practices may alienate women from their communities and families, even rendering them vulnerable to violence.
- Time costs of political mobilisation: MacGregor (2006) shows how politically active women incur significant time costs that add to already demanding workloads (see also Chant, 2011; Jenkins and Rondón, 2015). Such costs add to the material costs of activism, such as litigation, transport, amenities, etc. (see also Ali, 2006).
- Tensions within alliances that hinder the stability of movements: In Hong Kong, Baig (2016) found that the different priorities of the Hong Kong Association Concerning Sexual Violence Against Women and the Hong Kong Islamic Youth Association hindered cooperation between them, as one organisation was more oriented towards addressing needs and the other towards promoting legal change (see also Berriane, 2016; Cagna and Rao, 2016; Gutiérrez et al., 2018; Box 6).
- Lack of access to important constituencies: Baig (2016) highlights how, because of cultural and religious gender norms, Muslim women's rights groups cannot always reach the Indonesian and Malaysian migrant communities in Hong Kong with whom they aim to work.
- Political co-option of women's movements: Razavi's (2006) study of the feminist movement in Iran shows how activism can be politically co-opted. In this case, the government used the women's movement to increase its legitimacy, including it in public acts but excluding it from decision-making processes.
- Poverty and economic insecurity: Bennett (2007) and Gouws (2016) argue that poverty and economic insecurity, and the immediate priorities they present for women, may deter them from political action. However, the literature reviewed, as well as that of social movements more generally, shows that poverty is not necessarily a constricting factor for political mobilisation.
- Confounding social challenges: Abirafeh (2009) discusses how progress towards gender equality in Papua New Guinea has been hindered by the increased spread of HIV and AIDS, echoing literature on South Africa that highlights HIV and AIDS as a barrier for contesting gender-based violence (Bennett, 2007; Izumi, 2007; de Lange et al. 2012).w

2.5.1 Backlash against gender norm change

Resistance to gender norm change from male constituencies has been common in various contexts, as documented by Flood et al. (2020). The authors suggest that backlash is usually led by men wanting to defend and maintain their privileged status in the face of advances towards gender equality. Backlash can include denying or dismissing the existence of gender inequality, disavowing responsibility for playing a part in such dynamics, avoiding relevant action, co-opting language and goals, and repressing change.

On backlash as repression, some empirical evidence shows how women's increasing political rights and economic opportunities have prompted anger among men, which has manifested through high rates of male violence against women (Prieto-Carrón et al., 2007; True, 2012; Britton and Shook, 2014; Prasanna, 2016; Arora, 2017; Flood et al., 2020). Women involved in online activism movements against menstrual stigma

often experience backlash such as trolling, rape threats, death threats and hate messages (Arora, 2017). Prasanna (2016) also documents how threatening feminist activists is a form of backlash. She documents how members of the Young Lawyers Association in India, which filed a lawsuit contesting the Sabarimala temple's decision to deny entry to women (due to 'menstrual pollution'), have received threatening phone calls. Bates (2020) documents the rise of misogynist communities of men in the UK, elsewhere, and online, who perpetrate acts of hatred and terror upon women. In these cases, as Britton and Shook (2014), Prieto-Carrón et al. (2007) and Segato (2016) have also argued, men's threats and violence against women become symbolic, 'violently putting [or attempting to put] women back in their place' (Britton and Shook, 2014: 154). In this sense, some instances of male violence against women can be a form of backlash that aims to provoke fear among women, hindering their freedoms and re-establishing the status quo of asymmetric power relations.

In order to address this, True (2012) argues that it is important to involve men in activism against gender-based violence. However, as discussed previously, this is not a straightforward option for most feminist movements, nor does it guarantee that men will not perpetrate violence against women outside and inside these spaces. True also suggests that policy-makers have a key role here, as it is global economic dynamics that have put some men at a disadvantage, hindering their abilities to meet their own and their communities' expectations. Thus, it is important that economic policies promote the advancement of both men and women.

2.5.2 The impact of conflicts and crises

Conflicts and crises can inhibit gender norm change and re-entrench gender roles and responsibilities. Szablewska and Jurasz (2019) highlight (in the cases of Cambodia, Sierra Leone, Yugoslavia and Rwanda) how conflict increases the prevalence and impunity of gender-based violence, and how, due to the normalisation of violence during conflict, increased rates of gender-based violence carry on into post-conflict settings. Gender norm change may be affected by crises as they re-entrench patterns of risk and vulnerability (Plank, 2020), and austerity measures often decrease public sector services (True, 2012). This can be seen in the case of the Covid-19 pandemic. As Al-Ali (2020: 335) writes:

[The pandemic threatens] to create long-term gaps in terms of girls' education as well as women's participation in formal paid labour, which in turn risks strengthening traditional patriarchal gender norms and the division of labour within the household and the economy.

This could undo, in some cases, hard-won successes of feminist movements. For example, the Covid-19 pandemic is putting the successes of the domestic workers' rights movements at risk in South America and elsewhere (ILO, 2021). Conflicts and crises can also create a lack of gender data, deprioritising gender equality commitments in favour of other goals.

Moreover, conflicts and crises tend to complicate the possibility of political mobilisation. For instance, Moghadam (2018), argues that the conflicts sparked by the Arab Spring have eroded (in Egypt and Bahrain) and prevented (in Libya and Syria) the organisation of women's collectives. Yet, Moghadam (2014), Kaufman and Williams (2010), Earle (2011), Al-Ali (2020) and Fernández Anderson (2020) document how women can still mobilise during periods of conflict. In Tunisia, Moghadam (2014) argues, the feminist movement was

crucial in preventing the loss of hard-won rights during periods of political regime change. Al-Ali (2020) and Fernández Anderson (2020) found various feminist initiatives that emerged in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the vital role that feminist movements have played in getting gender issues on the political agenda despite the pandemic. Earle (2011, citing Castillejo, 2009) further demonstrates how conflict can lead to some unforeseen positive changes, outlining how in Sierra Leone rural women displaced to the capital of Freetown began demanding equality in their homes and communities because of exposure to the greater autonomy of urban women.

There is, however, a gap in the literature around what strategies feminist and women's movements are using, or should use, in contexts of conflict, crisis and instability. Research to fill a knowledge gap in this area is vital, so that it can be used by feminist and women's movements, and their allies, in critical times.

3 Impact of women's participation and leadership in broader movements

Changes in gender norms can also result from women's involvement and leadership in broader social justice movements, such as those concerned with peace and democracy, environmental justice, racial justice, human rights and indigenous rights, as well as in liberation or nationalist movements. However, unlike feminist movements, women who participate in broader movements do not tend to focus on producing gender norm change through legal or policy reforms. Instead, it is their participation itself, and the disruption of gender roles and relations this may require, which often brings about gender norm change.

This chapter first discusses how gender claims tend to be framed within these types of movement. It then examines the strategies employed by women to access these political spaces and to assert their claims. This is followed by a discussion of how women's participation has produced gender norm change through the renegotiation of gender roles and relations. Lastly, the chapter highlights some factors that can contribute to or hinder the impact of women's participation in these types of movement and the transformation of gender norms.

3.1 Framing gender claims

The literature reviewed for this study indicates that, as in contexts of conflict and crisis (see Sub-section 2.5.2), gender claims tend to be perceived within movements as potentially divisive or less important than other so-called 'more pressing issues' – considered relevant only, as some would say, 'after the revolution' (Horn, 2013; see also Campbell, 1996; Berhe, 2008; Britton and Shook, 2014). This attitude towards gender claims is illustrated in the cases of land rights movements,²⁰ racial struggles,²¹ union struggles,²² environmental movements,²³ citizen movements,²⁴ and even nationalist and revolutionary movements.²⁵ In response, women tend to frame their claims to gender equality and justice as crucial for the movement's goals. Indeed, existing literature shows that this framing is essential if women's claims are to succeed.

²⁰ See Agarwal (1994), Campbell (1996) and Deere (2003).

²¹ See Asher (2007).

²² See Barrios de Chungara and Viezzer (1978) and Lahiri-Dutt (2012).

²³ See Agarwal (2002) and Jenkins (2015; 2017).

²⁴ See Di Marco et al. (2003) and Sholkamy (2013).

²⁵ See Bernal (2001); Hale (2002); Alison (2003); Omar (2004); Berhe (2008); Salhi (2010); Ramisetty and Muriu (2013); Britton and Shook (2014); and Al-Ali and Tas (2018).

For instance, when women in the Bodhgaya movement for land rights (in Bihar, India) were told that gender issues were divisive in relation to the principle of class unity, they skilfully used language of justice and complementarity to overcome this, as traced by Agarwal (2002; see Box 7). Likewise, Asher (2007), examines the impact of the black women's movement on the agenda of black ethnocultural movements in Colombia, showing how a frame of gender equality being intrinsically tied to the movements' social justice goals has been crucial to creating cohesiveness around, and responsiveness to, afro-descendent women's gender claims within the movement. This makes evident that women's demands need to be adapted to specific narratives, not only for feminist movements (as emphasised by Cagna and Rao (2016) and Levitt and Merry (2009), also discussed in Section 2.1), but also for feminist demands within broader social movements.

Box 7: Framing gender demands within movements: the Bodhgaya movement for land rights

The struggle of Bihari landless labourers and sharecroppers for land rights began in 1978. It was the first movement in India where women's land rights were explicitly addressed, and where young women played a visible and key role in land occupations and street protests. Women's participation in the Bodhgaya movement promoted changes in gender roles and relations, as women began to organise *shivirs* (camps) to discuss their concerns and experiences within the movement. The *shivirs* resulted in the collective denunciation of violence against women and demands for land rights for women.

However, achieving land rights for women was not a straightforward process. Women had to convince men of the importance of their gender claims, with men arguing that these claims fostered division in the movement's class unity. To transcend this, women emphasised the movements' commitment to equality and male/female complementarity. As Manimala (1983, cited in Agarwal, 2002) documents, women maintained that:

Equality can only strengthen, not weaken an organization, but if it does weaken our unity, that will mean that our real commitment is not to equality or justice but to the transfer of power, both economic and social, from the hands of one set of men to the hands of another set of men.

When the men asked: 'How can you cultivate the land on your own? Who will plough it for you?' the women replied: 'Well, who will harvest your crop in that case? We are ready to cultivate the land with hoes instead of ploughs, but we want it in our names'.

Moreover, when gender demands were recognised within the movement, this did not translate into gains in practice because of prejudice on the part of state officials. Women's ability to overcome such opposition was aided by several factors: men's eventual recognition of women's role in the movement and thus of their right to land; the recognition of gender equality as an inherent goal of the movement; solidarity among women; women's recognition of their interests as *women*; and the support of middle-class feminist activists.

In 1985, women received one acre of land through individual, joint, widowhood and destitution titles (even unmarried adult daughters received land for the first time in modern Indian history). As Agarwal highlights, the Bodhgaya movement stands out not only for this achievement, but also for the discussions it prompted within communities on issues such as women's rights to economic independence, gender-based violence, female education and post-marital residence. This resulted in women's greater participation in decision-making, the social condemnation of gender-based violence and the redistribution of domestic labour, as male partners began to get involved in meal preparations and childcare while women participated in discussions.

Box 8: Negotiating participation: women in Ethiopia's Tigray People's Liberation Front

By 2008, women comprised one-third of Ethiopia's Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), an ethnic nationalist insurgency. Initially, women's participation was strictly along the gendered divisions of labour: they cooked and cleaned and were segregated in women-only spaces where they were taught about the movement's ideology. The Front prohibited women from taking on more meaningful activities, keeping decision-making processes completely in the realm of men.

Berhe (2008) documents how female members of the organisation began asking to have their domestic workload reduced so that they could participate more fully, and how the few women who succeeded in this were crucial in advocating for more female participation thereafter. This eventually led to some women taking up the role of fighters – a role which temporarily erased gender codes between men and women involved in the Front – and as organisers. However, women's access to the front line of fighting did not lead to a renegotiation of their domestic work within the movement. Women continued working in the kitchen, collecting water and firewood and preparing local ceremonies, in addition to their newly acquired role as fighters.

Berhe (2008) argues that women's participation in the TPLF nonetheless promoted changes in four areas. First, female members benefited from the Front's land policy, which gave them land ownership and economic independence (in some cases) from male relatives. Second, Tigrayan women benefited from acquiring new knowledge and access to other social circles. Third, women gained important political skills that have allowed them to create various women's associations. Fourth, the formation of women's associations within the Front has led to important contestations of unequal gender dynamics within the movement, such as child marriage and violence against women. However, as in many other cases, tensions abound within the TPLF regarding the recognition of women's rights and the establishment of an agenda for gender equality. The Front has attempted to subordinate women's associations to the direct control of the fighters' association, denying women their right to independent association and questioning the validity of campaigning for women's rights.

Source: Berhe (2008), Chapter 10.

3.2 Strategies of women participating in social movements

The literature on rural and indigenous women's involvement in environmental movements addresses most clearly the strategies women use to participate in broader social movements. This research shows that women often participate in movements by taking on normative gender roles and responsibilities.

Authors such as Campbell (1996), Hallum-Montes (2012), Jenkins (2015) and Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez (2018) document how rural and/or indigenous women across South America (Abya Yala to indigenous communities) have justified their political participation through their roles as mothers. They have centred their responsibilities within their families as caregivers, and the different sensibilities and range of skills they have as women. The use of such gendered narratives is a form of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 2006) – that is, the tactical use of discourses that rely on and support gender stereotypes (Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez, 2018). Although appealing to their gendered responsibilities as mothers and caregivers, as well as their unique skills, this may allow women to successfully negotiate their presence in these movements. Their use of strategic essentialism may simultaneously and contradictorily reproduce dominant gender norms and narratives (see Section 3.3).

Moreover, indigenous women have, in some cases, also used gendered divisions of labour as a way to enter social movements – performing tasks such as cooking and ‘backstage management’, as in the case of nationalist and/or revolutionary movements (see Box 8). Rural women involved in the *seringueiros* (rubber-tappers) movement in Brazil in the 1980s, for example, initially took on roles as recruiters, caretakers of male members and peacemakers in violent situations. Over time, however, they disputed and reshaped their roles in the movement (Campbell, 1996).

3.3 Pathways to gender norm change

It is well established in the existing literature that women’s participation in social movements has an impact on gender norms. As women participate, they disrupt the ‘persistent belief that women’s social roles pertain to the domestic, and not public realm’ and that they can be represented in the public realm by their male relatives (Ramisetty and Muriu, 2013: 493). This, in turn, may lead to a redefinition of gendered identities, roles and relations (Rocheleau et al., 1996).

3.3.1 Renegotiating gender roles and relations

According to the literature, women’s participation in social movements has promoted gender norm change through the renegotiation of gender roles and relations in five main ways: changing social expectations; renegotiating gendered divisions of labour; increasing women’s self-confidence; increasing their political capital; and revaluing the ‘feminine’. Each of these are discussed in turn below.

Changing social expectations

Women’s participation in social movements can disrupt the social expectations others have of them. As Jelin (1990: 186) writes, ‘the organization of the family and the sexual division of labour hinder women’s public participation because of their responsibilities and the ideological burden of being female’. Consequently, there is an argument to be made that, just by virtue of participating in a social movement, women in some contexts may be inherently reshaping the social norms that govern what is considered to be appropriate behaviour for women and what is expected of them socially.

Gendered divisions of labour

Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez (2018), Di Marco et al. (2003) and Agarwal (1994; 2002) have researched how women’s participation in social movements has initiated negotiations for the redistribution of domestic work within the household and the revaluation of reproductive labour. Di Marco et al. (2003) describes how, as a result of the participation of urban, middle-class women in neighbourhood associations and of urban working-class women in the *piquetero* movement,²⁶ these women have been able to renegotiate gendered divisions of labour with their partners. They have also increased their decision-making power in the household and taken on more leadership in the public sphere. Such renegotiations of domestic work are

²⁶ This is the movement of unemployed workers in Argentina, which emerged in the 1990s to oppose the privatisation reforms implemented by Carlos Menem (Di Marco et al., 2003; Svampa and Pereyra, 2009).

crucial for struggles to end sexist oppression, as they address what MacGregor (2006) has termed ‘women’s triple labour’ – in the house, in the marketplace and now in activism as well. These findings echo those of Berhe (2008) and Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez (2018) (see Boxes 8 and 9, respectively).

Self-confidence

Women who are active in social movements may also experience an increase in their self-esteem and self-confidence. Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez (2018), in her study of Mayan women’s and men’s opposition to genetically modified soybeans in Mexico, finds that indigenous women gained self-confidence as a result of their participation in the movement. This was linked to a feeling of becoming more knowledgeable and thus more capable of speaking up (see Box 9). These findings are also echoed by Campbell (1996), MacGregor (2006), Sundberg (2004), Berhe (2008; see Box 8) and Ibrahim and Kuru-Utumpala (2020).

Box 9: Impacts of the participation of Mayan women in the struggle against GM seeds in Mexico

In the 1990s, Monsanto’s genetically modified (GM) soybean became part of the Mexican government’s strategy to reduce soybean imports. In Campeche, one of the places that GM soybean was introduced, Mayan people organised against it, from 2010 to 2017. Both Mayan women and men expressed concerns about the impact of GM soybeans on their economy and health, and thus on the survival of their culture.

However, Mayan women described their participation in the movement as difficult; they faced discrimination not only as indigenous people when interacting with the government, but also as women within the movement. They faced confrontations and criticism for their involvement from their families and wider communities. Men’s opposition to their involvement gradually decreased over time. However, this acceptance of women’s participation is based on a gendered notion of women’s responsibilities. For example, one man explained that women had to participate because they needed to learn about the struggle so that they could educate children about it. Yet, women explain their participation differently. Appealing to strategic essentialism, they stress the importance of their participation on the basis that they have capabilities and principles that men do not, claiming authority to participate on their own terms.

Women’s participation, and the sense of authority they derive from it, has made the movement (for most Mayan women) a space of empowerment. It has enabled them to acquire new knowledge, speak up, expand their mobility and experience female solidarity. Furthermore, Mayan women’s participation also seems to be leading to a renegotiation of gender relations within their families. As women’s participation increases, household duties are being divided among household members.

Source: Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez (2018).

Political capital

By participating in social movements and opposing gender injustices within those spaces, women can gain political capital to demand justice in other spaces (such as state institutions) and/or to demand more changes within the movements themselves (Campbell, 1996; Agarwal, 2002; Asher, 2007). Campbell, for example, documents how women's participation in the *seringueiros* movement (in Brazil) made them aware of the importance of financial autonomy as a means to increase their decision-making power in the household. This led them to establish a Brazil nut drying and shelling enterprise, and their activism in the movement led them to challenge gender inequalities more generally in their homes, state institutions and at national/international gatherings (see also Di Marco et al., 2003; Asher, 2007; Gbowee, 2009; Bano, 2017).

Revaluation of the feminine

While the use of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 2006) to justify political participation in social movements can reinforce gender roles and relations – by entrenching care as a female task, for example – it can also prompt changes. As Whittier (2007: 1) notes:

[M]aternalist politics' can uphold traditional definitions of women's place while simultaneously expanding those definitions, bringing women into the public sphere and often changing activists' own family relations and identities.

By using 'care' as a politically relevant responsibility, for example, women may be reappropriating gendered discourses and promoting a revaluation of female labour and values. Thus, as Jenkins (2015) argues, using gendered discourses to negotiate participation can promote a revaluation of the 'feminine', and increase women's self-esteem and sense of power.²⁷ Moreover, as Hallum-Montes (2012) argues in the case of indigenous women's activism in Guatemala, by framing 'care' as both a politically relevant activity and a public one, indigenous women are not only revaluing their labour but also framing care work as a 'shared responsibility'. This can be understood as a contestation of previous gender relations that attributed care work solely to women.

²⁷ As the use of this discourse has been widely documented in South America, it is important to note that, as indigenous women appeal to their role as caregivers, they are not only promoting a revaluation of the 'feminine', but also of the 'indigenous'.

3.4 Factors that contribute to or hinder gender norm change

The literature reviewed shows that there are four main contributing factors for women's participation in social movements to have an impact on gender norms:

- **Bridge leaders:** According to Berriane (2016), 'bridge leaders' in feminist movements are women who have some formal education and who are influential in their community, which means they have the social capital and networks needed to recruit other women. Empirical evidence (Agarwal, 2002; Hallum-Montes, 2012; Berriane, 2016; Deonandan et al., 2017; Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez, 2018) suggests, moreover, that it is when bridge leaders have a feminist outlook and interest, that they explicitly seek to mobilise and involve women to promote gender equality and justice. Feminist bridge leaders can thus contest patriarchal beliefs in movements about women's political activism, help women overcome barriers to political participation (such as lack of self-confidence) and help them lobby family members for increased autonomy and political engagement (Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez, 2018; see also Box 9). This is important because, as Jenkins and Rondón (2015) argue, women may face significant pressure within their families and communities to forgo political activism and/or face harsh criticism if they decide to pursue it regardless.
- **Feminist mentoring:** Receiving support from an NGO – one that considers gender in its work – is important for two reasons. First, NGOs that mainstream gender will promote and support women's participation and the development of gendered interests (Asher, 2007). Second, NGOs can provide important mentorship, and those that place attention on gender issues will be mindful of transferring these skills to women (MacGregor, 2006; Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez, 2018). Moreover, the support of a feminist organisation is key since it can provide a vital counterweight to the interests of patriarchal allies and create an environment in which recognising women's interests is seen as strategic rather than divisive. This makes it less likely that gender equality is dismissed as an invalid political objective.
- **A supportive context:** As is the case for feminist and women's movements, when a movement develops in the context of a wider struggle for gender equality or women's rights, women are more able to pursue their claims within the movement and to disrupt dominant gender norms. This is the case for the Bodhgaya movement for land rights in Bihar, India (see Box 7), which Agarwal (2002: 9) argues was indirectly helped by 'a growing women's movement and a spreading feminist consciousness in the country in the late 1970s and early 1980s'. Being embedded in a context where there is a wider discussion about gender equality and justice means there might be less resistance from men within the movement, as well as less chance for gender issues to be perceived as divisive factors for coalition-building. This can also be seen in the cases discussed by Deere (2003).
- **The creation of women-only spaces:** In most cases, women-only spaces emerge organically when female activists experience marginalisation because of their gender (Barrios de Chungara and Viezzer, 1978; Agarwal, 1994, 2002; Campbell, 1996; Deere, 2003; Asher, 2007; Lahiri-Dutt, 2012; Sholkamy, 2013; Jenkins, 2015). Women-only spaces have proven crucial for women's consciousness-raising and collective action. Their importance is seen in the case of the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Landless Workers Movement, MST) in Brazil, discussed by Deere (2003), as the creation of the National Commission of Women in the late 1980s was a key turning point for the effective mobilisation of women within the MST to demand land rights for rural women.

The first three factors address barriers that Horn (2013) argues most often impede the advancement of women's interests within social movements: the dismissal of gender equality as a trivial issue; entrenched patriarchal beliefs and attitudes in a movement's structure; and – to a lesser degree – resistance to power relations in the private sphere being challenged. Other factors Horn (ibid.) lists as hindering the recognition of gender equality within broader social movements, and thus holding back gender norm change, are: the instrumentalisation of women, sexual harassment and violence against women within movements; backlash against feminist goals; and the difficulty of maintaining change through time. Other literature highlights an additional three key hindering factors:

- Sporadic participation: Jelin (1990) and Campbell (1996) note that it is often only possible for women to participate in protest movements for a brief time at critical moments – a limitation that hinders transformative change in the long term. This is the case for the movements studied by Al-Ali and Tas (2017; 2018) and Ramisetty and Muriu (2013).
- Women's exclusion from decision-making processes: Agarwal (2010) argues that women's mere presence in organisations without any significant power or decision-making authority (what she terms 'participatory exclusions') does not aid the goal of gender equality (see also Li, 2009; Asher, 2007). The exclusion of women from decision-making processes is one of the ways in which women's participation is instrumentalised, as well as a consequence of entrenched patriarchal beliefs and attitudes in a movement's structure.
- A limiting political context: As with feminist and women's movements, women's advocacy in wider movements can be limited by the political and historical context, as Al-Ali and Tas (2017; 2018) found in their examination of the nationalist Kurdish movement in Turkey. While the Kurdish women's movement has contested gender-based discrimination and violence, and promoted women's economic well-being, it has not raised issues related to sexuality and reproductive rights. The authors explain the reticence to engage with these issues as being due to the perception of women, in nationalist struggles, as biological and symbolic reproducers of the nation.

4 Conclusion

Social movements are vital agents in transformations towards social justice, and play a key role in prompting, progressing and achieving change across all levels of society. As social movements shape, and are shaped by, gender roles and relations, movements have brought about changes that take us closer to more gender-equal societies.

This report cannot do justice to all of women's political activism in the global regions mentioned, nor to the diversity and complexity of their struggles, trajectories and achievements. It aims to provide an insight into the plethora of women's efforts worldwide to contest gender inequalities and injustice, and to offer a framework through which we can improve our understanding of the ways that women's mobilisations have been approaching and bringing about change.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that while participation in social movements can be emancipatory and transformational, it is also time consuming, emotionally demanding and risky. Women's contributions to social movements usually entail an increased workload (permanently or temporarily), as discussed in Section 2.5. In fact, some authors, such as Chant (2011) and MacGregor (2006), describe movements as creating a 'triple workload' for women. This is because the labour of activism adds to women's already heavy 'double burden' of working in the (in)formal economy while still assuming responsibility for care work. Moreover, also noted in Section 2.5, women's political mobilisation may alienate them from their communities and families, as well as render them vulnerable to violence. This can be clearly seen in the case of women – mostly indigenous – leading and participating in environmental movements, who are facing unprecedented levels of violence in response to their activism (Global Witness, 2021). So, while it is important to recognise, amplify and celebrate women's political work and achievements, the responsibility for transforming gender relations should not be placed only on women. Men have an equal place and duty to do this work as well.

Likewise, it is worth keeping in mind that overt activism in social movements is not the only indicator of women's resistance to patriarchal norms. As Zanotti (2013) highlights in her discussion of resistance among Kayapó women (who do not engage in overt protests), resistance also takes place through everyday 'mundane' interactions. As Thorpe (2018: 67) mentions, it can happen in 'our homes, in the quiet spaces', as highlighted in the case of South Africa. Adopting an intersectional perspective reminds us that, for many women, 'protesting' can be a luxury activity. As a result, protest should not be understood as the only form of feminist or anti-patriarchal resistance and action, since 'one woman's practice of feminism is not another's' (ibid: 65).

4.1 Key findings

The review of existing evidence finds that shifts in gender norms associated with women's leadership and participation in social movements happens through two main pathways:

1. Changes in laws and policies pertaining to women's rights, which enshrine a new normative order, providing incentives or disincentives for behavioural change; and
2. Renegotiations of gender roles and relations, which directly target the gendered beliefs and behaviours (held by men or women) that underpin gender inequalities in everyday life.

Women's and feminist movements use a variety of strategies to bring about gender norm change. These include occupying public space, producing new information, running educational workshops, harnessing social and broadcast media, lobbying governments, creating alliances with state/political actors and forming coalitional networks, among others. The ways in which these movements have framed their struggles tend to be a result of negotiations between diverse constituencies of women, as well as of a process of organic emergence from local contexts. In fact, 'vernacularisation' can be strategically significant for a movement's success. Framing a struggle in accordance with particular locally and culturally relevant values increases its chances of support and success.

Many women's and feminist movements have worked to bring about legal and/or policy change (the first pathway) in areas such as women's representation in government, women's constitutional rights, family law, land ownership, violence against women and abortion. Similarly, women's groups without explicit feminist goals have also been critical protagonists in securing legal changes that affect women more widely (such as labour rights for domestic workers). This, in turn, challenges gender norms – even if that is not the explicit aim. However, activists must often continue to campaign even after legal and/or policy changes have been achieved, to ensure that changes are implemented and enforced to encourage the new normative order to take root.

These movements have also had significant effects on gender roles and relations (the second pathway). This pathway to gender norm change has been almost exclusively paved by feminist movements rather than women's movements (see Box 1). Gender roles and relations have been directly contested by activists mainly through work against menstrual stigma, male violence towards women or gender-based violence, and female genital cutting (among other issues). This second pathway is also indirectly influenced by women's activism in feminist movements or wider social movements. The transformation of gender norms in these spaces has been shown to have critical effects on wider social and political institutions.

Women's and feminist movements face strong and varied challenges in terms of having an impact on gender norm change. These include the pervasiveness of patriarchal attitudes and practices in a country's institutions; backlash against women's political activism and achievements; lack of institutional capacity for adequate implementation; tensions within alliances that hinder a movement's stability; political co-option of women's movements; and inadequate framings of women's rights or gender justice goals, among others.



YASNA BUSTOS
MUÑOZ

EDAD: 30 AÑOS
NACIONALIDAD: CHILENA

Degollada por conviviente, quien se autoinflingió una herida en el cuello y se encuentra hospitalizado; la madre del agresor dio aviso tras llamada del propio sujeto.

FECHA DE FEMICIDIO: 17/02/2020

LUGAR: MAIPÚ/ REGIÓN METROPOLITANA

Asesino:
PAULO CESAR
CONTRERAS
CATALÁN

EDAD: 40

NACIONALIDAD: CHILENA

SITUACIÓN ACTUAL/ ESTADO FEMICIDA: DETENIDO



NICOLE SAAVEDRA
BAHAMONDES

EDAD: 24 AÑOS.

NACIONALIDAD: CHILENA.

Su cuerpo fue encontrado con rastros de haber sufrido crudas agresiones y con una data de muerte de 30 horas antes.

Para su familia se trata de un crimen lesboróbico

FECHA DE ASESINATO: 25/06/2016.

ASESINO
VÍCTOR ALEJANDRO
PULGAR VIDAL

Su familia junto con diversas activistas lesbianas y feministas lucharon más de tres años para dar con su lesbicida, asesino y violador.



KATHERINE FERNÁNDEZ
QUINTERO

EDAD: 28

NACIONALIDAD: VENEZOLANA

Dos cuchilladas en el tórax; en el lugar se encontraban los dos hijos de la víctima, vecinos alertaron a policía; sujeto es detenido y niños en custodia de arrendador del inmueble por el momento.

Asesino:

JONATHAN AÑEZ
MORALES

EDAD: 31

NACIONALIDAD: VENEZOLANA

SITUACIÓN ACTUAL/ ESTADO FEMICIDA: DETENIDO

© Jorge Donoso / Shutterstock

A feminist intervention to draw attention to femicide and remember women killed by men on International Women's Day (#8M) in Santiago, Chile 2020. Credit: Jorge Donoso / Shutterstock

Yet, there are also many important factors that increase the capacity of movements to transform gender norms. In many cases, women's active participation and leadership in feminist and women's movements has been enabled or facilitated by: women's access to resources; the presence of a long-term perspective; the existence of feminist alliances and coalitions based on solidarity; the ability to mobilise elites and other political actors; as well as a democratic context and civic space for action, supported by an international political climate rooted in a consensus on gender equality and gender justice.

Women's participation and leadership in broader social movements also plays a fundamental role in changing gender norms. Women who are active in broader social movements tend to experience marginalisation therein and, as a result, they tend to form separate women's groups (of varying degrees of formality) as a strategy to contest these exclusionary dynamics. When doing so, women tend to frame their claims to gender equality and justice as crucial for the movement's goals, so that their demands are perceived and addressed as politically important. Existing literature shows that this framing is crucial if claims are to succeed.

Women tend to justify their political participation in these mixed-gender social movements through notions of care, their roles as mothers and their responsibilities as caregivers. Moreover, in some cases, women may begin to participate in compliance with gendered divisions of labour within a movement, such as by cooking, cleaning and leading on 'backstage management'.

Women's involvement in broader social movements impacts gender norms indirectly through instigating changes in gender roles and relations (the second pathway to change). Their political agency can disrupt the social expectations that others have of them, allowing them to gain political capital to demand equality and justice in other spaces, such as state institutions. Women are also then able to demand more changes within the movements themselves, prompting renegotiations of gendered divisions of labour.

The presence of feminist leaders and bridge builders, feminist mentoring opportunities, a supportive context, and women-only (separatist) spaces can enhance the potential for women's participation in social movements to create gender norm change. Still, challenges remain in terms of exclusion, violence and a lack of support for women's sustained activism and leadership.

4.2 Looking ahead

There is much scope for expanded studies of women's and feminist movements, as well as of women's participation and leadership in broader social movements. As noted in the report, there is a significant gap in the literature around what strategies feminist and women's movements are using, or should use, in contexts of conflict, crisis and instability – a gap that it is vital to address to better support movements and supporting actors in difficult times. There is also a gap regarding the strategies and factors that can help support movements through time, which is particularly important when considering that norm change can often be a gradual, slow process.

Existing literature indicates that future studies could explore how different actors (such as international donors with gender equality mandates) could best support activist and social movements and their transformational potential for realising norm change. There is growing interest in understanding and addressing social and gender norms within gender equality programming. There is also great potential to understand how movements themselves think of and conceptualise gender norms and gender norm change. This could be done through qualitative research – using interviews, focus groups or participatory arts-based methods, for instance – with women who are actively engaged in organising or supporting these movements. It is also important to better understand how activists perceive gender norms affecting their daily experiences, their struggles and movement's trajectories, and dialogues that foster such conversations would be valuable.

Overall, there is a need for more research that aims to understand the needs and experiences of women's, feminist and wider social justice movements in different sectors and spaces, and with more granularity. Questions remain as to how researchers and activists can best work together, and how research can most effectively support movements to scale up and expand action for accelerating gender norm change.

Appendix 1: Methodology

This report is based on a review of existing academic and grey literature. Table A1 shows the searches performed, mostly on Google Scholar, through which a good part of the material was recovered. Searches were performed in both Spanish and English because of the lead author's language profile. As this might have introduced a bias in the report towards empirical evidence emerging from Latin America, attention was paid to include empirical evidence from other regions. Papers were also identified from the lead author's own academic library – mostly on the participation of women in environmental movements – as well as by following relevant cited references in read publications and reference snowballing.

Table A1: Searches performed

Term(s)	Search taxonomy
social movements; feminist movements; gender norm change	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' AND TS='gender norm change'
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; gender norms; gender roles; gender; gender relations; gender roles; changes in gender-based violence; changes in gender roles	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='gender norms' OR 'social norms' OR 'gender relations' OR 'gender roles' OR 'gender' OR 'changes in gender-based violence' OR 'changes in gender roles'
social movements; feminist movements; against gender-based violence; against GBV	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' AND TS='against gender-based violence' OR 'against GBV' OR 'femicide'
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; gender-based violence; rape; sexual abuse; sexual harassment; GBV	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='gender-based violence' OR 'rape' OR 'sexual abuse' OR 'GBV' OR 'sexual harassment'
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; gender norms; gender roles; gender; gender relations; gender roles; changes in gender-based violence; gender based violence, GBV	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='gender norms' OR 'social norms' OR 'gender relations' OR 'gender roles' OR 'gender' OR 'changes in gender-based violence' OR 'gender-based violence' OR 'GBV'
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; changes in gender-based violence; gender-based violence, GBV	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='gender-based violence' OR 'GBV' AND TS='deconstructing' OR 'challenging' OR 'contesting' AND TS='gender roles' OR 'gender stereotypes' OR 'notions of love' OR 'gendered expectations' OR 'gender expectations'
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; successes; achievements	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='successes' OR 'achievements'

Term(s)	Search taxonomy
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; gender norm change; destigmatization; discrimination; empowerment; recognition; consciousness raising	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='gender norm change' OR 'destigmatization' OR 'empowerment' OR 'consciousness raising' OR 'recognition' OR 'discrimination'
social movements; feminist movements; feminist collectives; feminist associations; destigmatization; discrimination; taboo; menstruation; period	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='destigmatization' OR 'taboo' OR 'discrimination' AND TS='menstruation' OR 'period'
feminist movements; feminist collectives; taxation; distribution; sanitary products; pads; tampons	TS='social movements' OR 'feminist movements' OR 'feminist collectives' OR 'feminist associations' AND TS='taxation' OR 'distribution' AND TS='sanitary products' OR 'pads' OR 'tampons' OR 'menstrual cups'
feminist movements; feminist collectives; female circumcision; female genital mutilation	TS='feminist movement' OR 'feminist collective' OR 'women's association' OR 'women's organisation' AND TS='female genital mutilation' OR 'female circumcision' OR 'female cutting' OR 'infibulation' OR 'FGM' AND TS='changes' OR 'impact' OR 'success'
domestic workers movement; [country]; successes	TS='feminist movement' OR 'feminist collective' OR 'women's association' OR 'women's organisation' AND TS='domestic workers' OR 'domestic worker' AND TS='changes in gender roles' OR 'changes in gender discourses' OR 'success' OR 'impact'
role of women; peace movements; democracy movements; changes in gender roles; changes in gender norms	TS='role of women' OR 'women's participation' AND TS='peace movements' OR 'democracy movements' OR 'national liberation movements'
feminist movement; male participation; masculinities; male involvement; consequences	TS='feminist movement' OR 'feminist organisations' or 'feminist' AND 'male participation' OR 'masculinities' OR 'male involvement' OR 'participation of men'
feminist work; men; masculinities	TS='feminist work on masculinities'
movimientos sociales; movimientos feministas; colectivos feministas; colectivas feministas; normas de género; roles de género; relaciones de género; género; estereotipos de género;	TS='movimientos sociales' OR 'movimientos feministas' OR 'colectivos feministas' OR 'colectivas feministas' AND TS='normas de género' OR 'roles de género' OR 'género' OR 'estereotipos de género'
movimientos sociales; movimientos feministas; colectivos feministas; colectivas feministas; normas de género; roles de género; relaciones de género; género; estereotipos de género; cambios	TS='movimientos sociales' OR 'movimientos feministas' OR 'colectivos feministas' OR 'colectivas feministas' AND TS='normas de género' OR 'roles de género' OR 'género' OR 'estereotipos de género' AND TS='cambios'

Term(s)	Search taxonomy
movimientos sociales; movimientos feministas; colectivos feministas; colectivas feministas; normas de género; roles de género; relaciones de género; género; esterotipos de género; cambios; America Latina	TS= 'movimientos sociales' OR 'movimientos feministas' OR 'colectivos feministas' OR 'colectivas feministas' AND TS= 'normas de género' OR 'roles de género' OR 'género' OR 'esterotipos de género' AND TS= 'cambios' AND TS= 'América Latina'
movimientos sociales; movimientos feministas; colectivos feministas; colectivas feministas; marea verde; primavera violeta; america latina; cambios; impactos; logros	TS= 'movimientos sociales' OR 'movimientos feministas' OR 'colectivos feministas' OR 'colectivas feministas' AND TS= 'marea verde' OR 'primavera violeta' AND TS= 'cambios' OR 'impactos' OR 'logros'
incidencia feminismo; america latina	TS= 'incidencia' OR 'logros' OR 'impacto' AND TS= 'movimiento feminista' OR 'feminismo' AND TS= 'América Latina' OR 'México' OR 'Argentina' OR 'Chile' OR 'Perú' OR 'Colombia' OR 'Brasil' OR 'Uruguay' OR 'Bolivia' OR 'Paraguay' Or 'Guatemala' OR 'El Salvador' OR 'Honduras' OR 'Nicaragua' OR 'Costa Rica' OR 'Panamá' OR 'Venezuela'
movimientos sociales; movimientos feministas; violencia de género; feminicidio	TS= 'movimientos sociales' OR 'movimientos feministas' OR 'colectivos feministas' OR 'colectivas feministas' AND TS= 'violencia de género' OR 'violencia contra las mujeres' OR 'feminicidio'
movimientos feministas, masculinidades, participación de hombres	TS= 'movimientos feministas' OR 'feminismo' AND TS= 'masculinidades' OR 'participación de hombres'

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ALIGN is a digital platform and programme of work that is creating a global community of researchers and thought leaders, all committed to gender justice and equality. It provides new research, insights from practice, and grants for initiatives that increase our understanding of – and work to change – discriminatory gender norms. Through its vibrant and growing digital platform, and its events and activities, ALIGN aims to ensure that the best of available knowledge and resources have a growing impact on harmful gender norms.

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