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# AGENCY POWER IMPACT!

## AFRICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS Baraza

2018

15-16 Feb.  
Harare, Zimbabwe

REPORT

# Acknowledgements



We are grateful to the colleagues from Trust Africa and the participating partners for the opportunity to be part of the inaugural African Social Movements Baraza. We thank all the participants for their enthusiasm and openness in the Baraza.

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TrustAfrica, Wallace Global Fund and Omidyar Network hosted the African Social Movements' Experience Sharing Baraza under the Zimbabwe Alliance collaborative framework with the aim to bridge the digital and physical divides between African Social Movements and facilitate inter-movement experience sharing and co-learning. The following is an outcomes report for the African Social Movements Baraza (ASM Baraza) held in Zimbabwe on the 15th and 16th of February 2018.

The two-day ASM Baraza was held under the theme "Agency, Power, Impact" and managed to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Provided space for learning and knowledge sharing among Social Movement Activists and other stakeholders on emerging experiences and analysis of trends, innovations and methods of African Social Movements.
2. Provided opportunities for inter-movement networking, and collaborations
3. Engaged African Social Movements in collective thinking and practical solution building around some of the critical questions confronting movements at different stages of development and agenda attainment.
4. Resolved to turn the Baraza into an annual event.
5. Resolved to produce knowledge products (Books and readers) on the African Social Movement experience.

\* Other resources exist which catalogue the Baraza including its feed on its Tweeter Handle @ASMBaraza2018, and #ASMBaraza2018.

## SESSION 1: BARAZA OPENING & AFRICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS' AFRICAN DREAM(S)

In his opening remarks, Trust Africa's Briggs Bomba rallied the Baraza by placing Franz Fanon's injunction that 'Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it or betray it' on the table. He shared that the Baraza was taking place at a historic moment for Africa and its social movements and challenged activists to be "A concrete representation of peoples basic aspirations, dreams and struggles, confronting obstacles in their way." Briggs argued in his remarks that Generational Agency moves history, and that struggle was constant action with new questions emerging for each generation, which each generation must confront, determine what their historical task is, and answer history's call through contribution.

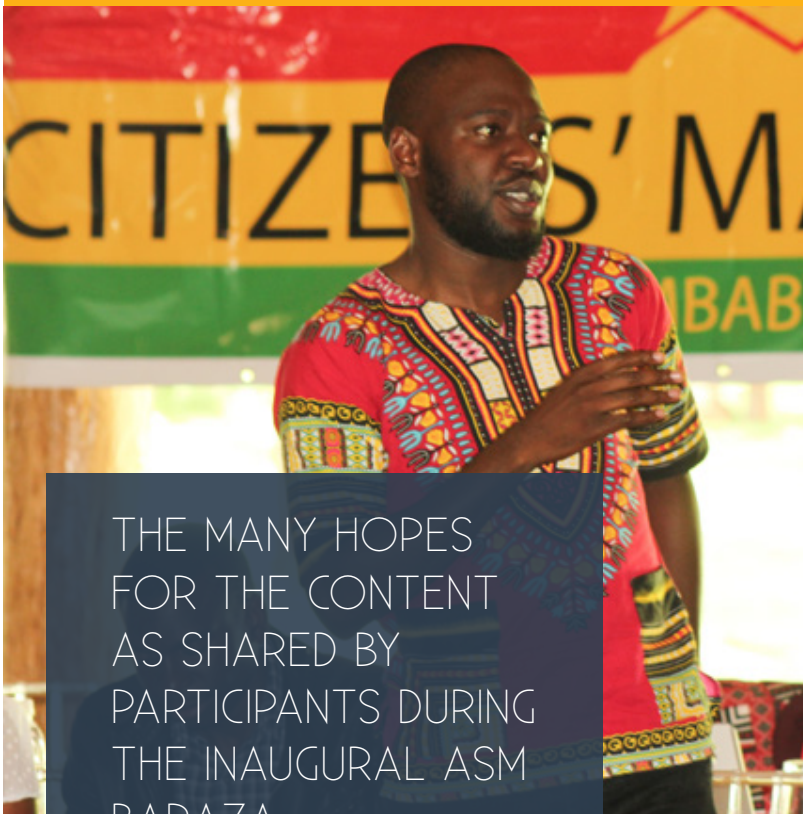
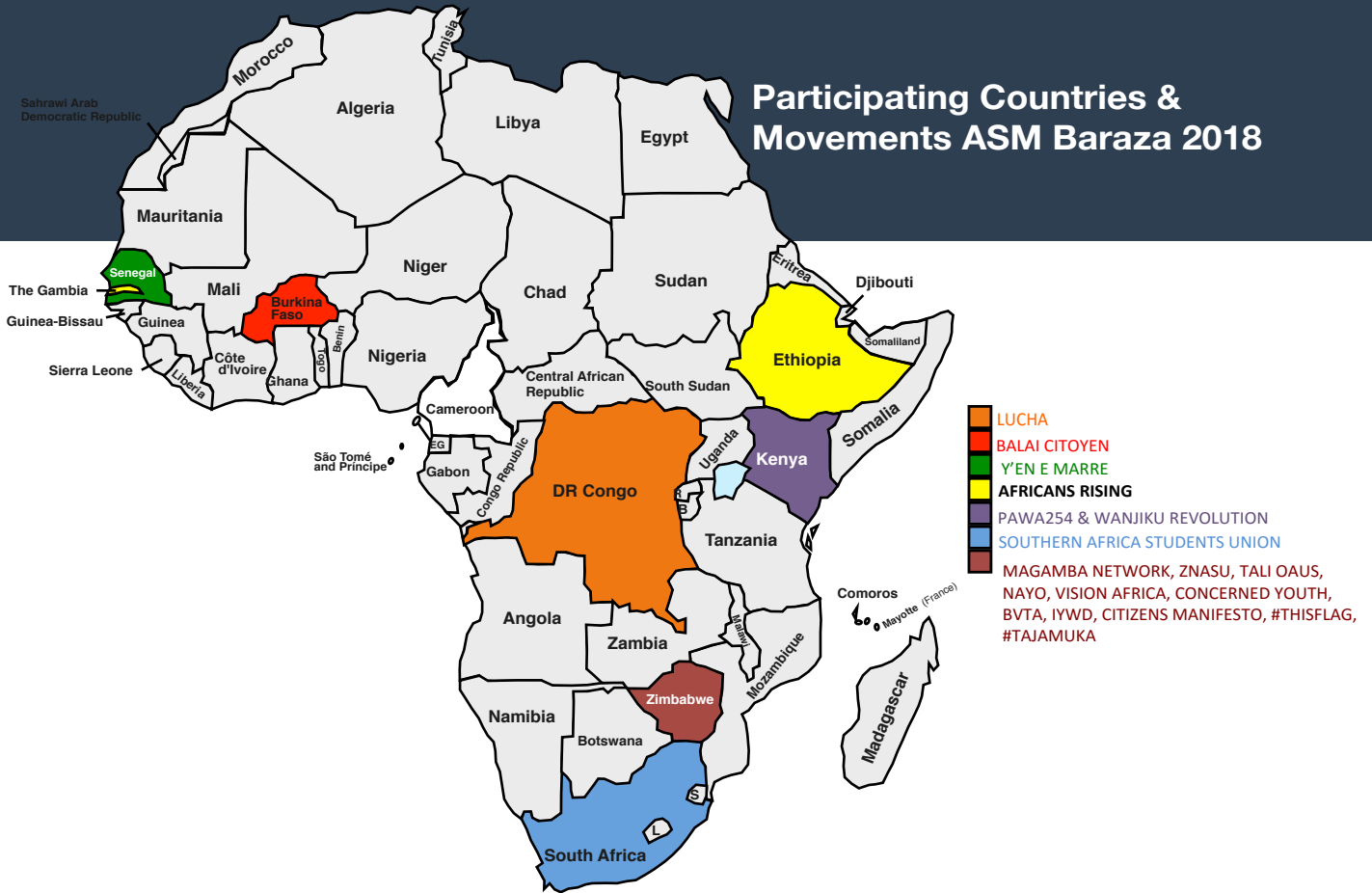
After Bomba's opening remarks participants, as part of the check in outlined their dreams for the Baraza as well as for the African continent.

In their diversity and different words and ways, ASM Activists at the Baraza were clear that they envisioned an Africa which was:

**Socially, economically and politically just. Where young people and women were active and played leading roles within and without the state to ensure a better Africa built around pan-African solidarity, ownership of the African narrative, leadership and determination of its agenda. This Africa would be powerful, just, equal and characterised by free movement, dignity and peace.**



## Participating Countries & Movements ASM Baraza 2018



THE MANY HOPES FOR THE CONTENT AS SHARED BY PARTICIPANTS DURING THE INAUGURAL ASM BARAZA.

- Liberated & united
- Empowered women
- Visa free
- Pan-African connections & solidarity networks
- Socio-economic justice & political justice
- Build agency, change narratives and tell stories differently
- Rise in entrepreneurs
- Generational Succession
- Sustain Active Citizens agency
- Sustainable change – Arab spring
- Holding governments accountable
- Committed young people who can lead change and transformation
- United Africa that can complete the change that the pioneers started
- Dignity & peace
- Young people at the center of governance visioning across spheres
- Just, equitable Africa
- The next global power
- Women in power
- Participatory Africa
- Democratic development



## SESSION 2: SOCIAL MOBILIZATION – EXPERIENCES FROM ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Five speakers shared their inspirational origin stories, how they built their movements, their inspirations and challenges. The following threads that emerged from the narratives assisted in painting a picture of the organising terrain in Africa:

### Context

1. The harshness of the political environment, include savage brutality of ruling regimes notably in Burkina Faso, The Gambia and DRC.
2. Dangers associated with activism, include threats to and sometimes loss of life, incarcerations, enforced disappearances.

### Methods

1. The adoption of nonviolent means of resistance and the use of imagery and creativity to get young people and women engaged. These were exemplified by the #GambiaDecides Campaign staging the citizen's brooms campaign and the Calabash campaign, Burkina Faso's Balai Citoyen which means Citizens Broom and its use of peaceful initially harmless activities like cleaning streets and hospitals. In DRC this was exemplified by the "Bye Bye Kabila" campaign, in Zimbabwe the Citizens manifestos washing line and People Picnic in the run-up to Mugabe's ouster, as Pawa254's Occupy Playground and burning coffins outside Kenya's parliament were emblematic of this creative nonviolent resistance.
2. The importance of shocking people into attention through creative integration of art and activism.

### Inspiration

1. The power of victory and success even small ones in motivating people and keeping them engaged, while growing these "small activities" to lead to significant impact.
2. The importance of engaging people on fundamental issues that are closest to their lived realities as entry points to more radical and or political struggles, e.g. Electricity, social service delivery.
3. The importance of inter-movement solidarity as a way of building relationships and gaining allies, e.g. The Citizens Manifestos' s solidarity actions with vendors in Zimbabwe.

### Challenges & Opportunities

1. The problem of enhancing women's participation and creating movements as safe spaces within which women can effectively participate on an equal footing with their male counterparts.
2. The importance of leveraging extant strengths especially at the beginning, e.g. Boniface's use of Photography (his profession) as the primary outlet for his activism.
3. The importance of ensuring that, in the main, solutions and resourcing for movements in locally sourced and built on the strength of activists contributions.
4. The importance of ensuring that movements politically organise to avoid backsliding on failing to sustain results.



From left to Right: **Duduzile Moyo** – Citizens Manifesto, Zimbabwe | **Mohamed Lamin Sayidy Khan** – Africans Rising, Gambia | **Touwendinda Zongo**, Balai Citoyen, Burkina Faso | **Dirk Shaka** – LUCHA, DRC | **Boniface Mwangi**, PAWA254, Kenya



## CONTEXT, POWER, KEY ACTORS & INSTITUTIONS

This session sought to consolidate the running threads from the previous session through group enunciation of critical issues and variables in the African context regarding social movement organising. The ASMs conducted a Triangle analysis with the following outputs from the conversations on structures, cultures and content within the ASM operating environment on the African continent.

<b>Content:</b>	<b>Structure:</b>	<b>Culture:</b>	
Relevant laws, policies, budgets, constitution),	Mechanisms, processes and institutions responsible for implementation of laws, policies, appropriate strategies, initiatives/ programmes run by government, other civics)	Refers to the values and behaviour that shape how people deal with and understand our issues of interest)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate power</li> <li>2. Anti-poor budgets &amp; policies</li> <li>3. Reactionary laws. Repression, restrictions of association media, public gatherings, liberations, freedom of movement</li> <li>4. State control of media</li> <li>5. Archaic laws legacy of colonial laws</li> <li>6. Lack of transparency in elections</li> <li>7. Constraints of having elections as the only citizen participation</li> <li>8. Custom made constitutions</li> <li>9. International agreements &amp; treaties</li> <li>10. African governance</li> <li>11. Informal institutions</li> <li>12. Brilliant policies not implemented</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council</li> <li>2. The executive</li> <li>3. Parliament</li> <li>4. Commissions</li> <li>5. Judiciary</li> <li>6. Security sector</li> <li>7. Political parties</li> <li>8. Tradition leaders</li> <li>9. Media</li> <li>10. Religious groups</li> <li>11. International STI structures</li> <li>12. Economic structures</li> <li>13. Electoral</li> <li>14. Business</li> <li>15. Civil society- CBOs – unions, movements, anyone not working for government</li> </ol>	<b>Positives</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respect for people's views</li> <li>2. Resilience</li> <li>3. Innovation &amp; creativity</li> <li>4. Esteem</li> <li>5. UBUNTU</li> <li>6. Coming together when there's tragedy</li> <li>7. Cultural values</li> <li>8. Herd mentality</li> <li>9. Cultural of solidarity</li> <li>10. Believing change is possible</li> </ol>	<b>Negative</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resistant to change</li> <li>2. Liberation credentials hold too much power</li> <li>3. Comfort zone</li> <li>4. Fear</li> <li>5. Ignorance</li> <li>6. Lack of positive role models</li> <li>7. Women propagating patriarchy</li> <li>8. Stockholm syndrome</li> <li>9. Race – whites support the status quo financially, control capital</li> <li>10. Negative traditional values</li> <li>11. Language barriers</li> <li>12. Western education popular education</li> <li>13. Personal principles vs values</li> <li>14. Skepticism</li> <li>15. Policy of the penis</li> <li>16. Marriage- women lose their voices</li> <li>17. Black experience stereotype</li> <li>18. Religion has enslaved our people</li> <li>19. Kingdom mentality</li> <li>20. Holding on to power-entitlement</li> <li>21. Socialization patriarchy</li> <li>22. Misogyny</li> <li>23. Ethnicity and tribal issues</li> </ol>



## WORLD CAFÉ

For the second half of day 1 of the ASM Baraza, ASM Activists participated in a world café built around Four Café's (The Arts Café, Internet Café, Knowledge Café, and Street Café). Conversations at the Café's tables were based on three questions as shown in the tables below which highlight the primary outputs from the Café's after three waves.

	Art café	Internet café	Street café
Questions:			
<b>1. In what was have you harnessed (art, internet, knowledge or street) in your movement building work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen washing line – interactive washing line harvesting opinions</li> <li>• Music to mobilise</li> <li>• Symbolism</li> <li>• Role play/forum theatre</li> <li>• Musicians – social consciousness</li> <li>• Hip-hop – peace in the hood – politically charged music</li> <li>• Use of celebrities and prominent figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story telling</li> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• inform</li> <li>• mobilize</li> <li>• branding/marketing</li> <li>• spread propaganda</li> <li>• fundraising</li> <li>• build solidarity</li> <li>• hack the oppressor</li> <li>• protect yourself</li> <li>• grow membership</li> <li>• set the agenda</li> <li>• counter government propaganda</li> <li>• amplify positive movement stories</li> <li>• disseminate content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One grievance to mobilize masses</li> <li>• Creatively taking the problem to authorities – eg rubbish problem so take rubbish to council offices</li> <li>• Timing</li> <li>• Use of children in protests</li> <li>• Use of student groups</li> <li>• Found victims, build protest around them</li> <li>• Use of space – clean up after ourselves after actions</li> </ul>
<b>2. In our experience, what have been the limitations, challenges, surprises, illusions?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One national broadcaster limits exposure for activists/artists. Writers retreat because they have no platform</li> <li>• Drama – through Savanna Trust – helped amplify/increase engagement for anti-privatisation campaign</li> <li>• A filmmaker who filmed Silvanos' play encountered resistance from audience to be shot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• internet trolls</li> <li>• cyber regulations</li> <li>• lack of skills</li> <li>• information security</li> <li>• infiltration</li> <li>• offline action</li> <li>• hacking democracy</li> <li>• limited access to internet</li> <li>• date security (IP)</li> <li>• fake news</li> <li>• Eco chamber cyber tribalism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parisian politics – betrayal of the cause</li> <li>• Dear of repercussions</li> <li>• Internal sabotage</li> <li>• Misogyny</li> <li>• Completion for space</li> <li>• Leadership insecurity – lack of acknowledgement of women's' contributions</li> <li>• Lack of innovation</li> </ul>

	Art café	Internet café	Street café
<p>3. <b>Moving forwards how do we optimize the use of (Art, Internet, Knowledge and Street) for solidarity &amp; movement building?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make art part of the DNA of your activism – not siloed</li> <li>• Graffiti/flash mobs</li> <li>• Show don't tell</li> <li>• Creativity comes first not an add-on!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Text to tweet</li> <li>• Equip people with skills</li> <li>• Make it cheap and accessible</li> <li>• Tell each other's stories</li> <li>• Consistency and content to gain followers online</li> <li>• To trendy – amplify each other and tell stories. When on TV talk about your twitter handle and WhatsApp to support each other's causes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use common ground</li> <li>• Mobilize youth and women</li> <li>• Clear &amp; simple messaging – language must connect to audience</li> <li>• Clear target</li> <li>• Use social media to mobilize and inform</li> <li>• Understand the context – use appropriate actors</li> <li>• Build cross-movement solidarity</li> <li>• Prepare for contingencies – exit plans, safety, legal support, medical treatment</li> <li>• Use creative means to inspire people eg drama as a mobilizing tool</li> <li>• Agency – activate citizens to believe in themselves solving their own problems</li> <li>• Hijack the message/space</li> <li>• Synergies</li> </ul>

	Knowledge café
<p>Combined answer to all 3 questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In what was have you harnessed knowledge in your movement building work</li> <li>2. In our experience, what have been the limitations, challenges, surprises, illusions?</li> <li>3. Moving forwards how do we optimize the use of Knowledge for solidarity &amp; movement building?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art as a tool for messaging</li> <li>• Creating a database. (knowledge hub)</li> <li>• Movement building (short + long term strategy)</li> <li>• Interrogate/plan on gaining political power – or not</li> <li>• Systematic knowledge transfer – annual TOTs</li> <li>• Research + fact finding</li> <li>• Creating a shared understanding of experiences</li> <li>• Identifying knowledge gaps – impartial case studies of social movements – content – challenges &amp; moving to the next phase</li> <li>• Invade universities &amp; academic space</li> <li>• Catch them young</li> <li>• Stop – reflect</li> <li>• Simplify the difficult and make available</li> <li>• Think – act</li> <li>• Capitalization issues</li> <li>• Discussion seminars – 1 hour for country</li> <li>• Interface dialogues to share experiences</li> <li>• Use of research – how does it travel/connect with their actions</li> <li>• Creation of empowerment cycles + knowledge transfer, especially to those affected</li> <li>• Telling your own stories</li> <li>• Curriculum: vision, mission, strategy</li> <li>• Creating learning &amp; reflection platforms to draw lessons and successes.</li> </ul>





From all four café,'s the following themes were recurring:

1. The need for cross-movement Solidarity
2. Building networks
3. Sharing experiences (storytelling) through documenting case studies and facilitating comparative research of African social movements – Could be in Book forms or series of articles.
4. Changing Mindsets
5. Shared experience/commonality in the struggle
6. The importance of youth and women and the roles they play as leaders and the most significant demographic groups on the continent.

During plenary on the Café's ASM activists flagged the following critical questions for further discussion:

1. How to protect your voters during elections especially in polling station based voting?
2. How to stop a movement from being co-opted?
3. What is the future of social movements in Africa? (Political power, building ideologies, staying out of the political process.)
4. How are movements accessing resources?
5. How can movements build solidarity

## CHALLENGES & OBSTACLES FOR AFRICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANISING

Day 2 of the ASM Baraza opened with some reflections on Day 1, and some of the remaining questions left undiscussed or unanswered on day 1, spinning off into an open discussion on challenges, obstacles and opportunities for ASM organising. The conversation dealt with the following issues and proposed solutions:

### Reflections

1. ASMs to consider growing Knowledge and consciousness through targeting young citizens in school- "catching them young."
2. Focusing on Community development & empowerment as a way to get communities engaged, then leveraging these interests to conscript activists into foundational issues beyond immediate concerns.
3. The power and contagious nature of Inspiration
4. Modelling leadership practice around the tenets of servant leadership
5. Building ways of avoiding activists from appropriating people's voices. Important for activists to be the voice of the voiceless, but equally important to give the people a voice and transfer empowering knowledge.
6. Focusing on Building Pan-African Mass movements which can be useful counterweights to governments
  - i. Strong
  - ii. Impactful
  - iii. Continuous
7. Need to develop shared understanding on the criticalness of the current historical juncture
8. Building Local solidarity and sponsoring co-creation amongst movements.

### Challenges

1. Competition vs cooperation
2. Grassroots funding deficits
3. Donor funding lethargy
4. Donor meddling + unethical donor conduct
5. Not valuing Local knowledge
6. Leveraging external skills and expertise
7. How to assist in the development of organic movements = zero budget, support from the people OR Self-supporting movements
8. The place of values & principles = principles struggles





# TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL MOVEMENT BUILDING ON THE CONTINENT

A Talk show, hosted by Cde Fatso, discussed some of the issues raised in reflection from day one and sought to share ideas and experiences around building sustainable social movements. The following critical issues and thoughts emerged from the conversation.

**Guests:** Lucha – Dirk Shaka | Balai Citoyen - Touwendinda Zongo | Y'en a Marre- Abdou Khafor Kandji | Trust Africa – Briggs Bomba | Wanjiku Revolution – Edwin Kiama

- For movements to be sustainable, they must add value to the lives of their members, e.g. through active involvement or exploring how movements can have income generating activities to encourage participation from members.
- In addition to traditional funding support to movements through established donors, creation of self-sustaining movements built on contributions and solicitations to supporters and believers in the cause but who may not be in a position to act on their beliefs through active engagement on a day-to-day basis.
- Initially build through sacrifice or investments, having confidence in the belief that “Money follows ideas” and that Activism is a calling not a job as such activists must never be driven by money.
- Build movements around sets of principles and values and be clear on what is and what is not negotiable.
- Build support from fellow Africans across borders, including the African diaspora.
- Build locally but aim for national and international replication and amplification.
- Institutionalize more practical arrangements for activists to beyond the “big asks” like legal support through safety nets for welfare (food and medicines while incarcerated), fines, health for dependents.
- Operationalise mechanisms that allow movements to learn from themselves and each other through mainstreaming sharable (action) research in movements work.
- Build a vision based social movements, where ideas and values are shared and act as disciplining mechanisms.
- Consider adapting appreciative inquiry methodology, for instance the Citizen's Manifesto's development was centred on the three 'Vs' – Vision (how can we come together for a better Zimbabwe), Values (integrity, accountability, social solidarity...) and Vehicle (what carries the movement towards reality, what kind of a convergence space or platform can accommodate the vision while allowing movements to remain the same but providing the space to amplify movements voices.)
- Consider having an organising methodology and a motivating ideology, e.g. Lucha's 5 Cells Structure: communications, mobilisation and solidarity, studies and strategy, action and operation & Luchology (the ideology which members /professors can transmit articulating the Lucha values)
- Provide rolling training for recruits to the movement – Train, Act, Recruit cycle



## SOLIDARITY BUILDING PRACTICUMS

Two solidarity-building practicums were staged at the ASM Baraza. The first was a demonstration of a community-networking platform, slack, initially conceptualised to optimised teamwork but which could be adapted to support networking, collaboration and communication amongst ASM Baraza participants. The second was presentation by Edwin Kiama on building a robust online presence based on his experience with Wanjiku revolution. He shared how it was essential to build a following that can defend one from trolls if blocking trolls or “killing them with kindness” doesn’t work. Kiama shared that part of the process of building a following was through engagement with followers, building trust, being consistent, meeting offline, and building a building a brand. In addition to Kiama’s inputs, Boniface Mwangi added the importance of content, including use of images, more than text.

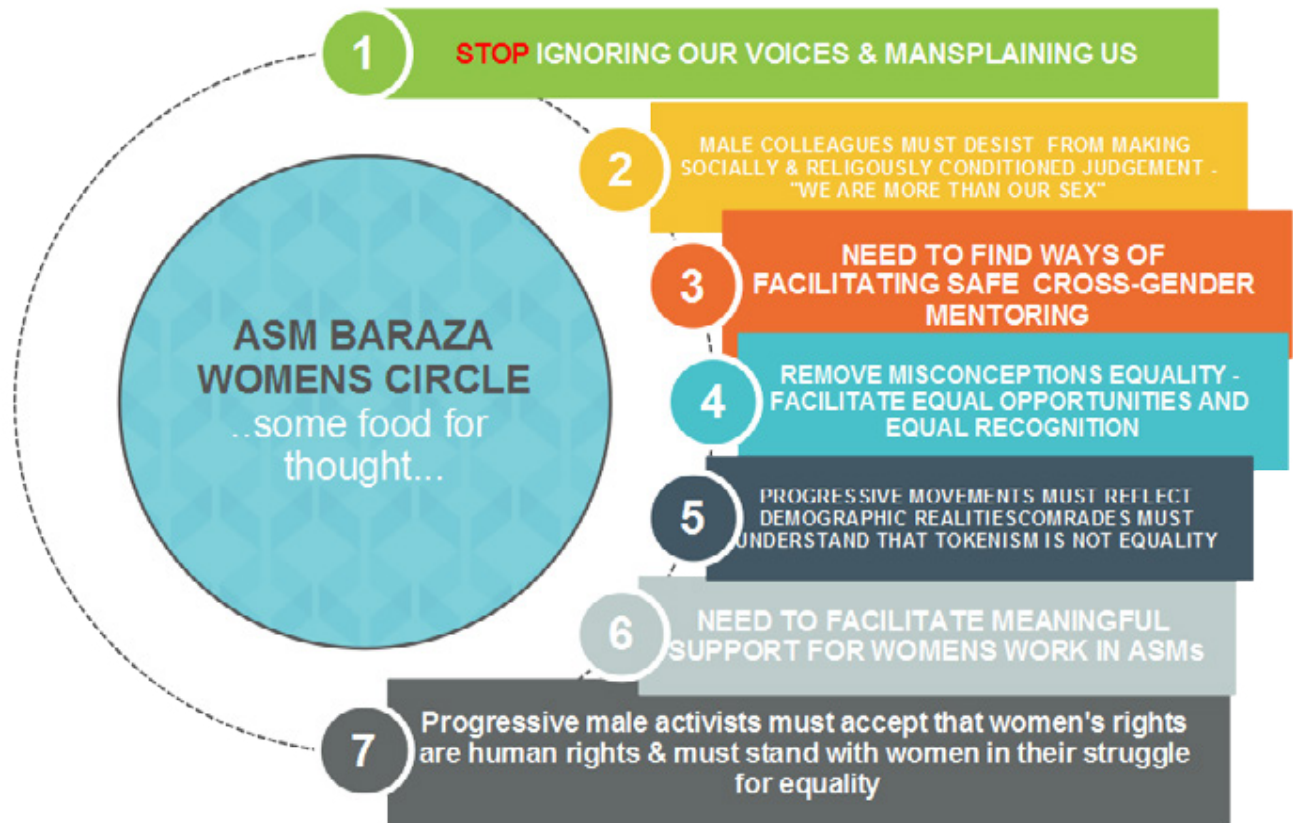




## THE WOMEN'S CIRCLE

The Women's circle was a bespoke space created on demand for female participants to share their thoughts, experiences and ideas on issues affecting women in the ASM space and struggles.

Post sharing, Trust Africa representative Briggs Bomba thanked the female comrades for sharing and committed to full transparency in the ASM Baraza process, including the good and bad, positive and negative elements of women's participation in movement spaces. He committed to fair and equal treatment of female activists and pledged to continue engaging with female activists towards fashioning solutions to some of the challenges exposed in the circle.





## COMMITMENTS AT EXIT

At the end of the process, ASM Baraza 2018 participants flagged the following issues as part of the way forward.

- Facilitate processes to continue ASM Baraza 2018 conversations, including online and where possible offline.
- Seriously Consider making the Baraza an annual event with the next one ensuring space to engage more in-depth of
  - o Solidarity building across movements locally and across the African continent.
  - o Deepening conceptual understandings of Movements, their theory, emergence development, sustenance, and how they differ from other third sector organization's.
  - o Developing a knowledge generation agenda (research agenda)- e.g. case studies done on previous movements
- Facilitate the ability of female activists to embrace the big obligation of nurturing other female activists.
- Commitment to building a network of activists who support each other, share each other's stories and strength and believe they are stronger together from the ASM Baraza 2018.

Trust Africa's Jeanne Elone concluded the ASM Baraza 2018 by expressing Trust Africa's commitment to accompanying the Baraza process in future editions. She shared that the conveying of social movements of this kind was at the heart of Trust Africa's DNA and founding roots. She thanked ASM activists for their intelligent conversations, open sharing and commitment to the process.

