

On April 18, 2010, a small group of activists from across Africa held a roundtable discussion in Nairobi, Kenya, during which they drafted the African LGBTI Manifesto/Declaration.

"As Africans, we stand for the celebration of our complexities and we are committed to ways of being which allow for self-determination at all levels of our sexual, social, political and economic lives. The possibilities are endless. We need economic justice; we need to claim and redistribute power; we need to eradicate violence; we need to redistribute land; we need gender justice; we need environmental justice; we need erotic justice; we need racial and ethnic justice; we need rightful access to affirming and responsive institutions, services and spaces; overall we need total liberation."

Quotes from the research work "Queer Activism in Africa"

"[...] taking place beyond the purview of mainstream human rights and HIV interventions, queer activists in Ghana assert rights, challenge homophobia, and build community in multiplex ways, through culturally located practices of solidarity, defiance, kinship, and reciprocal material and emotional support"

"they take place in a more ad hoc way, in informal community settings, among friends, family members, and peers, and encompass a range of activities, from gestures of love and support to the courageous attempts of some activists to challenge homophobic violence."

"In a context of entrenched heteronormativity such as Ghana, it is impossible to separate the political from the "personal" or the "communal." This means that all of these practices and actions are profoundly political in character."

This dislocation between Western political and development agendas and the priorities of queer African activists was manifest in 2011, when the British prime minister, David Cameron, threatened to cut aid to African countries that “persecute” homosexuals and have a “poor track record” on gay rights (BBC News, 2011).

A statement released by a group of African social justice activists, comprising 53 organizations and 86 individual activists across the continent, stated (Pambazuka News, 2011):

"A vibrant social justice movement within African civil society is working to ensure the visibility of—and enjoyment of rights by—LGBTI people ... Donor sanctions are by their nature coercive and reinforce the disproportionate power dynamics between donor countries and recipients. They are often based on assumptions about African sexualities and the needs of African LGBTI people. They disregard the agency of African civil society movements and political leadership."

#KilltheBill movement in Ghana.

Massive protests in Ghana and in the diaspora and involvement of many Ghanaian public figures in support of the campaign to kill the bill.

"Ghana is not a one family value system. We even believe in the extended family system, we believe in the uncles, aunties, and everybody coming together to build up an individual in the society. So how come somebody is proposing a bill about family values and all of a sudden, people do not want to raise an eye about it. What is it about the Ghanaian family value that is so threatened that there needs to be a bill that will curb?"

Alex Kofi Donkor, from the group LGBT+ Rights Ghana

Keguro Macharia on radical queer Africa:

"xiv.

to be vulnerable is not the same as to be a victim

--Veena Das

xv.

freedom seeds:

Every time you pluck an amaranth leaf from a mature, seed-laden plant, seeds fall to the ground. The work of freedom might be to keep plucking the leaves, to keep letting seeds fall.

As the protesters have it: they buried us;
they did not know we were seeds

xvi.

the neoliberal hoax of "Africa rising" cannot
imagine freedom

xvii.

the labor of knowing how to talk to the
police, how to transport to safe houses, how
to fight the everyday battles needed for
survival

the invisible labor of women, trans warriors,
sex workers, the unacknowledged work of
those who make a queer now possible"

"I also hope that people realise that all oppression is connected. People who are racist tend to also be homophobic, to be sexist, and so on. These things are layered. If people can apply the lens of inclusivity around race, we could do the same with gender, with queerness, with class.

This is a layered conversation about oppression in general. And if we approach it that way, if we approach dismantling oppressive systems in general, then I think liberation for all people is possible."

Yvee Oduor, a gender non-conforming feminist, from the Gay and lesbian coalition of Kenya (GLACK+)

"What propels me to be at the forefront is that I know myself. [...] I'm trying to document and narrate what a nonbinary lesbian experience in Namibia could be.

I'm doing this for myself, too. If I had the book I've written when I was in high school, I wonder how would it have shaped my own reflections of my identity. It would have confirmed for me all the thoughts I had and the internal conflict I felt. At that time, I didn't have the language to articulate who I am: what I am for myself, to myself. And if media like it could exist, then it's not just for me. It's for the other many people who struggle to articulate exactly what they feel, to help them navigate how to exist.

This work documenting and archiving the struggle is so important. We must do it for ourselves.

~Ndiilokelwa Nthengwe, intersectional gender justice activist involved in advocacy and communications for several organisations including Equal Namibia.

If there's any doubt that Namibia's social justice evolution is queer, one need only witness the wave of a rainbow flag below Windhoek's bronze statue of Namibia's founding father as Ndiilokelwa Nthengwe yells a slogan that is often a prelude to pearl-clutching.

"My koekie, my keus!"

A translation of what the gender-non-binary intersectional activist and author is shouting as protesters raise wire hangers in the air ahead of Namibia's first public hearings on abortion in over 20 years is simple:

"My pussy, my choice!"

In 2020, non-binary activist and co-founder of the Voices for Choices and Rights Coalition, Beauty Boois, reenergized the reproductive justice movement with a petition to legalize abortion in Namibia which garnered over 62 000 signatures.

Nthengwe (25), the organisation's other co-founder who has taken up Voices for Choices and Rights Coalition's reins in Windhoek, was also a leading activist in last year's ShutItAllDown protests, which saw hundreds of Namibians take to the streets to rally against the country's rampant sexual and gender based violence.

"my work has been trivialised, dismissed, discredited and treated with hostility by the government and the mining company."

Above all, Manu wants the voices of the coastal community affected by mining exploration to be heard, and for the government to rescind legal provisions that still criminalise people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

~ Emmanuel Peni (Manu), an LGBTI and environmental activist from Sepik, in the coastal region of Papua New Guinea

"The struggles and experiences of the LGBTQUI community in different areas certainly resonate with the fa'afafine community in Samoa.

It is important that I understand the global trends and development progress in LGBTIQ issues [and] communities, so that I am able to critically analyse and contextualise those experiences [with] the lived realities and experiences of fa'afafine in Samoa.

Similar challenges impact both communities including violence and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

Although Samoa does not collect disaggregated data on the fa'afafine population, we know anecdotally that there are many of us that have faced some sort of discrimination, or have been a victim of domestic violence and sexual abuse at one point of our lives.

~ To'oto'oali'i Roger Stanley from Samoa Fa'afafine Association

By 2016, a team of transgender women and myself were able to obtain enough interest from binabinaine, to establish a civil society organisation intended to amplify the voices of binabinaine who are constantly experiencing social discrimination, hatred and stigma because of their diverse sexual orientation a, gender identity and expression .

Perhaps it is noteworthy, that in 2021, the recognition and visibility of binabinaine has improved compared to 10 years back.

However, consensual sex between men, or homosexuality, is still criminalised in Kiribati and thus, the decriminalisation of such discriminatory laws is the ultimate goal for BIMBA.

~ Tebeio Tamton, Advisor and Co-Founder of Boutokaan Inaomataia ao Mauriia Binabinaine Association

We gather here stories about inspiring queerfeminist movements and campaigns. While we lay the focus on former German colonies, we also included some other territories / countries, since we noticed many groups work in alliances and influence each other's fights strongly.

If you have any other activists, collectives or grassroots organizing in mind, from these or other colonized countries, that you think the world should know about, please add them here!