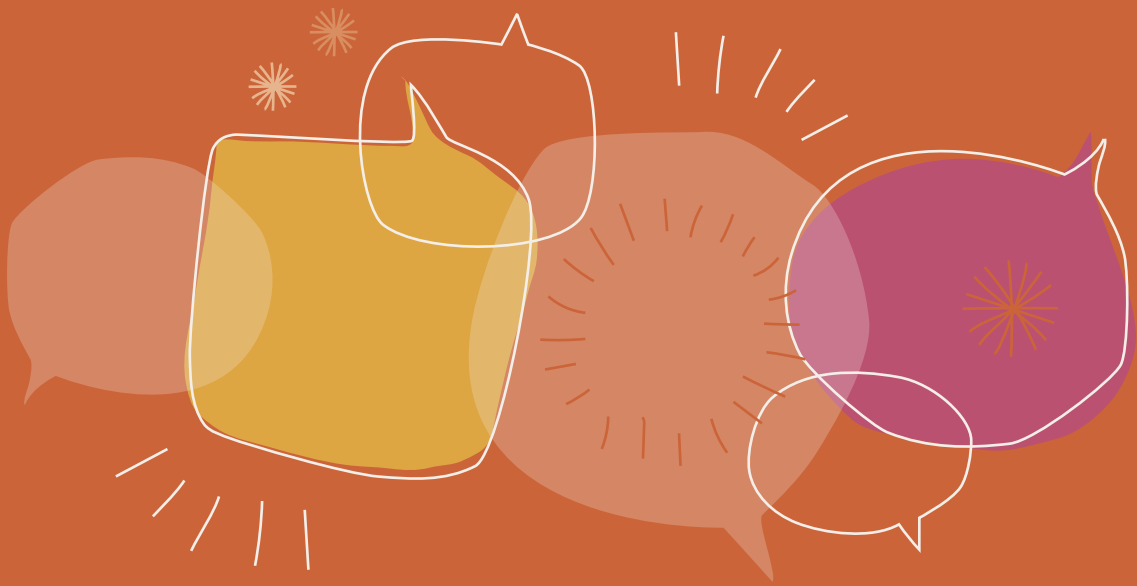


FEMINIST ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

BACKGROUNDER



IWDA INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

The Feminist Organisational Capacity Strengthening (FOCS) Toolkits were written by Gender at Work associates Carol Miller, Shawna Wakefield, Joanne Sandler, David Kelleher and Virisila Buadromo in deep consultation with International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) staff and partner organisations across Asia and the Pacific. Artwork concepts and illustrations by Viola Design.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Backgrounder is to help IWDA program staff understand the concepts and principles underpinning Feminist Organisational Capacity Strengthening (FOCS) so that they better model these in working with partners. It uses the 5 Capabilities (5C) Framework and consideration of gender and power as a starting point for determining changes partners want to make in their organisations, and what kinds of support partners may be interested in.

The Backgrounder has two purposes:



TO ILLUSTRATE WHAT A FEMINIST APPROACH TO THE 5C FRAMEWORK LOOKS LIKE, INTEGRATING A GENDER AND POWER ANALYSIS.

TO BUILD ON IWDA PARTNERS' FEEDBACK AND IDEAS ABOUT THE 5C FRAMEWORK TO DATE, WHICH CAN SUPPORT IWDA STAFF TO COLLABORATIVELY CRITIQUE AND ENHANCE THE APPROACH DURING THE REMAINING PILOT PHASE, AND FEED INTO FUTURE ITERATIONS OF THE FOCS PACKAGE.

The Backgrounder is a foundational part of a larger set of **FOCS Resources** designed for partners and any external facilitators (from IWDA or otherwise) to use to support feminist organisational capacity strengthening. The suite of resources includes:

1

FOCS FACILITATION GUIDE that outlines facilitation principles and practical tips consistent with feminist values and practice.

2

FOCS ORGANISATION SELF-ASSESSMENT MODULE that partners may use to reflect on capacities they want to develop as part of a capacity strengthening process which they develop and guide themselves, or which IWDA or other external facilitators support.

3

RESOURCE MODULES on the specific capacity areas most identified by FOCS partners and IWDA staff as needing strengthening:

Creating Cultures of Care and Resilience

Leading, Governing and Being Accountable

Resources for Women's Rights

As you engage with partners, it will be important to consider your own positioning, and identify how that may or may not bring power and privilege. The **FOCS Facilitation Guide** suggests ways to create spaces where people with different forms of power are supported to share their ideas, wisdom and differing perspectives equally and respectfully.

BACKGROUND

The FOCS pilot builds on the work IWDA has done to strengthen capacities of women's organisations, with a feminist lens, over the last 30 years – and with selected partner organisations over the last five years. It also draws from and builds on the work of other feminist organisations and thinkers,¹ aiming to create a systematic framework with an holistic and feminist approach to organisational capacity-strengthening, building on the 5C Framework.² This framework aligns closely with IWDA's values and Program Partnership Principles and a feminist understanding of how social change towards gender equality happens, as discussed below.

IWDA focuses on strengthening women's organisations because they are crucial in maintaining and widening the space for voice, visibility, advocacy and evidence about violations of women's rights in their regions, and for putting pressure on power holders and institutions for greater accountability for women's rights.

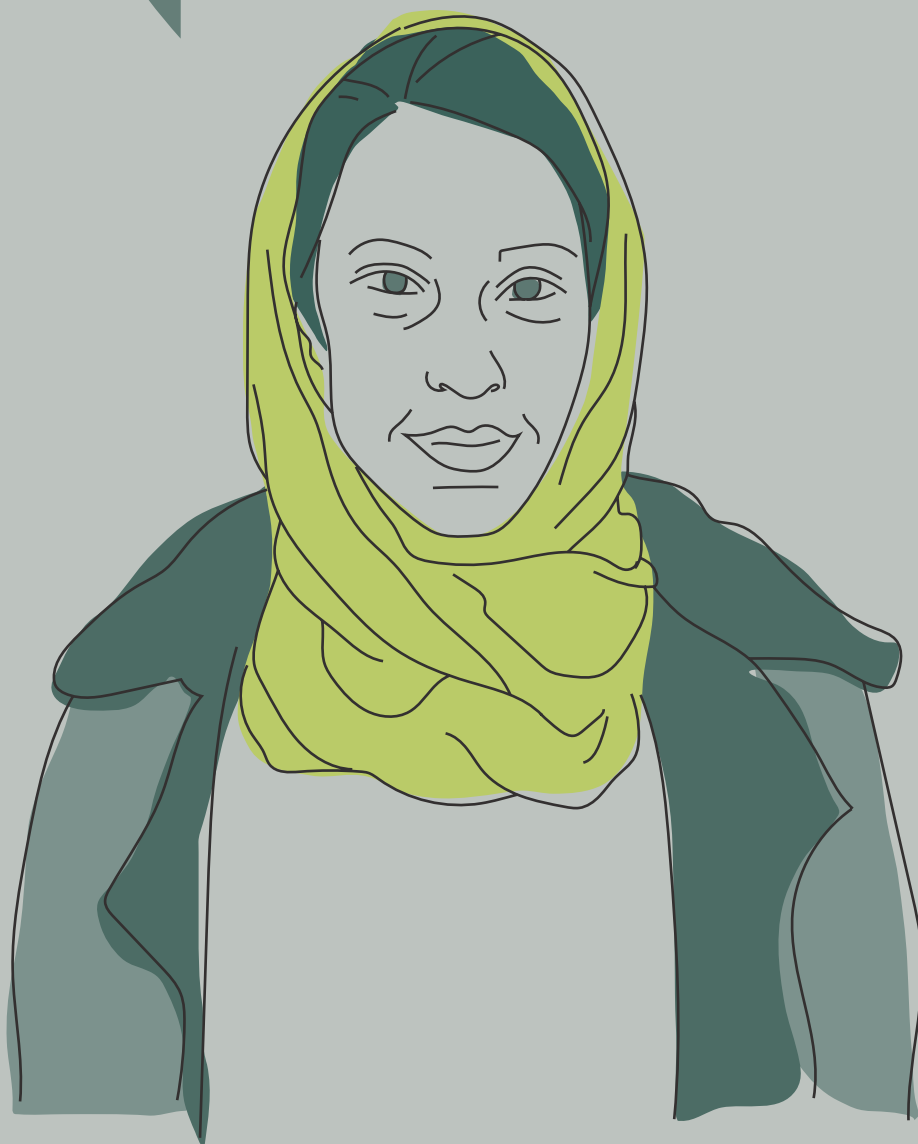
IWDA believes that stronger women's rights organisations are better able to establish, participate in and strengthen vital, vocal and visible women's movements that will aggregate and amplify women's power and priorities. IWDA also recognises that in post-conflict settings, women's rights organisations have an especially important and difficult role to play in participating in and influencing democratisation, peace-building and development processes to ensure these processes advance women's human rights.

For these reasons, IWDA is committed to supporting partner organisations to build their sustainability, resilience and capabilities, through progressive organisational development and exchange, and connection to a wider network of similar organisations. At the Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) workshop in 2016, partners expressed concerns specific to their work as women's organisations (see the following pages).

¹ Oxfam Canada, *The Power of Gender-Just Organisations: Toolkit for Transformative Organisational Capacity Building*; African Feminist Forum, *The Feminist Organisational Development Tool: A Tool to Operationalise the Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists*, Accra Ghana; Batliwala, S., *Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Thirteen Insights for Women's Organisations*, Association for Women's Human Rights in Development, 2011; Haylock, L. & Miller, C., "Merging Developmental and Feminist Evaluation to Monitor and Evaluate Transformative Social Change", *American Journal of Evaluation*, SAGE Publishing, 2015, p1-17; Barry, J & Dordevic, J., *What's the Point of Revolution if We Can't Dance?*, Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights, 2007.

² Baser H, Morgan P. *Capacity, Change and Performance*. Study Report. Discussion Paper no. 59B. European Centre for Development Policy Management: Maastricht, The Netherlands, 2008.

IWDA BELIEVES THAT STRONGER WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS ARE BETTER ABLE TO ESTABLISH, PARTICIPATE IN AND STRENGTHEN VITAL, VOCAL AND VISIBLE WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS THAT WILL AGGREGATE AND AMPLIFY WOMEN'S POWER AND PRIORITIES.



FEMINIST ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

FACILITATION GUIDE



IWDA INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

The Feminist Organisational Capacity Strengthening (FOCS) Toolkits were written by Gender at Work associates Carol Miller, Shawna Wakefield, Joanne Sandler, David Kelleher and Virisila Buadromo in deep consultation with International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) staff and partner organisations across Asia and the Pacific. Artwork concepts and illustrations by Viola Design.

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Please Note: These resources were developed before the COVID-19 Pandemic transformed the world in 2020. We believe the basic principles of feminist facilitation set out in these Toolkits are still relevant in a post-Pandemic world. However, we recommend you seek out specific advice on facilitating feminist spaces virtually if you are planning your FOCS workshop online.



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INTRODUCTION

Ever been in a meeting or workshop where everyone – from volunteers to directors – seemed comfortable sharing ideas and concerns? Can you recall any workshops where new ideas or solutions emerged from open exchange of experiences and perspectives – by the whole group, not just one or two leaders? Ever been so involved in the workshop process that you weren't tempted to check your emails, or worry about other work? Ever been at a workshop balanced across mind, heart and body? Ever left a workshop with a sense of collective accomplishment, feeling inspired and energised?

If you answered 'yes', it's likely that the meeting or workshop organisers put some thought into good facilitation.



WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This guide is for anyone working with Feminist Organisational Capability Strengthening (FOCS) modules – from staff in International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA), partner organisations or other women’s rights organisations to facilitators working with these organisations. It offers tips, tools, and links to resources – all to support facilitators to create the kinds of spaces and processes described above. It’s designed to support facilitation of organisational capacity building processes using a feminist lens – but can be used for facilitating other workshops or sessions as well. It assumes that users already have some facilitation experience – so if you don’t, we suggest teaming up with an experienced facilitator.

We suggest reading the Facilitation Guide before planning the workshops or activities outlined in the accompanying Feminist Organisational Capability Strengthening (FOCS) Modules, which include:

- FOCS Organisation Self-Assessment
- Creating Cultures of Care and Resilience
- Leading, Governing and Being Accountable
- Resources for Women's Rights

***THE FACILITATION GUIDE WILL HELP
DECIDE WHICH APPROACHES AND
EXERCISES TO DESIGN INTO WORKSHOPS
— WHATEVER CAPABILITY AREA
YOU CHOOSE TO FOCUS ON.***

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This Facilitation guide supports the facilitation of organisational capacity strengthening processes using the FOCS modules. The guide:

- Provides practical suggestions on planning FOCS processes
- Introduces facilitation skills and approaches relevant for FOCS processes
- Offers suggestions for creating safe, reflective spaces in FOCS meetings and workshops

The approach to facilitation used in this guide is based on feminist values, consistent with the overall principles of organisational strengthening with a feminist approach (discussed in more detail later in this guide).

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Use this guide for ideas on planning and facilitating organisational capacity strengthening – for **workshops, meetings, and other group processes**.

You and your organisation have your own trusted facilitation approaches and tools – we encourage you to adapt and borrow from this guide as needed.

We'd love to hear from you about what worked, and what additional activities you included (see page 45).

This guide is divided into four main sections. The first introduces the concept of facilitation based on feminist and social justice principles. The second considers some issues to keep in mind when planning organisational capacity strengthening processes. The third section looks at steps facilitators can take to help create safe, reflective spaces throughout FOCS workshops. This includes ideas on how to address power relations in the workshop space. These are likely to look very different in various cultural settings – this means that facilitation needs to be attentive to cultural context. The fourth section offers ideas on ways to wrap up FOCS workshops, and ideas for workshop evaluation.

At the end of the document there are ideas and links to other facilitation tools and resources that you can draw on while planning your activities.

TOP FACILITATOR TIP:

THROUGHOUT THE FACILITATION GUIDE WE OFFER SUGGESTIONS ON APPROACHES AND ACTIVITIES MOST RELEVANT FOR EACH OF THE FOCS MODULES IN THE FOCS RESOURCE. LIKEWISE, OTHER FOCS MODULES OFFER IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES, AND POINTERS FROM THE FACILITATION GUIDE IN WORKSHOP DESIGN. REMEMBER, THE FOCS RESOURCES ARE MODULAR. YOU CAN MODIFY THE ORDER AND CONTENT OF ACTIVITIES TO RESPOND TO THE SPECIFIC PARTICIPANTS AND CONTEXTS YOU WORK WITH. YOU MAY WISH TO ORGANISE A TWO OR THREE-DAY WORKSHOP THAT COVERS SEVERAL OF THE MODULES. OR YOU MAY DECIDE TO DIP INTO A FEW ACTIVITIES FROM EACH OF THE MODULES AS A HALF-DAY TASTER. WHATEVER YOU DECIDE, THE FACILITATION GUIDE OFFERS IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO PLAN AND CARRY OUT A FOCS WORKSHOP.



FEMINIST ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

RESOURCES FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS



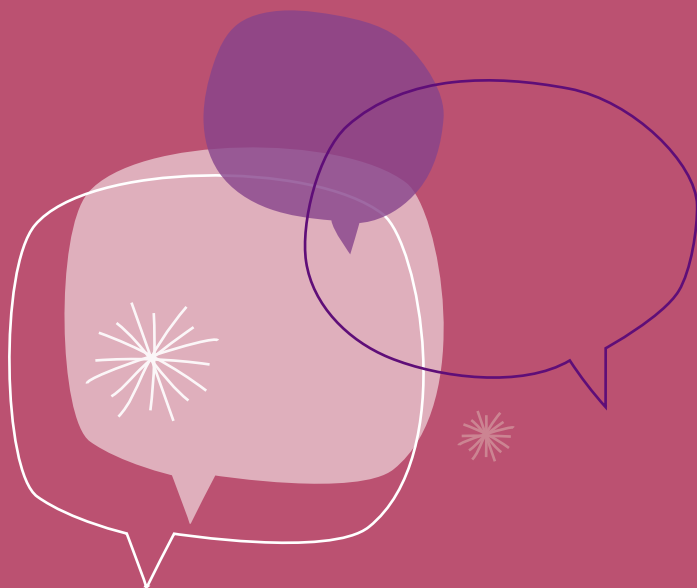
IWDA INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

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INTRODUCTION

CLAIMING THE RESOURCES WE NEED (AND DESERVE) FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

We start this module with a simple premise: there are more and more resources available to support women's rights from more sources and – if you are part of a group that is advancing women's rights – your organisation deserves a share of those resources. As women and as women's rights organisations, we've not demanded or received our share of resources. Developing far-ranging and ambitious resource mobilisation strategies, crafting realistic budgets, reaching out to donors and other supporters, and mobilising sufficient resources for your partners and staff to create change – all these are part of ground-breaking feminist action!

PURPOSE OF THIS MODULE

TO INTRODUCE IDEAS,
LESSONS LEARNED AND
BACKGROUND INFORMATION
RELEVANT TO FEMINIST
RESOURCE MOBILISATION
FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS
ORGANISATIONS.

TO ENABLE INDIVIDUALS
AND ORGANISATIONAL TEAMS
TO THINK, COLLECTIVELY, ABOUT
HOW EVERY TEAM MEMBER CAN
CONTRIBUTE TO RESOURCE
MOBILISATION AND A STRONGER,
MORE SUSTAINABLE
ORGANISATION.

TO IDENTIFY RESOURCES
THAT YOU CAN CONTINUE
TO USE TO STRENGTHEN
YOUR FUNDRAISING
EFFORTS.

MONEY IS LIKE WATER. IT CAN BE A CONDUIT FOR COMMITMENT, A CURRENCY OF LOVE. MONEY MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF OUR HIGHEST COMMITMENTS NOURISHES OUR WORLD ...WHAT YOU APPRECIATE APPRECIATES. WHEN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH WHAT YOU HAVE, IT EXPANDS. COLLABORATION CREATES PROSPERITY. MONEY CARRIES OUR INTENTION. IF WE USE IT WITH INTEGRITY, THEN IT CARRIES INTEGRITY FORWARD.

- LYNNE TWIST, THE SOUL OF MONEY



HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

You may have picked up this module because your organisation is ready to begin or deepen its capacity for resource mobilisation – or you may have been pointed here after using the **Feminist Organisational Capacity Strengthening (FOCS) Self-Assessment Module**.

This module provides resources and activities that can be used in workshop settings or other group sessions with staff in your organisation. The **FOCS Facilitation Guide** provides feminist transformative facilitation principles that form the basis for the reflective practices included throughout this module. Before using this module, it's useful to review the Guide's suggestions for organising workshops and guidance on whether to use an internal or external/independent facilitator (such facilitators help to go deeper into this topic, or navigate sensitive organisational dynamics). Given the multiple layers of change needed to create shifts in organisational culture, you might also combine this module with the **Leading, Governing and Being Accountable Module**.

The module has four parts:

Part One provides important background on resource mobilisation for women's rights organisations.

Part Two engages you in a series of activities to get everyone in the organisation on board for resource mobilisation.

Part Three supports you to develop a Resource Mobilisation Strategy.

Part Four offers ideas on other valuable information and resources.

Your organisation or group may have many years of experience in providing services, rolling out creative advocacy strategies, or securing legislation for women's rights. Your organisation or group may be

highly appreciated by the women and communities that you serve. Your organisation or group may work in coalition with others to change laws, policies and gender discriminatory cultures – it may even have received awards and publicity for its excellent work.

Yet however well recognised it may be, your organisation or group probably has greater demand for services and advocacy than its capacity to provide them. Why? Because around the world, women's rights organisations and networks are under-resourced – lacking the money, staff, technology, logistical support and sustainability required to respond to demands and opportunities.

DESPITE RHETORIC (FROM DONORS) THAT SUPPORTS EQUALITY, FUNDING FLOWS TO ORGANISATIONS THAT CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO ARE LIMITED.

– AWID, WATERING THE LEAVES / STARVING THE ROOTS

**INCREASING THE CAPACITIES
AND 'LITERACY' ABOUT RESOURCE
MOBILISATION WITH ALL OF YOUR
STAFF IS A REVOLUTIONARY
FEMINIST ACT THAT MORE AND
MORE ORGANISATIONS NEED
TO ENGAGE IN. SO LET'S BEGIN!**



FEMINIST ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

CREATING
CULTURES OF CARE
AND RESILIENCE



IWDA INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

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INTRODUCTION

This resource supports your organisation on its journey to become more resilient and sustainable. We offer ideas for how to reflect on and practice care individually, collectively, and in your organisation as a whole. We hope this resource helps make your organisation a healthier and happier place, where shared values, purpose and politics are reflected organisationally and in the communities of your work.

PURPOSE OF THIS MODULE

TO LEARN ABOUT STRESS, SELF AND COLLECTIVE CARE, AND RESILIENCE — AND WHY THEY'RE IMPORTANT IN ORGANISATIONS.

TO HELP YOU MAKE PRACTICAL COMMITMENTS TOWARDS CREATING AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CARE.

TO OFFER PRACTICES AND PROCESSES TO SUPPORT SELF AND COLLECTIVE CARE THAT CONTRIBUTE TO STRONGER ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES.

TO LEARN ABOUT POWER DYNAMICS AND HOW THEY CAN CREATE OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRACTISING SELF AND COLLECTIVE CARE.

*WHEN WE NURTURE WELLBEING
AT THE PERSONAL LEVEL, WE
SIMULTANEOUSLY IMPROVE OUR
ABILITY TO CARE AND HAVE
COMPASSION FOR OTHERS.*

— AWID



HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

You may have picked up this module because your organisation is ready to begin or deepen its journey towards a culture of care. Or you may have been pointed here after using the **FOCS Self-Assessment Module** which suggested a need to strengthen the capability to adapt and renew – or other capability areas – related to self and collective care.

The **FOCS Facilitation Guide** provides feminist transformative facilitation principles that form the basis for the reflective practices included throughout this module. Before you begin using this module, review the Guide, and consider using an internal or external / independent facilitator (the latter can be extremely helpful to do deeper work on this topic, or to navigate sensitive internal organisational dynamics). You might also combine the **Leading, Governing and Being Accountable Module** with this one, given the multiple layers of change needed to shift organisational culture.



THIS RESOURCE HELPS CONSIDER QUESTIONS THAT YOU, YOUR TEAMS AND YOUR ORGANISATION MAY HAVE, SUCH AS:

WHAT DOES SELF AND COLLECTIVE CARE MEAN IN MY SOCIAL CONTEXT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME?

WHAT DOES STRESS AND TRAUMA MEAN IN MY ORGANISATION? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME?

HOW DO THESE IDEAS SHOW UP IN OUR WORK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS?

WHAT ARE WE ALREADY DOING TO STRENGTHEN OUR ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY TO SUPPORT SELF AND COLLECTIVE CARE?

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO BUILD A CULTURE OF CARE IN OUR ORGANISATION, CONSIDERING ORGANISATIONAL AND PERSONAL CONTEXT, REALITIES AND IDENTITIES?

HOW DO OUR LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY SUPPORT THIS? WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

FEMINIST ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

LEADING,
GOVERNING AND
BEING ACCOUNTABLE



IWDA INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
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INTRODUCTION

This is a resource to support your organisation on its journey for greater alignment with feminist purpose and practice. This module focuses on feminist leadership, governance and accountability – with an emphasis on power, intergenerational issues, and succession planning. We offer ideas for individual and group reflection. We hope this resource helps make your organisation a healthier, happier place – where shared values, purpose and politics are reflected internally and externally.

PURPOSE OF THIS MODULE

TO LEARN ABOUT FEMINIST LEADERSHIP,¹ GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS;

TO LEARN ABOUT POWER DYNAMICS, AND HOW THEY CAN CREATE OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEMS AND PRACTICES;

TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SYSTEMS, STRUCTURE AND PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT FEMINIST LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY – THEN DEVELOP PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PLANS.

¹ In this module we use the term 'feminist leadership' to include transformative approaches and outcomes, with leadership for significant and lasting change. More detailed discussions of the conceptual underpinnings of these terms can be found in the resources listed at the end of the module.

The resource will help you consider questions that you, your teams and your organisation may have about how to support better alignment between feminist principles, feminist values, and feminist practices. Such questions may include:

*HOW IS POWER EXERCISED
IN YOUR ORGANISATION,
ESPECIALLY UNDER
PRESSURE?*

*HOW DOES YOUR
ORGANISATION SHOW
ITS ACCOUNTABILITY
TO THE WOMEN IT'S
WORKING FOR?*

*WHAT KINDS OF
LEADERSHIP DOES YOUR
ORGANISATION CELEBRATE
AND FOSTER?*

*HOW IS YOUR ORGANISATION
MAKING ROOM FOR AND PREPARING
EMERGING LEADERS TO EXERCISE
LEADERSHIP AND TO SUCCEED
EXISTING LEADERS?*

*HOW WELL DOES THE
GOVERNANCE OF YOUR
ORGANISATION SUPPORT
ACCOUNTABILITY, COMMUNICATION,
INFORMATION SHARING,
TRANSPARENCY AND
RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESULTS?*

HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

You may have picked up this module because your organisation is ready to begin or deepen its journey into strengthening feminist leadership, governance and accountability. Or you may have been pointed here after using the **FOCS Organisation Self-Assessment Module**. Before using this module, it may also be helpful to:

1.

Review the **FOCS Facilitation Guide** – which outlines feminist facilitation principles, ideas for workshop planning and evaluation, and tips for using the reflective practices included throughout this module.

2.

Decide whether to use an internal or external / independent facilitator. The latter can be extremely helpful if you decide on deeper work on this topic, or amongst very sensitive internal organisational dynamics.

3.

Familiarise yourself with the ideas presented in Part One of this module, around feminist leadership, governance and accountability. One suggestion in the **FOCS Facilitation Guide** is that excerpts from Part One could be shared as background reading for participants prior to the workshop, or as short handouts during the workshop.

THE EXERCISES IN PART TWO AND THREE CAN BE PULLED OUT AND USED SEPARATELY IN MEETINGS OR WORKSHOPS, USED AS A PACKAGE, OR COMBINED WITH IDEAS AND EXERCISES PRESENTED IN OTHER FOCS RESOURCE MODULES. THROUGHOUT THE MODULE YOU'LL FIND SHORT REFLECTION QUESTIONS. THESE QUESTIONS CAN BE CONSIDERED INDIVIDUALLY, IN SMALL GROUPS, OR AS AN ORGANISATION DURING INFORMAL LUNCHEAS, TEAS OR OTHER INFORMAL SESSIONS.



PART ONE: **INTRODUCING KEY IDEAS**

The following section discusses different concepts and practices of leadership – including transitions, governance, accountability, and how these relate to strengthening your organisation and its culture. It can be shared with participants and offered as a basis for discussion for exercises that follow in Parts Two and Three.



TAKE NOTE!
**THIS MODULE FOCUSES
PRIMARILY ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS
ORGANISATIONS, HOWEVER MANY
OF THE FOLLOWING IDEAS AND
ACTIVITIES ALSO APPLY TO
MORE INFORMAL GROUPS
AND NETWORKS.**

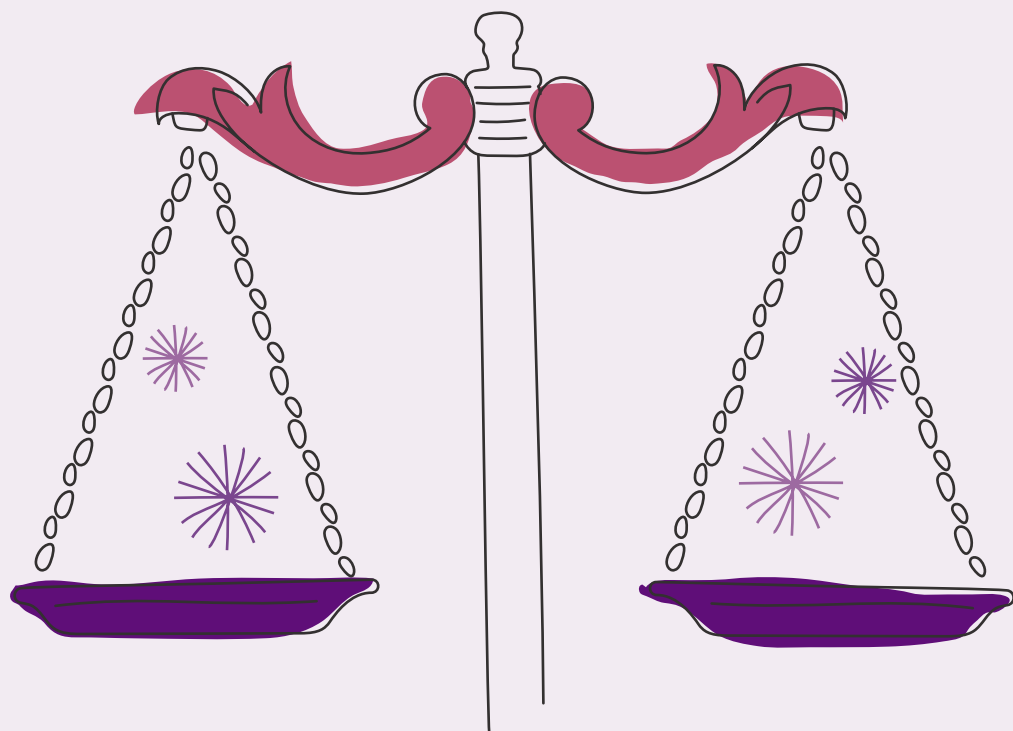
WHY DOES FEMINIST LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MATTER?

Some of the **positive impacts** documented among women's rights organisations include:²

- each person's point of view is included and everyone contributes to the solution-making process in some way
- opportunities are created for second-tier leadership development and younger women to diversify and distribute responsibilities, inject new thinking into organisational and movement-building efforts, and ensure smoother leadership transitions
- co-workers are committed to and motivate each other by sharing information and ideas
- staff work together to create common principles and vision
- good communication and transparency is supported by oversight bodies
- responsibilities and relationships between staff are clarified
- governance bodies understand the vision and mission of the organisation and can better support the work
- staff have stronger relationships, and trust each other more
- workplaces have less of the separations between work and life that often contribute to stress and burnout
- seeing leadership exercised in non-oppressive empowering ways inspires staff to promote the same in communities
- disagreements are handled respectfully, with clear boundaries, and can actually strengthen relationships
- collaboration within and across teams improves, as well as with other stakeholders

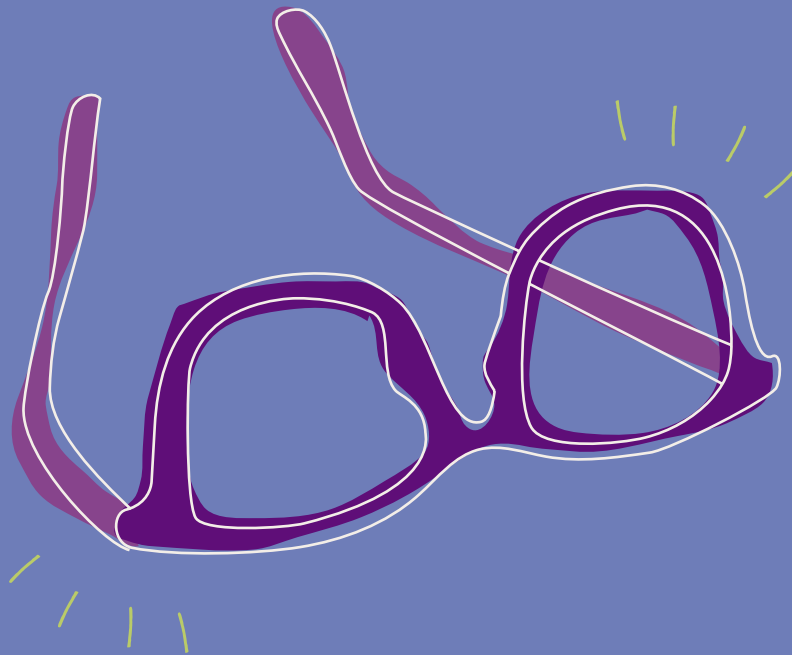
² This list draws on S. Wakefield, *Transformative and Feminist Leadership for Women's Rights*, AWDF

A PARTNER PERSPECTIVE: IWDA
PARTNER, ALFELA, RAISED SEVERAL IDEAS ABOUT HOW THIS CAPABILITY RELATES TO THEIR ABILITY TO FULFIL ITS MISSION TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM TIMOR-LESTE TO ACCESS A FORMAL JUSTICE SYSTEM WHICH IS FAIR. THESE INCLUDED: A MANAGEABLE AND FAIRLY DISTRIBUTED WORKLOAD, RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT, ADEQUATE RESOURCING, CEDAW AND NATIONAL LAWS, NEW LAWS, POLITICAL CHANGES AND RESOURCING, AND GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES TO SUPPORT EQUALITY.



FEMINIST ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

ORGANISATION SELF-ASSESSMENT



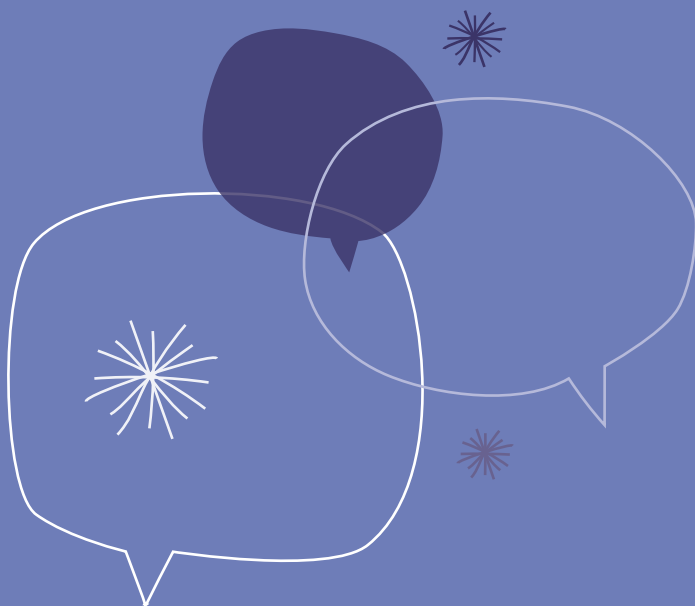
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INTRODUCTION

If you're reading this module, your organisation is probably thinking about ways to strengthen its capacity to do important work on gender equality and women's rights. Many organisations rarely have the time to pause and reflect on their capacity to carry out their goals or strategically develop plans for organisational strengthening – this FOCS self-assessment process provides an opportunity to do exactly that. It can also be integrated with or complement your current capacity assessment tools or processes, where they exist, to create a more complete picture of organisational capacity.



PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The FOCS Module offers an assessment process and tools for assessment – all developed with a power-aware, feminist lens on organisational capacity strengthening. The module guides an organisation through a facilitated process of self-reflection on current organisational strengths and gaps, to provide a basis for identifying strategic areas for capacity strengthening. The exercises allow staff from across the organisation to engage in collective reflection, prioritisation and thinking about next steps. The outcome of the process is an action plan for organisational capacity strengthening based on the priorities you identified. The module also offers ideas on how to track progress on organisational capacity development over time.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS MODULE?

This module is designed to be used by organisations to support a self-reflective process to assess current strengths and gaps in organisational capacity. This kind of process requires commitment and support from staff and senior management team. Some ideas on how to assess your readiness for FOCS processes are described below.

Ideally, your organisation would engage an external facilitator with good knowledge of your organisation to support the process.

HOW DOES THIS MODULE FIT WITH OTHER MODULES IN THE FOCS RESOURCES SERIES?

The **FOCS Facilitation Guide** provides ideas on things to keep in mind when you are planning FOCS workshops and other events, including:

- Creating environments where participants feel safe and open for reflection and learning.
- Defining who should participate and how facilitators can pay attention to power relations within workshop settings.
- Other tips and tools for facilitating organisational capacity strengthening with a feminist lens.

The **FOCS Facilitation Guide** is complementary to this module and **required reading** before you begin to plan the process outlined in this module.

The FOCS modules listed below, provide additional background information for thinking about organisational capacity – as well as reflective exercises that can be drawn on for the self-assessment process. Once you get to the point in the self-assessment process of exploring **actions** to build on current capacity, key next steps could include committing to use one or more of the FOCS modules.

STRUCTURE OF THE MODULE

The first section provides background on the 5C Framework used to support capacity assessment. The second offers suggestions for organising a FOCS workshop to be used in conjunction with the **FOCS Facilitation Guide**. The third outlines the 6 steps of the FOCS self-assessment process.

MODULES IN THE FOCS RESOURCES SERIES

**FOCS FACILITATION
GUIDE**

**CREATING CULTURES OF
CARE AND RESILIENCE**

**LEADING, GOVERNING AND
BEING ACCOUNTABLE**

**RESOURCES FOR
WOMEN'S RIGHTS**



PART ONE: THE SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The FOCS self-assessment process is built around the 5 Capabilities Framework. The 5C Framework offers a holistic approach to capacity assessment, emphasising functional capacities alongside structural and systemic solutions. In developing the FOCS Resources, we've brought a feminist lens to the 5C Framework to ensure its relevance to Women's Rights Organisations (WROs). Figure 1 outlines the five capabilities that contribute to organisational capacity.

Handout 1 (page 40) includes a short description of the key features of the 5C Framework.

We hope the 5C Framework will help your organisation think in new ways about organisational capacity – incorporating the 'soft', less technical, skills and capabilities of your organisation. If you have a different preferred framework or approach, that's fine. We hope you'll integrate some of the ideas and exercises in the processes you already use. **The tool you use is less important than the process of engaging in participatory, critical reflection on organisational capacity** and ensuring that a gender-sensitive and power-sensitive lens is used as part of this process.

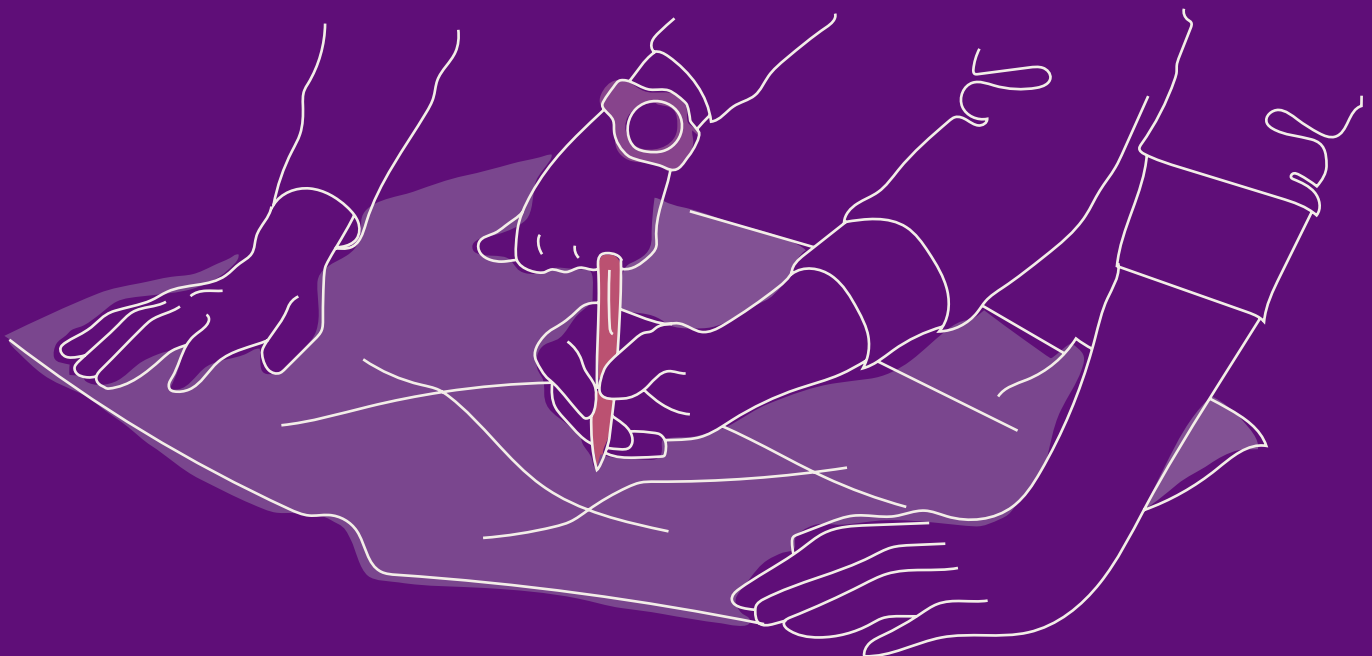


FIGURE 1: FIVE CAPACITIES IN THE 5C FRAMEWORK

