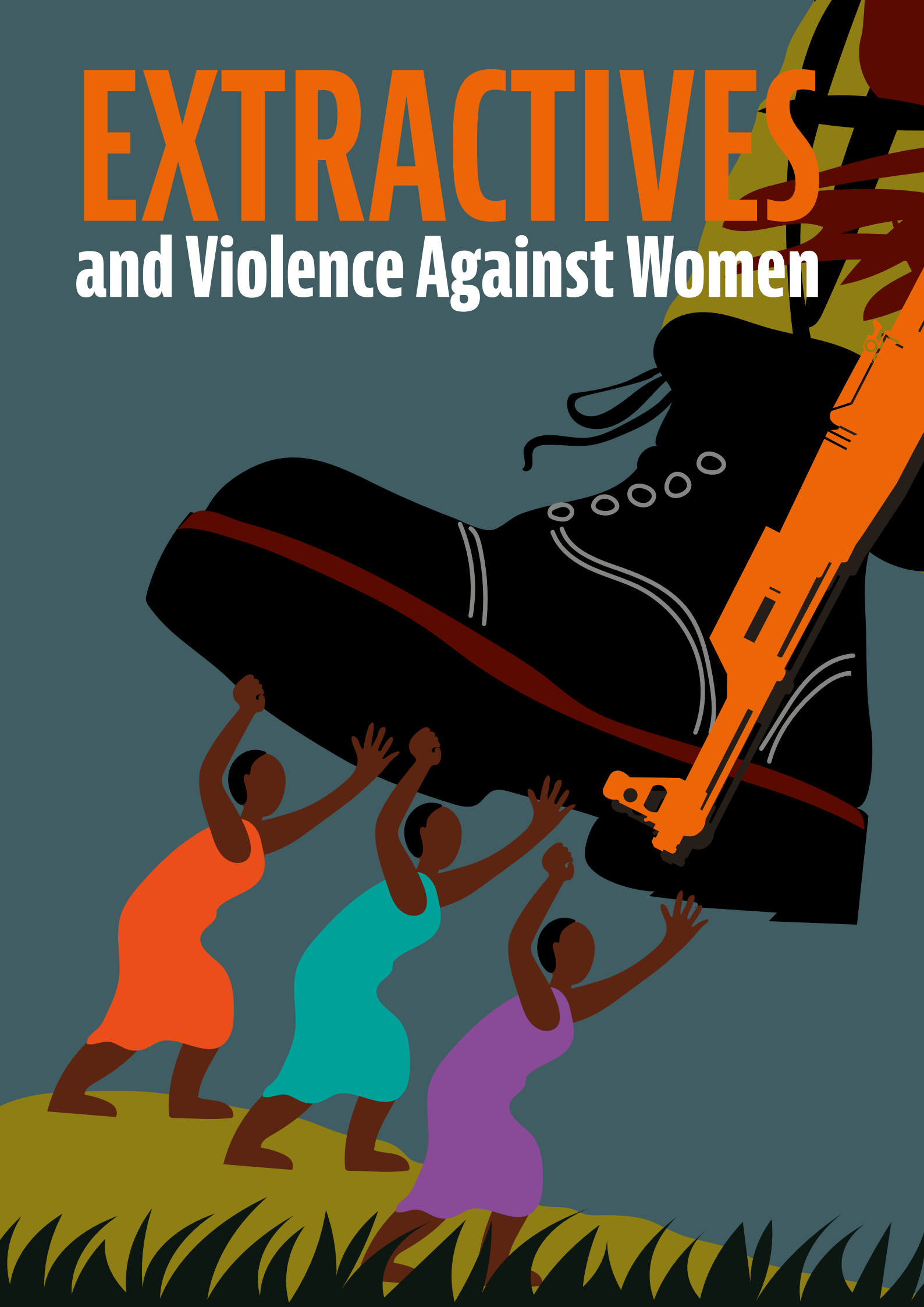
EXTRACTIVES
and Violence Against Women



womin

This paper is a collective effort of Shamim Meer, Winnet Shamuyarira and Samantha Hargreaves. It draws on critical literature and feminist political economy research on extractivism, militarisation and violence against women undertaken by WoMin and its partners and launched in 2020 (See research publications and activist guides here.)

CONTENTS


When women and their communities exercise their right to say no to the natural resource grabbing by extractives industries, when they protest removals or the failure of companies to fulfill promises of relocation and development, they face the might of the army and police.

INTRODUCTION

EXTRACTIVES AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Shamim Meer 12 April 2021

Women in communities affected by extractives projects - mining, plantations and large energy projects - face violence daily at the hands of police, army and private security who wreak havoc over women's lives, often with the active support of the state. Women have been raped, gang-raped, sexually harassed, and coerced into exchanging sex for jobs, water and firewood.

In addition to offering support to women in these situations WoMin, together with its allies and women affected by such violence, have been grappling with how to understand such violence in order to take effective actions against it.

In this paper we share our understandings of the violence, our thoughts on effective action, and some of our ongoing actions. Section One of the paper starts with women's lived experiences of violence. Section Two looks at women's experiences in pursuing justice, noting that given the limitations with securing justice within the existing system, women need to search for alternative forms of justice. Section Three sets out our understandings of violence and offers a critique of current strategies. Section Four considers alternative strategies, including WoMin's ongoing work to provide trauma support and think through appropriate forms of justice within the frame of building women's power.

We make clear in this paper WoMin's ecofeminist understanding which locates the violence women experience within the structures of the economy. Mining and the extractivist economy takes place within the context of a violent economic system. This system is based on production for profit and exploits nature and people. It destroys whole ecosystems of water bodies, forests and land. It destroys the livelihoods of communities, who are often removed by force from the lands and resources they depend on for their survival. It exploits the labour of workers including women's labour and women's bodies.[1]

In addition to drawing on ecofeminist framings of capitalism as a violent system which exploits the environment and women, we draw from framings by indigenous groups in North and South America of the body as territory; on Ruth Wilson Gilmore's[2] notion of the violence of organised abandonment by state and capital of those who do not matter; on Judith Butler's[3] idea of violence done by states to populations considered less human or "ungrievable", in that their lives are not considered valuable, and who can because of this be left to die; and on Anne McClintock's notion of colonialism

1 *Mapondera, M., Reddy, T. and Hargreaves S. (2019) If another world is possible, who is doing the imagining? Building an ecofeminist development alternative in a time of deep systemic crisis. Bread and Butter Series, African Feminist Reflections on Future Economies. AWDF*

2 *Democracy Now. (2020) The Case for Prison Abolition: Ruth Wilson Gilmore on COVID-19, Racial Capitalism & Decarceration. May 5, 2020https://www.democracynow.org/2020/5/5/ruth_wilson_gilmore_abolition_coronavirus*

3 *Verso. (2020) A philosophy of nonviolence: Judith Butler interviewed by Alex Doherty. 14 September 2020 https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4851-a-philosophy-of-nonviolence-judith-butler-interviewed-by-alex doherty?fbclid=IwAR2IOi9mgCVqGaRsuC-brlnhQhTTUfqupWBhOA_MlwKFHf2ocleDcn35zsds*
Verso. (2020) Judith Butler: on COVID-19, the politics of non-violence, necropolitics, and social inequality, Jul 23, 2020 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Bnj7H7M_Ek

and imperialism as representing the conquest of the sexual and labour power of colonised women and the transmission of white, male power through control of colonised women.[4]

WoMin's understanding of violence thus goes beyond the violence by men with guns, to understanding the violence of a system which enriches a few whilst abandoning the majority to death through dispossession and immiseration (economic impoverishment).

When mines and large plantations take over the land that has sustained local communities over generations, they depend on the state military and/or police to secure these properties and prevent encroachment by the local people. In many cases the state guarantees 'security' for the operations of companies and police the lives and movements of the local people. In addition companies often employ their own or other private security to safeguard their operations and these security actors behave in similar ways to state military. Whether state or private, this security apparatus threatens and intimidates the local people, at times using physical violence, including assassinations.

When women and their communities exercise their right to say no to the natural resource grabbing by extractives industries, when they protest removals or the failure of companies to fulfill promises of relocation and development, they face the might of the army and police. Women are often subject to sexualised violence, including sexual harassment, rape or the threat of rape, and sexual coercion for livelihoods and basic needs, like water and/or firewood, by the military, police and private security.[5]

Documentation on women's specific experiences of violence has been scarce and one of WoMin's concerns has been to intensify the spotlight on these experiences while being mindful that women are often reluctant to speak of the sexual violence they encounter, fearing not only further harassment from armed forces for speaking out, but also the patriarchal victim blaming from their own families and communities. Rape and sexual violence are treated differently from other crimes and this makes it difficult for women to talk about this violence. When a woman is shot no one asks "did she ask for it?" or "did she tempt the shooter?". Yet when women experience sexual violence or rape it is as though she was to blame. People often ask: "what was she doing at that place?", "why was she out in the dark?" or "did she tempt him?". Husbands might not want a woman who is raped.

In setting out the actions WoMin has taken to date and the direction in which we are moving as we continue work in this area, we make clear that since we locate the root of the problem in an exploitative economic system, we see the need to change this system.

However, we are clear that we need to simultaneously address the trauma women face and to consider the forms of justice women want when they have been violated. We share some insights from our work with a Zimbabwe partner organisation, the Counselling Services Unit (CSU) and women from communities affected by mining, in a pilot project which seeks to support women who have experienced violence.

Our actions are grounded by WoMin's work on African Ecofeminist Development Alternatives which is informed by dialogues among women in extractives-impacted communities during 2021 and which includes attempts to recover past practices

4 McClintock, A. (1995) Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge

5 WoMin African Alliance and CNRG. (2020) Guns, Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Zimbabwe https://womin.africa/vaw-research/

of production and reproduction while dreaming a community, society and Africa that represents women and serves their interests. In thinking of alternatives, we draw from ecofeminist framings as well as alternative framings by feminists and indigenous groups who centre in their creation of alternatives a good and happy life where free bodies live in harmony with each other and with nature.

SECTION ONE:
WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE

We begin with some examples of women's lived experience of violence at the hands of state forces and company security who band together to safeguard the mineral wealth and the lands they have grabbed, and who wreak the violence of dispossession, subjecting local villagers to increased militarisation and securitisation.

The examples here are drawn from oil extraction in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, from industrial palm oil and rubber plantations in West and Central Africa, and from research by WoMin and partners in Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone and Mozambique.

The research by WoMin and partners sought to uncover and document women's experiences of violence, to deepen an understanding of the relationship between economy, development choices, the dominant political system and ways in which state machineries are deployed to safeguard private property and the interests of the elite. The products of this process were a set of research reports and accompanying activist guides, which were launched online at a regional level in September 2020, followed by national launches between October to December in the same year.[6]

Violence in the Niger Delta

Sokari Ekine[7] highlights violence in the Niger Delta since the 1990s as people's lives, their livelihoods and the environment was ravaged by multinational oil companies Shell, Chevron/Texaco, and Elf, and when the area was militarised by the Nigerian military whose actions included mass murder, torture, rape, and the burning of homes and property.

Protests by villagers demanding justice and compensation from the oil companies were violently put down, while other villages were invaded by the military in order to preempt and prevent their protest.

One such attack took place in 1999 when the army invaded Odi town in the Niger Delta, causing people to flee. Many escaped, leaving behind their possessions. On returning they found that family members had been killed, their homes had been burnt to the ground, and their property looted. As one woman explained:

> ***"When the soldiers came we were in our various houses, we only heard that soldiers have come and surrounded everywhere. Since the soldiers were coming we were all afraid. Everyone started packing and running away, we were not able to stand soldiers. We carried a few things and we left. When we came back we saw all our houses, food had been burned down, all burned down money that we left in our houses.***

6 *WoMin and its partners – Centre for Natural Resource Governance (CNRG) in Zimbabwe, Justiça Ambiental (JA) in Mozambique, and Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) in Sierra Leone –undertook research published in 2020 under the title "Guns, Power and Politics Extractives and Violence Against Women" https://womin.africa/vaw-research/*

7 *Ekine S. (2008) Women's Responses to State Violence in the Niger Delta. Feminist Africa 10*

Since then we have been trying to manage with nothing again. We are lying on the ground nothing to sleep on." (Amasin, primary school teacher, Odi in Ekine 2008[8]).

Ekine[9] writes also of the violence experienced by Ogoni women since 1993 when the Nigerian army began its violent onslaught in Ogoniland: "women were harassed on the way to their farms, on the way to their markets, in their villages minding their homes, and at night when they were asleep".

In interviews with members of the Federation of Ogoni Women's Organisations, women spoke out about rape and sexual violence. Comfort Aluzin, one of the women shared:

"They started beating the women, dragging them into the bush. And they started losing their cloth and raping them...my mate was with pregnancy. One army man just used his leg and hit her stomach and she miscarry. That was the beginning of suffering in Nyo Khana."

A second woman, Mrs Kawayorko shared:

"They dragged some of the women into the bush. We were naked, our dresses were torn, our wrapper were being loosed by a man who is not your husband. They tore our pants and began raping us in the bush. The raping wasn't secret because about two people are raping you there. They are raping you in front of your sister. They are raping your sister in front of your mother. It was like a market."

Ekine documents forms of resistance by women in the Niger Delta in the late 1990s at a time of heightened resistance by community groups against the multinationals and the state. These included protests and occupation of corporate offices. They also included less acknowledged forms of resistance, such as the power of silence as resistance, a means of coping and healing; and the "curse of nakedness" - the stripping off of clothes to shame men, to make them go mad or suffer great harm.

Sexual Violence and Abuse of Women in and around plantations

A 2019 report with the title, "Breaking the Silence: Harassment, Sexual Violence and Abuse Against Women In and Around Industrial Palm Oil and Rubber Plantations",[10] highlights the sexual violence experienced by women in West and Central Africa where governments have handed concessions of up to four million hectares of land to foreign companies for industrial oil palm plantations. Women and girls in communities living close to these plantations encounter sexual violence, rape and abuse when they pass through the plantations to get to their fields, water sources, school, the nearby town or villages. Women who work on industrial plantations experience sexual harassment and the pressure to provide sex. As a plantation worker in Liberia said, "if you're unlucky you only get paid if you let the guy 'do his thing'. It happens all the time".

However, there is a silence around this and few women report these incidents of violence. Women fear being stigmatised, being blamed and they fear that their families will be shamed if they speak

8 *Ibid*

9 *Ibid*

10 *RADD, Muyissi Environnment, Natural Resource Women PlatformRadio Culture, GRAIN and World Rainforest Movement.(2019) Breaking the Silence Harassment, sexual Violence and Abuse Against Women In and Around Industrial Palm Oil and Rubber Plantations https://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/28799*

out. The plantation managers and security guards use their positions of power to carry out these acts or they allow such acts to happen without consequences for the abuser. "Our women cry a lot", a traditional chief in Cameroon remarked. "The situation of 'everybody knows but no-one talks about it' is pervasive", say the authors of the report – "and it must end".[11]

Guns, power and politics: The Marange diamond mining areas in Zimbabwe

Recent research by WoMin and its partner, the Centre for Natural Resource Governance (CNRG) in Zimbabwe, spotlights women's experiences in Marange where diamonds were discovered in 2005 and where military and company security have been waging battle over the past 14 years with artisanal miners and the local community in order to secure control over the diamond wealth.[12]

From November 2006, police killed, tortured, beat, harassed, and set dogs on artisanal miners In raids intended to drive them from the diamond fields. Alongside these raids police assaulted and arrested local community members and subjected women to sexualised violence.[13]

A woman from Marange recounted how a truck of soldiers stopped her and another woman as they were coming from the fields.[14] The women were forced to strip, armed with sticks, and then instructed to fight one another. The soldiers indicated that the loser would be raped by the soldiers in the truck.

On October 27, 2008 the army, air force and Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) launched Operation Hakudzokwi (a Shona word meaning 'you do not come back') in Marange. Soldiers fired live ammunition and teargas from the ground and from helicopters at artisanal miners and villagers. More than 200 artisanal miners and diamond dealers were gunned down. Thousands more were tortured and hundreds of women were raped.

Villagers in Marange are effectively prisoners. The area has been declared a restricted zone which outsiders may visit only if they have police clearance. Soldiers continue to occupy the area and subject villagers to arbitrary searches in their homes, and at the 11 checkpoints on the 100 kilometer road between Mutare and Marange. Women often experience sexual violence when searched. Three women told Human Rights Watch that a male police constable forced them to strip naked at a checkpoint. He inserted his gloved finger in their private parts, claiming to be looking for hidden diamonds.[15]

Many villagers were also forcibly removed from their homes in 2009 and taken to Arda Transau, a government farm about 60km north of Marange. Armed forces removed these 1 300 families from Marange to clear more land for diamond mining. The families were forced onto trucks at gunpoint and their homes were destroyed by bulldozers. Many families continue to experience considerable

11 *Ibid*

12 *WoMin African Alliance and CRNG. (2020) Guns, Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Zimbabwe https://womin.africa/vaw-research/*

13 *Human Rights Watch (2009) Diamonds in the Rough Human Rights Abuses in the Marange Diamond Fields of Zimbabwe, reports on the brutality and human rights abuses wreaked on artisanal miners and villagershttps://www.hrw.org/report/2009/06/26/diamonds-rough/human-rights-abuses-marange-diamond-fields-zimbabwe*

14 *Recounted to WoMin and Counselling Services Unit, Zimbabwe*

15 *Human Rights Watch (2009) Diamonds in the Rough Human Rights Abuses in the Marange Diamond Fields of Zimbabwe, reports on the brutality and human rights abuses wreaked on artisanal miners and villagershttps://www.hrw.org/report/2009/06/26/diamonds-rough/human-rights-abuses-marange-diamond-fields-zimbabwe*

hardship and violence in Arda Transau.

One of the women related her experience:[16]

> ***"[A senior military officer] told me that I had to move to Arda Transau, he pointed a gun at me in the meeting... We had no chance to take anything. We left our mapfunde, (finger millet) groundnuts and other crops in the fields."***

The community lives in fear of reprisals if they speak out. As a second woman related:[17]

> ***"We were told not to say bad things about the government, that bad talk would get us into trouble. We are forced to say that we get food and school fees for our children, uniforms and other things even if all this is not true."***

Guns, power and politics: Sierra Leone

Research by WoMin and two partners in Sierra Leone, Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) and Women and Mining (WOME), examined extractives and violence against women in Sierra Leone.[18]

Since the beginning of large scale mining in the 1930s, mining companies, with help from government, politicians and chiefs have abused the rights of people and destroyed the environment.

As the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission pointed out, conflict over the control of the diamond industry led to the 11-year civil war which ended in 2002 and which devastated the country, with 75 000 people killed and 1 million people displaced.

To make way for mining, people in many communities across Sierra Leone were forced to leave the land on which they depended for their survival – land on which they grew their food, grazed their cattle and from which they got their water and firewood. Women in these communities experience the greatest hardship from this loss of land, because they are the ones who grow food, collect fuel and water, and who cook and care for their families. About 70% of the people in Sierra Leone, especially women, survive by growing their food and mining threatens this survival.

Added to these threats of survival, people living close to mines have to deal with ongoing violence from the army, police and mine security who are brought in by mining companies to protect the minerals on the land they have taken from the community. Community members who attempt to engage in artisanal mining to supplement farming activities have regular battles with the army and the police who want an end to artisanal mining. Women artisanal miners are often sexually violated. These military and security forces control the movement of the community, search people's homes, and use violence against community members. Women and girls suffer additional physical safety challenges, including sexualised violence, when security forces enter their homes and villages.

A 2018 study by NMJD highlighted that women in Kono, in the main diamond fields on the eastern side of Sierra Leone, lost access to vast areas of land they used to farm when a mining company took this land. Women in the south of Sierra Leone can

16 « WoMin African Alliance and CRNG. (2020) Guns, Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Zimbabwe https://womin.africa/vaw-research/

17 ibid

18 WoMin African Alliance and Network Movement for Justice and Development, Women and Mining. (2020) Guns Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Sierra Leone https://womin.africa/vaw-research/

no longer farm because rutile and bauxite mining companies caused serious damage to their land.

Women are further disadvantaged because they are seldom part of community discussions with mining companies, and because of this they are seldom able to speak out about how mining affects them in very particular ways. Women are kept out of such discussions because of cultural ideas that these are men's concerns and also because women's household responsibilities leave them with little time for such discussions.

Mining companies are required by law to pay compensation for damage they cause to vegetation, physical structures, water sources and other assets, but they seldom pay and when they do, compensation amounts are minimal. In the few cases where communities receive compensation women are not likely to benefit directly as it is the male members of land-owning families who handle money matters and negotiations with government and mining companies.

When communities protest against violations by mining companies, government and companies often respond with violence and even killings. On 13 December 2007, people of Koidu protested against Koidu Holdings' refusal to pay for the resettlement of people affected by the mine. Security shot at the protesters, killing two people and injuring many more. In December 2012, a woman was seriously injured, and two men were killed when police used live ammunition against protesting workers at the same Koidu Holdings.

On 17 April 2012, security forces entered the iron ore mining town of Bumbuna and fired tear gas at female traders and their children in the main market. One woman was killed.

It is well known that women experience sexualised violence when there is a greater presence of security forces and during times of war. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission estimates that 275 000 women and girls were sexually violated during the Sierra Leone civil war. Women and girls were taken by force from their homes by the warring groups. Their labour was exploited, they were raped, forced into sexual slavery and suffered acts of gross sexual violence.

Further research is needed to uncover the violence women in communities and women artisanal miners experience when the military, police and private security enter their homes and villages to protect the wealth of mining companies in Sierra Leone.

Guns, power and politics: Mozambique[19]

Research by WoMin and partner, Justiça Ambiental, looked at extractives and violence against women in Mozambique.

When the Mozambique Liberation Front, FRELIMO, which fought for the independence of Mozambique, made a shift away from socialist policies in the late 1980s, this opened up Mozambique's people, their labour and the country's natural resources to multinational companies. Government saw mining as key to development of the country. However, for the people living in areas rich in minerals, mining brought devastation through the loss of land, water and forests on which their survival depended. Communities whose land is taken for commercial farming, fishing and forestry face problems similar to those of communities affected by mining.

Although the law in Mozambique provides for communities to be involved in negotiations on the use of their land, and in the determination of

19 *WoMin African Alliance, and Justiça Ambiental. (2020) Guns Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Mozambiquehttps://womin.africa/vaw-research/*

compensation before mining starts up, these rights are regularly ignored. At times companies buy off or pressure community representatives and chiefs, to accept mining and low levels of compensation.

Often companies make promises they do not keep. Since most communities affected by mining and other types of extractives live in poverty, they see hope in the promises of jobs, services, and better living conditions made by the companies. These promises are never kept. Most jobs at the mines require specialised training that many community members do not have and companies are reluctant to invest in training.

Community members often face additional hardship when moved to new settlements. In many cases, basic services are lacking, land is of poor quality and farming is difficult or impossible. When families are resettled, or when they lose their land to the mines, women and girls often have to walk longer distances to provide food, and to collect water and wood. They are exposed to many risks, including rape.

When mining companies take over forests, security officials demand sexual favours before permitting women to collect wood. When the police, army or private security search women this often takes the form of sexual assault on women's bodies.

In some villages, homes and fields are enclosed within the property of a working mine, in others mines are located close by. Families enclosed within the mine or who live close to the mine suffer ill health as the air around them is thick with black smoke from mine explosions. Their rivers are polluted by mine waste, their crops are badly affected and their cattle die. Blasting from the mine shocks people's bodies and crack the walls of their houses. Women's work, defined by a gendered division of labour, expands as they take on responsibilities for the care of the sick, resulting from the mining activities. Often these communities lack proper access to health care, education and jobs.

When villages are fenced within the mine, community members may not move freely and they are under constant surveillance by the private security agents, the police and the military, who search people as they enter the mine or invade homes to search for "stolen minerals". During such searches women's bodies are violated by male police, soldiers or company security.

Government often permits private security to take action against members of communities affected by mining and at times send in the police and army to deal with community protests.

Artisanal miners have been forced to stop mining or have had to limit mining when a company enters their area. Those who attempt artisanal mining face continual harassment. In 2017, a video leaked on the internet showed police torturing artisanal miners inside a ruby mine.

With fewer livelihood opportunities available in these communities, many men leave to look for jobs in other parts of Mozambique. This causes family breakdown and greater difficulties for women left to provide for their families. To survive women do whatever is possible - some cook and clean, others run shebeens, and take up sex work - and in some situations the difficulties of surviving leads to forced marriages of young girls.


Families enclosed within the mine or who live close to the mine suffer ill health as the air around them is thick with black smoke from mine explosions. Their rivers are polluted by mine waste, their crops are badly affected and their cattle die.

Rape survivors were offered "income-generation skills training" and "start-up" grants. In exchange for these inadequate benefits, women were expected to waive their legal rights. The entire process was inconsistent with international human rights standards, which require remedies proportional to the gravity of the abuses.

SECTION TWO:
WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES IN PURSUING JUSTICE

The stories of women's attempts to pursue justice when they and their communities are violated highlight how important it is to pursue alternative forms of justice. We present two cases studies to highlight this point - one from Guatemala where the Mayan Q'eqchi' community living in El Estor brought legal action against HudBay Minerals and its subsidiary HMI Nickel Inc; and one from Papua New Guinea where the community affected by Barrick Gold's Porgera mine sought justice for heinous acts of violence.

Both examples illustrate the callousness of systemic violence against communities seen as surplus, as not grievable and as among those who can be left to die, while at the same time highlighting difficulties at getting redress within a system stacked in favour of corporates. The Barrick case makes clear that the lives of the local people did not matter to the company. The claims made by the local community were ignored and were only given attention, inadequate as this was, when international human rights organisations intervened on behalf of the local people.

Hudbay

The Mayan Q'eqchi' community living in El Estor, Guatemala have never accepted the legitimacy of the mining concession and land rights granted by the Guatemalan Government for the Fenix nickel mining project. The concession is on their ancestral land and was granted to Hudbay without consultation. Despite community protests against the removal and resettlement of their homes, they were forcibly evicted in January 2007. During the evictions women community members were gang-raped by mine security personnel.[20]

On 28 March 2011 a group of 11 Guatemalan women filed a lawsuit in the Superior Court in Ontario, Canada against Hudbay Minerals and its subsidiary HMI Nickel Inc, the owners of the Fenix nickel mining project.

This is one of three lawsuits – the two others against Hudbay Minerals being one by a widow whose husband, a community leader was severely beaten and killed during a protest against Fenix mine; and another by a survivor of a shooting incident at the Fenix project who is a paraplegic as a result.

All three lawsuits are ongoing. Hudbay has used stalling and all manner of tactics to delay justice. The first was to oppose the case being heard in a Canadian court. This meant it took two years to get a court ruling that the case could be heard in Canada. Two years later, in June 2015, the Ontario Court of Justice ordered Hudbay Minerals to disclose internal corporate documentation including information regarding its corporate structure and its control over its subsidiary in Guatemala. In November 2017, the 11 women travelled to Canada to give testimony as part of the

20 *https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/hudbay-minerals-lawsuits-re-guatemala-0?page=3*

ongoing discovery procedure. On 17 September 2019, the women amended the statement of claim to provide further details on the involvement of Skye Resources (now part of Hudbay Minerals) in the violent eviction of their community. On 21 January 2020, the Superior Court of Justice in Ontario ruled in favour of the women in response to Hudbay's motion to block them from amending their complaint to include further details of rapes committed by the mining security forces.

Barrick

Security guards at the Porgera mine in Papua New Guinea (PNG), raped and gang-raped hundreds of local women and girls and killed several local men.[21] Barrick Gold, a Canadian mining company, and the largest gold mining company in the world, has operated the Porgera gold mine since 2006. Barrick employs private security and local PNG police officers, including the PNG Mobile Police squad - a branch of the national police force with a long history of serious human rights abuses, including shootings, beatings, rape, forced evictions and burning of homes.

Without land to farm and sources of clean water, the only means of income practically available to the local indigenous communities is to scavenge for remnants of gold in the open pit or the treacherous waste dumps. Men and boys in the community have been routinely beaten, shot, and killed for entering the open pit, the dumps or simply being near the mine's property over the past 20 years. Women and girls living near the mine have been raped by the mine's security guards. Many suffer lasting physical and emotional injuries, as well as marginalisation and social isolation in their community.

A young girl panning for gold with her sister was handcuffed beaten and gang-raped by 10 armed Barrick security guards. She was then jailed for "illegal mining" and held in custody for a week without medical treatment for the serious injuries inflicted on her. She has trouble walking today.

A woman caught by guards in the dump after her group was teargassed, was beaten, cut with a knife and brutally raped by 10 guards. She could not walk for weeks and walking still causes her pain and she can no longer have children. When her newlywed husband learnt that she had been raped, he left her. Her community has ostracised her and she has moved to another town.

Local human rights group Akali Tange Association (ATA) took up advocating against these abuses but the company ignored the local group. Barrick's CEO told community leaders in 2008 that the allegations were untrue. It was only in 2011 after investigative reports from groups like ATA, Mining Watch Canada, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, that the company admitted there was a problem.

In 2012, Barrick set up a "Remedial Framework" to enable rape survivors to apply for limited benefits. More than 200 women lodged complaints of rape and gang-rape although the actual number of victims was believed to be higher. Barrick claimed that it would assess each woman's needs and offer a flexible benefits package that might include financial reparations or even relocation where appropriate.

EarthRights International represented some of the women who lodged claims with the Remedial Framework. However, compensation offered was not commensurate with the abuses experienced and the Remedial Framework rejected women's request for appropriate compensation. Rape survivors were offered "income-generation skills training" and "start-up" grants. In exchange for

21 *Earthrights International. Factsheet: Abuse by Barrick Gold Corporation https://earthrights.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/barrick_fact_sheet_-_earthrights_international_1.pdf*

these inadequate benefits, women were expected to waive their legal rights. The entire process was inconsistent with international human rights standards, which require remedies proportional to the gravity of the abuses. Eleven women represented by EarthRights International rejected offers made through the Remedial Framework.

Women in peasant and working-class communities carry the double burden of oppression arising from their location in the periphery of the world, which is subject to ongoing neo-colonial capitalist exploitation, and by patriarchy which serves the interests of capital and all men.

SECTION THREE:

UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE AND A CRITICAL LOOK AT STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH VIOLENCE

The experiences above highlight that armies and the police in many countries, together with company security unleash violence against poor women and their communities. WoMin's ecofeminist understanding[22] is that this violence is intrinsic to the capitalist system, in other words it is inbuilt, or systemic. Systemic violence goes beyond the actions of men with guns – the soldiers, the police or armed company security – and takes place in deadly, less obvious ways. Practices built into the system lead to poverty and dispossession and determines who shall live, who can be allowed to die, whose lives matter and whose lives are ungrievable.[23] The violence of organised abandonment[24] unleashed by this system determines who shall pay the costs of a system hell bent on producing maximum profits for a few.

This system wreaks violence against the majority of the earth's people, the ecosystems upon which all life depends, and the sustainability of the planet in order to ensure profits and wealth of an elite.

The global south has carried the costs of the wealth achieved by colonising countries of the global north. As Maria Mies highlights, the search for unlimited growth by the colonisers was only possible because the costs were carried by others - people, especially women, and nature – hitting hardest on the global south.[25] Colonial power was advanced in large part through the conquest and control of the sexual and labor power of colonised women.[26] Federici talks about world regions marked for "near-zero-reproduction" because they are believed to be redundant or inappropriate to the requirements of capital.[27]

Nature and the earth, and those human beings regarded as surplus or dispensable carry the burden of the social, environmental, and economic costs, whilst capital carries few or none of the costs. Capital does not carry the costs of, for example,

22 *Mapondera, M., Reddy, T. and Hargreaves S. (2019) If another world is possible, who is doing the imagining? Building an ecofeminist development alternative in a time of deep systemic crisis. Bread and Butter Series, African Feminist Reflections on Future Economies. AWDF*

23 *Judith Butler notes that those who are deemed worthless and ungrievable can be killed off, no one will grieve, no one will notice they are gone, and they can be left to die.*
Verso. (2020) A philosophy of nonviolence: Judith Butler interviewed by Alex Doherty. 14 September 2020 https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4851-a-philosophy-of-nonviolence-judith-butler-interviewed-by-alex doherty?fbclid=IwAR2IOi9mgCVqGaR-suCbrlnhQhTTUfqvpWBhOA_MlwKFHf2ocleDcn35zsds;
Verso. (2020) Judith Butler: on COVID-19, the politics of non-violence, necropolitics, and social inequality, Jul 23, 2020 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Bnj7H7M_Ek

24 *Ruth Wilson Gilmore uses the terms 'organised abandonment' to refer to processes whereby large sections of the population are abandoned by state and capital and have violence done to them.*
Democracy Now. (2020) The Case for Prison Abolition: Ruth Wilson Gilmore on COVID-19, Racial Capitalism & Decarceration. May 5, 2020https://www.democracynow.org/2020/5/5/ruth_wilson_gilmore_abolition_coronavirus

25 *Mies, M. and Shiva V. (1993) Ecofeminism. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Publications*

26 *McClintock, A. (1995) Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge*

27 *Federici, S (2020) Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction and Feminist Struggle. Oakland, CA. PM Press*

clean ups after mining, fair compensation for the loss of resources and livelihoods, increases in women's unpaid labour, and the costs of destroyed health in affected communities. Extractives industries dispossess the peasantry and the working classes of land, water, forests, fisheries and minerals. Dispossession always entails violence, lies, corruption and co-optation of national elites, as well as local elites such as traditional leaders.

Women in peasant and working-class communities carry the double burden of oppression arising from their location in the periphery of the world, which is subject to ongoing neo-colonial capitalist exploitation, and by patriarchy which serves the interests of capital and all men. Women carry an additional burden of the costs of capitalism because of patriarchal relations and a sexist division of labour, where the work of social reproduction is largely relegated to women.

Social reproduction includes reproducing and maintaining human life – giving birth to the next generation as well as ensuring the day-to-day survival of human beings through the provision of food, clothing, shelter, basic safety and health care. Social reproduction involves mental, manual and emotional work, the development and transmission of knowledge, social values and cultural practices, aimed at providing the care necessary to maintain existing life and to reproduce the next generation.[28]

The work of social reproduction is made more difficult and thrown into crisis when extractives industries dispossess communities and devastate community life and livelihoods. Women pay the costs of cleaning up polluted ecosystems, they are forced to walk longer and further to meet the basic needs of their families, and they fall ill from the toxins and poisons they encounter when cooking with dirty fuel.[29]

Vandana Shiva[30] points out that capitalist patriarchy abuses both nature and the sustenance economy, stretching both to their limits. The earth and its resources which sustain life are destroyed, women are displaced from their livelihoods and removed from access to the land, forests, water and seeds on which they and their families and communities depend for survival. The powerful grab resources from the vulnerable and this intensifies violence. Women's deepening vulnerability as a result of extractivist land grabs and ecological exploitation makes them more vulnerable to violence.

Ecofeminists highlight that because of capitalism's focus on profits, both nature and women are dominated, land and women are deemed inferior, and treated as commodities that are expendable, and destined to be abused.[31] Like land, female bodies become properties of a patriarchal colonial system.[32]

In similar vein community feminist activists from Bolivia and Guatemala see capitalism as treating both land and women's bodies as expendable territories to be conquered.[33]

28 *Laslett and Brenner, 2006 in WoMin paper...*

29 *WoMin papers: Mapondera, M., Reddy, T. and Hargreaves S. (2019) If another world is possible, who is doing the imagining? Building an ecofeminist development alternative in a time of deep systemic crisis. Bread and Butter Series, African Feminist Reflections on Future Economies. AWDF WoMin Africa Alliance. (2020) Concept note on development alternatives*

30 *Mies, M. and Shiva V. (1993) Ecofeminism. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Publications*

31 *von Werlhof, C. (2007) No critique of capitalism without a critique of patriarchy! Why the Left is no alternative.Capitalism Nature Socialism, 18(1), 13-27*

32 *DA Silva, MI. (2013) Narratives of Desire: Gender and Sexuality in Bugul, Aidoo and Chiziane. A Dissertation Presented to the Department of Comparative Literature and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

33 *González, TP. (2016) Defending the body-earth territory: an alternative for social movements in resistance. World Rainforest Movement, Bulletin 226, 20 October 2016 https://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/defending-the-body-earth-territory-an-alternative-for-social-movements-in-resistance-1/*

Searching out strategies

As we search for ways of working with women in communities who are dealing with the violence of dispossession, as well as the violence of rapes and murders perpetrated by state and company militia and security, there are lessons to be drawn from the above critical understandings.

We need legislation and state and company adjudication processes while understanding that these exist within the predatory capitalist system which "lets some die" and that the legal system is set up in ways that privilege multinational companies, the rich and the powerful. We need to find ways to help build the power of women in communities so that they may use these processes to hold states and companies to account. However we need to go beyond what exists to find ways to ensure transformational justice, which enables the reduction of violence and the eventual eradication of acts of violence against women's lives and bodies.

Ecofeminist understandings that violence is intrinsic to a violent extractivist model of development enable the development of transformative organising approaches and alternative visions. This is in contrast to mainstream responses to violence against women which often individualise the problem and the solution, offering women individual treatment or casting justice solely in legal terms.

Violence against women was, as Maria Mies notes,[34] the first issue which mobilised women in the 1970s with the upsurge of the women's liberation movement. Women took action around the many forms of violence experienced in their homes, communities and streets. Take back the night marches highlighted that women are not free to walk in their neighbourhoods because of the ever present danger that men would rape them. Women supported each other through counselling and the setting up of shelters for battered women.

While the violence WoMin is concerned with is not perpetrated by individual men in households and communities but emanates directly from the state and corporates, there are perhaps still lessons that can be gleaned from the ways in which feminists have dealt with violence against women at household and community levels, whilst still recognising the systemic roots of such violence.

The activism of the 1970s resulted in shifts in awareness and understanding as more women spoke out about the violence they experienced. More women became aware that it is not their fault, that the problem is to do with power dynamics within patriarchal relations wherein men are privileged and women subordinated.

Sexual harassment at work came to be defined as a problem and not just "men being men" and "having fun" they were entitled to. Rape in marriage came to be defined as a criminal act and not simply the right of a husband to take what was legally his. Women's right to consent was asserted, that if a woman says no it means no and men should listen.

Women's right to bodily autonomy was asserted and accepted as a right at various levels of policy and law. Significant as these gains are, both in terms of awareness that women should not be abused and in terms of legal changes which meant that women could lay charges and take perpetrators of violence against them to court, violence against women has not abated. As recent UN statistics on VAW show, globally, 35 per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, or sexual violence by a non-partner.

Statistics also reveal that globally many women do not report the violence they experience. Less than 40 per cent of the women who experience violence seek help of any sort[35]. Among the reasons are that

34 *Mies, M. and Shiva V. (1993) Ecofeminism. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Publications*

35 *UN Women. (2021) Fact and Figures: Ending Violence against Women https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures*

women often face secondary victimisation when they do speak out – from families, communities, the police and the courts.

Perhaps the key shortcoming in mainstream feminist approaches, as Gillian Walker[36] argues, is that there was a shift away from political movement led approaches to de-politicised legally defined approaches. This shift took place in the 1990s with the rise of what are referred to as femocrats – that is feminists entering state and UN arenas with critical mass. This greater engagement with and within state processes aimed at increased counselling, shelter and legal supports for women who had experienced violence at the hands of intimate partners or other individual men. However alongside these additional supports came a depoliticisation of the issues. In order to ensure they made gains in state directed advocacy, feminist organisers depoliticised their language.

In order to be accepted within technical legal and policy processes, feminist organisers watered down their language and their demands. And for many their entire focus became this new terrain of state feminism. This meant that gains of laws on rape and domestic violence, in training of police and magistrates were made alongside losses. The resulting losses were an undermining of transformative organising and movement building as strategies to address violence against women.

Among recent challenges to state led and legal remedies to violence against women are challenges by feminists from the USA such as Angela Davis, Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Mariame Kaba.

Angela Davis[37] notes that the major strategy of the women's movement has been criminalising violence against women, that is to make sure there are laws which enable women to get the criminal justice system to act in cases of violence. Angela Davis asserts that this strategy will not end violence against women, just as imprisonment has not ended crime in general. Davis notes that a great challenge for feminists is how to work with the contradiction that while legal remedies are necessary, these remedies rely on punishment within institutions that promote violence and are located within states which act violently against people, especially people of colour, the poor and the marginalised.

WoMin's analysis echoes these ideas. How do women take action and seek legal or other justice responses when the very state they are asked to report to and search for assistance and justice is the main perpetrator of VAW where they reside and work?

Angela Davis notes the need to develop an approach that relies on political mobilisation rather than legal remedies or social service delivery, and which simultaneously develops temporary and long-term solutions to violence based on an awareness that global capitalism, global colonialism, racism, and patriarchy shape violence against women of colour.[38]

Angela Davis challenges us to think of transformative justice that can create a more just, human community and relations that allow us to flourish as opposed to being caught up in a cycle of revenge and retribution. She points out that retributive justice and vengeance is the impulse of the state which we have internalised: "We don't ask

36 *Walker, Gillian. (2003). "The Conceptual Politics of Struggle: Wife Battering, the Woman's Movement and the State." In Studies in Political Economy: Developments in Feminism, 2nd ed., edited by C. Andrews. Toronto: Women's Press.*

37 *Davis, A. (2000) The Color of Violence Against Women, keynote address at the Color of Violence Conferencein Santa Cruz. Colorlines, Vol.3 no.3, Fall 2000 http://www.arc.org/C_Lines/CLArchive/story3_3_02.html*

38 *ibid*

how can we make this relationship better, we ask how can we hurt them".[39]

It is clear that existing solutions do not work in the long term or take us in the direction of reducing violence against women. More shelters, and better legislation for women who are victims of violence have not succeeded in significantly reducing violence against women. As Hall[40] points out this is because state services, particularly the criminal justice system, reproduce the structural inequalities and violence that enable violence against women. While the importance of these services for women's wellbeing and safety must not be ignored, neither must their gaps, exclusions, and inadequacies.

Most notably a service approach does not address structures of violence that support and promote individual and collective expressions of violence. As True[41] notes, women's vulnerability to violence is conditioned and heightened by global political economic structures. Economic globalisation and neoliberal policies have increased poverty, intensified the exploitation of labour, drastically limited health and other social services with repercussions for women's sexual and reproductive rights, and these policies exacerbate violence against women. Within this scenario of increased social and economic inequality, violence against women has increased with some women experiencing more pernicious forms of violence than others.

True draws on Kimberlé Crenshaw who argues that violence against women in the home must be understood through violent structural inequalities based on race and class. In WoMin's perspective, the experience of women impacted by mining and other extractives activities similarly leaves women and their families without the means to survive and reproduce themselves. Dispossessions and losses place enormous stresses on families and given the patriarchal foundations of the majority of communities, violence and frustration is often directed to the bodies of women and girl children.

As Hall[42] notes and as Angela Davis alludes, being aware of the state as an agent of violence does not preclude feminists from demanding legislative change and services for women who experience violence. Hall refers to the Sisters in Spirit campaign in Canada, which while it is based on an awareness of the ongoing colonial violence of the Canadian state against people of the first nations, at the same time it demands protection from that state for individual acts of violence that emanate from these structural relations. This is not a contradictory position, notes Hall, but is rather a complex one that must be pursued for the safety and dignity of the women most marginalised by state violence, inside and outside its borders.

Two examples of organisations in the USA searching for nonviolent ways to address violence against women are INCITE, a network of radical feminists of color, organising to end state violence and violence in homes and communities; and Sista to Sista, a collective of working class Black and

39 *Dream Defenders. (2020) Sunday School: Unlock us, Abolition in our Lifetime. Zoom talk with Angela Davis. 14 June 2020 https://www.facebook.com/DreamDefenders/videos/615123319385564/*

40 *Hall, RJ. (2014) "Feminist Strategies to End Violence Against Women", in The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movement, edited by Rawwida Baksh and Wendy Harcourt. Oxford Handbooks Online https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199943494.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199943494-e-005*

41 *True, J. (2014). "The Political Economy of Violence Against Women: A Feminist International Relations Perspective", in Australian Feminist Law Journal, 32, 39-59*

42 *Hall, RJ. (2014) "Feminist Strategies to End Violence Against Women", in The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movement, edited by Rawwida Baksh and Wendy Harcourt. Oxford Handbooks Online https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199943494.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199943494-e-005*

Latino women in Brushwick, Brooklyn, New York, which works to build a society based on liberation and love.[43] INCITE's statement of purpose sets out the following:

> ***"We seek to build movements that not only end violence, but that create a society based on radical freedom, mutual accountability, and passionate reciprocity. In this society, safety and security will not be premised on violence or the threat of violence; it will be based on a collective commitment to guaranteeing the survival and care of all peoples."***[44]

Sista to Sista's anti-violence model is based on community engagement and education. As an alternative to turning to the police for safety, Sista to Sista operates a Freedom School for young women and organises Sista's Liberated Ground, an area where violence is not tolerated. Women from the organisation built a public awareness campaign around the ground and inaugurated the space on July 28, 2004, at a block party at which community members were asked to sign an anti-violence pledge.[45]

43 *Ibid.*

44 *INCITE. (2006) Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology. Cambridge: South End Press.*

45 *Sista II Sista. (2006) "Sistas Makin' Moves: Collective Leadership for Personal Transformation and Social Justice." In Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology, edited by INCITE, 196–207. Cambridge: South End Press.*

We seek to build movements that not only end violence, but that create a society based on radical freedom, mutual accountability, and passionate reciprocity. In this society, safety and security will not be premised on violence or the threat of violence; it will be based on a collective commitment to guaranteeing the survival and care of all peoples.

WoMin believes that action for redress needs to be led by the most affected. WoMin therefore works with its allies to build women's power and to support women and their communities to deepen their struggles against extractives.

SECTION FOUR:
WORKING ON ALTERNATIVES

The Barrick and Hudbay cases referred to previously in this paper pursue justice within the bounds of the law and in terms of remedial and compensation frameworks offered by corporations. These responses have a definite place in the work to press for the accountability of offending corporations. However, WoMin with other ecofeminists point out that violence against women is linked to systems of class and patriarchal oppression; and that change is needed to structures of oppression while at the same time addressing the immediate effects through counselling, breaking the silence, and enabling women to work through self-blame, fear and stigma.

Violence against women needs to be seen in the context of the broader violence in communities, and countries we live in, where inequalities and poverty are rooted in a violent and dehumanising system. Vandana Shiva notes that ending violence against women means moving beyond a violent economy shaped by capitalist patriarchy to a nonviolent, sustainable peaceful economy that respects women and the earth.[46]

Maria Mies[47] vision for an alternative presents a new way of looking at the economy which she calls the "subsistence perspective". This perspective places the creation, recreation and support of life and the living at the centre, and not money, economic growth or profit.

The subsistence perspective rejects capitalist industrial society. Mies' principles of the subsistence perspective include the need to redefine what we mean by a good life. Abundance for some and utter abject poverty for the majority cannot be taken to mean a good life. A good life requires that we transform social relations to respectful, mutual relations, and that we end patriarchal, violent and militaristic relations. A total revolution is needed to liberate women and men from patriarchal structures and violent ideologies.

Mies calls on us to redefine the concept of "work" so that all work, including the work of housewives, subsistence peasants and artisans, is considered valuable. She calls on us to liberate the concepts of "productive work" and "productivity" so that they promote the good life for all.

WoMin's Ongoing work as we search out alternative actions

WoMin believes that action for redress needs to be led by the most affected. WoMin therefore works with its allies to build women's power and to support women and their communities to deepen their struggles against extractives.

An ongoing strand of WoMin's work is to work with allied movements and NGOs and women in communities affected by extractives towards healing and towards alternative practices. One aspect of this work is to develop ways of thinking about and understanding the violence of displacement and immiseration and the physical violence which women and their communities experience. A second aspect of this work is a grassroots women led process of recovery,

46 *Mies, M. and Shiva V. (1993) Ecofeminism. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Publications*

47 *Mies, M. (2006) CNS conference keynote address: "War is the father of all things" (Heraclitus) "but nature is the mother of life"*
von Werlhof, C. (2007) No critique of capitalism without a critique of patriarchy! Why the Left is no alternative.Capitalism Nature Socialism, 18(1), 13-27

dialogue, dreaming and documentation of women's imagination about a different community, society and Africa which is at service of its people and women in particular. This is combined with efforts to make visible women's coping strategies, as well as the recovery of practices decimated by colonisation and neo-colonisation, and the documentation of living alternatives. These will inform different expressions of Pan African alternatives to the dominant capitalist model. This will take the form of exhibitions, podcasts, collections of stories, a charter and will inform ongoing organising and campaigning across the continent.

In the period 10 November to 10 March 2020, WoMin joined hands with another 12 organisations, including a human rights defender network in Southern Africa, to build a month of action under the banner of Rise Against Repression.[48] This platform publicised 16 cases of repression and violence confronting individuals and communities critiquing, challenging and encroaching upon mega extractives projects across the region. This platform aims to grow and take on advocacy and solidarity efforts, hopefully hand in hand with human rights defender networks across the region.

As part of this initiative, WoMin wrote up a detailed case on the rape of women at the Barrick North Mara mine in Tanzania.[49] The case can be accessed on the Rise against Repression website. The violence by security guards and police at Barrick's North Mara mine in Tanzania was similar to the violence committed at the Porgera mine illustrated in the case study above. Tanzanian villagers filed a law suit in the United Kingdom against Barrick in 2013, after their relatives were killed at the gold mine and others were injured by police officers working under contract with the company to provide security to the mine.

Alongside these larger macro-efforts, WoMin has been working in Zimbabwe in partnership with the Counselling Services Unit (CSU)[50] to provide support to women in communities affected by violence to work through trauma collectively, to rebuild livelihoods, to develop ideas on what justice means for them; while simultaneously supporting women to build their power and to organise. This work is advanced (at the time of writing) but stalled in March 2020 as a result of COVID lockdown restrictions. The write up of the experience is underway and will launch alongside this paper. It is also being shared through conversations with partners and allies in Mozambique and Sierra Leone. We share some emerging thoughts on this attempt to move towards an alternative that builds solidarity while addressing trauma and healing.

Pilot in Zimbabwe

CSU with support from WoMin brought together 18 women who had experienced trauma arising from militarisation and securitisation of areas surrounding and impacted by mining activities. Among the women were small scale miners, women living within or close to mines, and women who were relocated as a result of mining.[51]

The violations that the women had experienced ranged from sexual, psychological to physical violations by state forces and private security companies brought in to "protect" mining operations. The experiences of women small scale miners

48 *https://riseagainstrepression.org/*

49 *A short film Women Speak Out About Abuse at Barrick Golds North Mara Mine in Tanzania by MiningWatch Canada can be accessed at : https://youtu.be/lizXaJShi8Y*

50 *This systematisation of a feminist collective model of trauma support can be accessed at https://riseagainstrepression.org/tribute-wall/north-mara-tanzania-rape/*

51 *Draft report by CSU and WoMin September 2020*

included rape, being forced to have sex as a "fine", being forced to expose body parts, being subjected to invasive body searches, being shot, bitten by dogs, assaulted with fists, boots, and weapons, and detained in exposed cages with no food.

Women and their communities living within or close to mining areas experienced illness as a result of air and water pollution, and exposure to constant explosions even through the night which crack houses, disturb sleep and cause constant stress. They experienced arbitrary searches of their homes by security forces, and were in constant fear of being raped by soldiers or male miners.

Women displaced by mining lost their homes, ways of living and livelihoods. They had no fields to work, no homesteads to maintain, and no activities to structure their days around. Mothers were anxious about their children's safety and their futures, given their loss of access to schooling, to land and livelihoods. Those who endured the exhumation of bodies of loved ones when they were relocated, were highly stressed by not being able to carry out traditional rites to ensure their loved ones would rest in peace.

The 18 women came together in three sessions which included psychological and medical assessments; individual and group arts and crafts therapy; psychological, medical, and legal information; safety and security information; peer group development; and the exploration of ideas relating to livelihood projects. The objectives were to understand the impact of extractives mining, and to develop women-led actions to challenge these impacts while offering support in the building of coping strategies.

The approach used to support the women was guided by feminist principles. In this respect it centred collective sharing, story-telling and support that created solidarity and tore down the deep isolation that women had experienced following the sexual violations. The process enabled women to centre healing based on, and drawing from their lived realities and traditional ways of coping with trauma. Women had sessions that enabled them to dismantle and interrogate systems such as patriarchy and capitalism and how these worked to perpetrate violence as well as instil shame and direct blame to victims. The approach was deliberate in emphasising collective care as a model of trauma support.

Women were initially afraid to participate in the programme for fear of repercussions. Some were suspicious that the programme was a set up by mining companies to see if the women would disclose rights abuses. Developing trust was a crucial starting point, to enable women to begin to speak out about their traumatic experiences.

Women described feeling isolated and alone, that there was no one to listen to them, and that they were turned away by police or village heads when they tried to get assistance. They felt powerless in relation to men in their homes and communities, in relation to security forces, in relation to large foreign companies, and in relation to their own government.

Many women had symptoms common to both trauma and depression. Some had suicidal thoughts, some felt hopeless. Women who had interactions with soldiers had the highest levels of stress. By the third session there were significantly lower levels of depression for all women.

Over the three sessions women were made aware of ways to recognise trauma in themselves and in others and they were trained to develop basic, community-relevant counselling skills and skills in referring women to relevant and available service providers, including to report rights violations.

Each woman was supported to make visible existing coping mechanisms and think about new ones, and build a self-care plan. A package of care was

developed with feedback from the women and this included counselling, medical, legal, security and referral needs.

The third session brought the project into a wider frame, raising awareness that women in other countries and regions are affected by extractive activities and have mobilised themselves to claim their rights and in some cases have been able to stop mining activities. The WoMin film "Women Hold up the Sky" was a key tool in this process. Awareness was raised about how women are taught from an early age to fill gender stereotypic roles, and that there is a whole system in place, to subordinate women.

In discussion on the need to rebuild livelihoods women participants proposed a chicken project. WoMin committed to a collectively owned chicken project comprising of 900 broiler chicks, chicken feed and vaccinations. They sourced training in chicken rearing through an organisation specialising in the empowerment of rural women. While women rear the chickens in their homesteads, the chicken project is designed so as to enable space for women to continue to come together in their communities and build a community-based support structure providing social and emotional support for women impacted by violence.

The pilot process in Zimbabwe built solidarity among the women participants, validated each one's value and boosted self-esteem. In all it was a radical and empowering experience for the women. The CSU team was challenged to understand the trauma of extractives industries on women's lives and the WoMin team was challenged to delve more deeply into trauma and healing.

Six months after the conclusion of the program, Zimbabwe went into COVID lockdown and while it was impossible to have face to face meetings, remote support via phone calls has been ongoing. Support groups set up at the first session were sustained and members kept in regular contact, providing social and emotional support, and enabling women to continue with their efforts to strengthen livelihoods.

Critical to the continued support of the women is a conversation and a deeper exploration of what justice looks like for each of the women. This process is about affirming women and allowing them to define what justice looks like for them, legal or otherwise. It is a project that aims to continue to honour and centre women's voices and experiences. This work, and the related effort to assist women tell their stories in narrative and through beadwork or knitting, has been greatly impacted by COVID for most of 2020 and into 2021. The process of story-telling and the exploration of justice options must be undertaken face to face. WoMin continues to document these processes.

Learning from from Yaoska Guardians Movement[52]

As we learn from our current practice and as we define a pathway for ongoing practice there is also much to draw from movements such as the Yaoska Guardians Movement of Rancho Grande municipality in northern Nicaragua. The movement is an example of the many movements emerging in Nicaragua to reject large extractive projects; such as mining, the interoceanic canal, dams, and monocultures like sugarcane. Many of these movements are led by women who understand that they are the most affected.

The movement protested against the Canadian Gold mining company B2Gold's proposal to start a

52 *This subsection is based on: González, TP. (2016) Defending the body-earth territory: an alternative for social movements in resistance. World Rainforest Movement, Bulletin 226, 20 October 2016https://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/defending-the-body-earth-territory-an-alternative-for-social-movements-in-resistance-1/*

gold mine on their land, and after a 11 year struggle, which was characterised by extreme repression by the army and police, was able to halt the project at the exploration stage, with government declaring continued exploration to be "non-viable".

The Movement was started in 2003 when women and men from the 38 affected communities questioned the Nicaraguan government's support of mining as a means to reduce poverty. The community pointed out that mining in other towns had increased inequality, did not reduce poverty, and led to harmful economic, social and environmental impacts on the people and the land.

The movement rejects mining because mining would impact the sustainable local economy upon which local citizens of the territory depend for livelihoods.

The women of Rancho Grande participate in Yaoska Guardians. As leaders in decision-making spaces, with the ability to mobilise other women they raised ways in which women are affected by mining. Mining causes changes in ecosystems and water sources and this adds to the burden on women, since women are responsible for the provision of food and for the health of their families and communities. Mining deepens relationships of domination of men over women. Mining also leads to increased sexual violence and abuse by men who come from outside the area, and feel entitled to invade the territory and the bodies of women.

For the movement, defending the territory is defending their way of life - which is deeply rooted in the land and in community, in which mutual care still exists, as well as the value of the collective over the individual. Despite these characteristics in the community, there remains great inequality between women and men.

The movement sees the struggle to defend land as inseparable from the struggle to defend women's bodies — the first territory to free in an exploitative system. Only by uniting struggles relating to territory, bodies and lives can they resist and create alternatives to transform the capitalist, patriarchal and colonial system.

In Rancho Grande, the army and police protect foreign investment and have repressed protest by the people. Company personnel and government officials have threatened, and physically and verbally abused women and men of the Yaoska Guardians Movement for their position against mining.

The Movement understands that the territory they are defending cannot be filled with relationships of inequality, as these weaken the community. The Movement is defending a good and happy life for all, with free bodies living in harmony with each other and with nature:

> ***"Territory is not only a physical space: forests, mountains and rivers; it has a deeper meaning. It is where relationships among humans, and with the environment (animals, plants) occur; it is the rocks and minerals that sustain it, and the surrounding air that enables all these forms of life to exist. It is also history, memory and culture, and the roots and spirituality that form the worldview of each people. Territory is where individual and collective identities are constructed. Therefore, to defend territory is to defend the forms of life that inhabit it."***

> ***"Faced with a threat like the installation of a mining project, defending territory becomes a struggle to defend life itself. … …. In order to defend a good life where we can be happy, the struggle must mend the injustice of the system itself, in joint defense of land and bodies. Otherwise, territorial defense is only partial and helps uphold inequalities."***

Learning from Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network

In similar ways as we may draw lessons from the Yaoska Guardians in Nicaragua, there are lessons to be drawn from Women's Earth Alliance (WEA) and Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN).[53]

In 2014, WEA and NYSHN began to document the health and safety of Indigenous women and young people in territories most heavily impacted by extractive industries in the USA and Canada. The Violence on the Land, Violence on our Bodies report and toolkit that came out of this process exposes the impacts of extractives on the people and land and is a support to action against environmental violence.

The report reveals that healing and ceremony are crucial responses to environmental violence; and that while local, federal, and international laws and policies serve as critical tools, Indigenous peoples are also designing culturally-safe and community-based solutions to reducing harm.[54]

Violence that happens on the land is seen as intimately connected to the violence that happens to bodies. Many of these communities are sites of chemical manufacturing and waste dumping, while others are sites of encampments of men who are brought in to work for the gas and oil industry. Environmental violence ranges from sexual and domestic violence, drugs and alcohol, murders and disappearances, reproductive illnesses and toxic exposure, threats to culture and Indigenous ways of living, crime and other social stressors.

The report notes that:

> ***"This dangerous intersection of extractive industry, the violence that accompanies it, and a population of women and young people who are already targets of systemic violence and generational trauma, sets the stage for increased violence on the land leading to increased violence on Indigenous people."***

The report notes that the risks faced as a result of extractives is part of a larger system of colonisation and historical trauma. These include higher levels of cancers, birth defects, miscarriages and mental illnesses. All of these have had deep impacts on the social fabric of Indigenous communities living near industrial developments. The extractive industry, fueled by corporate and governmental greed, furthers colonial and patriarchal systems by eroding traditional Indigenous governance systems and the role of women in these communities.[55]

Solutions to violence proposed in the report assert the self-determination and consent for people over their bodies and the lands of which they are a part; challenge mainstream responses of increased policing or criminalisation; centre deep listening in order to come with with alternative solutions; and places women at the epicentre of resistance to dispossessions of their land, water, forests and way of life. The report proposes alternatives to current development thought and practice.

53 *WEA invests in training and supporting grassroots women to drive solutions to our most pressing ecological concerns — water, food, land, and climate. NYSHN is a network by and for Indigenous youth that works across issues of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice in the United States and Canada.*

54 *Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network. (2016) Violence on the land, violence on our bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf*

55 *ibid*

SECTION FIVE:
A BRIEF CONCLUDING NOTE

Since the roots of the violence women experience lie in an exploitative economic system, we see the need to change the system and to work towards an alternative. The alternative we have in mind is a good and happy life where free bodies live in harmony with each other and with nature.

As we work towards this vision free of violence, we need to offer women support for healing and we need to consider forms of justice women want to pursue, given the pitfalls with existing forms of justice which repeatedly fail women. This requires the engagement of deep listening as well as learning from the examples cited from the groups of women included in this article – the Yasoka Guardians, the Women's Earth Alliance and Sista to Sista.

As we listen to the women we work with, we bring our creativity to devising strategies which attempt to recover past practices of production and reproduction while dreaming a community, society and Africa that represents women and serves their interests.

REFERENCES

Da Silva, MI. (2013) Narratives of Desire: Gender and Sexuality in Bugul, Aidoo and Chiziane. A Dissertation Presented to the Department of Comparative Literature and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Davis, A. (2000) The Color of Violence Against Women, keynote address at the Color of Violence Conferencein Santa Cruz. Colorlines, Vol.3 no.3, Fall 2000
http://www.arc.org/C_Lines/CLArchive/story3_3_02.html (link not working)

Democracy Now. (2020) The Case for Prison Abolition: Ruth Wilson Gilmore on COVID-19, Racial Capitalism & Decarceration. May 5, 2020
https://www.democracynow.org/2020/5/5/ruth_wilson_gilmore_abolition_coronavirus

Dream Defenders. (2020) Sunday School: Unlock us, Abolition in our Lifetime. Zoom talk with Angela Davis. 14 June 2020
https://www.facebook.com/DreamDefenders/videos/615123319385564/

Earthrights International. Factsheet: Abuse by Barrick Gold Corporation
https://earthrights.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/barrick_fact_sheet_-_earthrights_international_1.pdf

Ekine S. (2008) Women's Responses to State Violence in the Niger Delta. Feminist Africa 10

Federici, S (2020) Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction and Feminist Struggle. Oakland, CA. PM Press

González, TP. (2016) Defending the body-earth territory: an alternative for social movements in resistance. World Rainforest Movement, Bulletin 226, 20 October 2016
https://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/defending-the-body-earth-territory-an-alternative-for-social-movements-in-resistance-1/

Hall, RJ. (2014) "Feminist Strategies to End Violence Against Women", in The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movement, edited by Rawwida Baksh and Wendy Harcourt. Oxford Handbooks Online
https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199943494.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199943494-e-005

Human Rights Watch. (2009) Diamonds in the Rough: Human Rights Abuses in the Marange Diamond Fields of Zimbabwe, Reports on the brutality and human rights abuses wreaked on artisanal miners and villagers
https://www.hrw.org/report/2009/06/26/diamonds-rough/human-rights-abuses-marange-diamond-fields-zimbabwe

INCITE. (2006). Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology. Cambridge: South End Press.

Mapondera, M., Reddy, T. and Hargreaves S. (2019) If another world is possible, who is doing the imagining? Building an ecofeminist development alternative in a time of deep systemic crisis. Bread and Butter Series, African Feminist Reflections on Future Economies. AWDF

McClintock, A. (1995) Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge

Mies, M. and Shiva V. (1993) Ecofeminism. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Publications

Mies, M. (2006) CNS conference keynote address

Mining Watch Canada. (2018) Women Speak Out About Abuse at Barrick Golds North Mara Minein Tanzania
https://youtu.be/lizXaJShi8Y

RADD, Muyissi Environnment, Natural Resource Women PlatformRadio Culture, GRAIN and World Rainforest Movement.(2019) Breaking the Silence Harassment, sexual Violence and Abuse Against Women In and Around Industrial Palm Oil and Rubber Plantations

https://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/28799

Rise against repression website: https://riseagainstrepression.org/

Sista II Sista. (2006) "Sistas Makin' Moves: Collective Leadership for Personal Transformation and Social Justice", in Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology, edited by INCITE, 196–207. Cambridge: South End Press.

True, J. (2014) "The Political Economy of Violence Against Women: A Feminist International Relations Perspective", in Australian Feminist Law Journal, 32, 39-59

UN Women. (2021) Fact and Figures: Ending Violence against Women
https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures

von Werlhof, C. (2007) No critique of capitalism without a critique of patriarchy! Why the Left is no alternative.Capitalism Nature Socialism, 18(1), 13-27

Verso. (2020) A philosophy of nonviolence: Judith Butler interviewed by Alex Doherty. 14 September 2020 https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4851-a-philosophy-of-nonviolence-judith-butler-interviewed-by-alex doherty?fbclid=IwAR2IOi9mgCVqGaRsuCbrlnhQhTTUfqvpWBhOA_MlwKFHf2ocleDcn35zsds

Verso. (2020) Judith Butler: on COVID-19, the politics of non-violence, necropolitics, and social inequality, Jul 23, 2020
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Bnj7H7M_Ek

Walker, G. (2003). "The Conceptual Politics of Struggle: Wife Battering, the Woman's Movement and the State", in Studies in Political Economy: Developments in Feminism, 2nd ed., edited by C. Andrews. Toronto: Women's Press

Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network. (2016) Violence on the land, violence on our bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence
http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf

WoMin African Alliance and CRNG. (2020) Guns, Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Zimbabwe
https://womin.africa/vaw-research/

WoMin African Alliance, and Justiçia Ambiental. (2020) Guns Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Mozambique
https://womin.africa/vaw-research/

WoMin African Alliance and Network Movement for Justice and Development, Women and Mining. (2020) Guns Power and Politics Research Paper: Extractives and Violence Against Women in Sierra Leone
https://womin.africa/vaw-research/

WoMin Africa Alliance. (2020) Concept note on development alternatives

WoMin and CSU (2021) Building Women's Collective Power through trauma support

womin