# Everyday Feminism in Zimbabwe

## Debunking Myths and Exploring Feminism in Daily Realities

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# Contents

# Introduction

Globally, feminism has often been misrepresented as an anti-cultural or Western concept. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, patriarchal narratives have painted feminists as “bad”, “unruly”, and “un-African”. These negative portrayals have led many women to distance themselves from the feminist label believing it only belongs to “loud”, “educated” and highly “eccentric” women who attend high-level summits and lead global feminist campaigns. At the same time, feminist theories, often communicated in academic language, may not be widely read, yet feminist principles are present in the lived realities and choices of women across the country. However, the multiple ways women are engaging with feminism in their daily lives are often left out in feminist discussions and achievements [Carter, 2013].

This essay is a reflection on how everyday feminist actions in Zimbabwe challenge patriarchy. The key question guiding this paper is

***“What does feminism look like in daily Zimbabwean life?”***

We understand that this concept is not only about individual acts of resistance, but also about collective efforts to transform oppressive structures that limit women’s agency and participation. By illuminating everyday feminist actions, this essay strives to show how power is contested to challenge gender inequity and how these actions are connected to the broader feminist movement in Zimbabwe. The essay seeks firstly to debunk myths about feminism by highlighting feminist ideology and principles, and demonstrating how ordinary people, collectives and organisations may live these values without considering themselves feminists. Secondly, the paper aims to challenge narrow ideas of power, showing how influence and resistance happen in and beyond traditional political arenas and activist spaces. This will be done through tracing and illustrating feminism in Zimbabwe’s history, culture, politics, economy, and contemporary society. Lastly, we aim to examine how to bridge the gap between actors living feminist ideals, outside the formal feminist identification, with those who identify as feminists, in order to strengthen collective efforts for gender justice. We hope to create space for connection between the former and the feminist movement.

We aim to make visible the often unacknowledged feminist practices that are embedded in the everyday lives of women in Zimbabwe. This aligns with African feminist methodologies, which prioritise lived realities and challenge the marginalisation of local knowledge systems in mainstream (often Western) feminist discourse [Nnaemeka, 2004; Mama, 2001]. In doing so, we hope to contribute to a growing body of African feminist scholarship that values lived experience as legitimate knowledge and affirms that being a feminist is not merely a label, but a practice deeply rooted in everyday acts of survival, defiance and care.

This reflective piece utilises a desktop research approach, drawing on a diverse body of literature that centres the agency of Zimbabwean women. We refer to historical accounts, academic texts, NGO publications, and media reports to illustrate how Zimbabwean women challenge dominant narratives of womanhood, patriarchy, and cultural essentialism in both formal and informal spaces. The literature was critically interrogated through a feminist analytical lens, which allows for a deeper engagement with how gendered power operates and is contested within specific cultural, historical, and political contexts.

The paper begins by unpacking the concepts of feminism and everyday feminism, as well as the feminist principles and values that connect them. We then highlight some of the feminist tensions and myths that lead some women to distance themselves from the feminist label. Thereafter, the essay offers a contextual background as to how feminism has operated in Zimbabwe, before dwelling on some examples of how women have and continue to demonstrate feminist practices in their everyday lives. We conclude by reflecting on these acts of feminism and offer suggestions about how to blur the gap between feminist identity and feminist practice.

# 1. Unpacking Feminism, Feminist Principles and Everyday Feminism

Feminism can be defined as the belief in the social, economic and political equality of all sexes. Feminism should also be understood as an empowering discourse, fostering critical awareness and resistance to dominant patriarchal norms [Carter, 2013]. While feminism manifests itself in many forms, it is beyond the scope of this paper to untangle them all. However, it is critical to note that feminist principles centre on achieving gender equality, promoting bodily autonomy, and challenging systems of oppression such as patriarchy. Feminism also demands that women have the agency to make choices about their own lives and bodies, and that diverse voices and experiences are reflected in all aspects of social transformation [Hooks, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989]. At its core, feminism is the pursuit of justice and equity for women. These principles form the foundation of feminist thought and activism globally, while adapting to specific cultural and historical contexts.

Feminism recognises intersectionality – the overlapping systems of discrimination that individuals may face, and the importance of inclusivity, justice, and collective action [Hooks, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Britannica, n.d]. Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality recognises that women are not a homogenous group and that systems of power affect individuals differently depending on their social positioning. For example, a black woman may face discrimination that is not just racist or sexist, but a combination of both, creating unique challenges that neither feminism nor anti-racism alone can fully address [Crenshaw, 1989]. In African and Zimbabwean contexts, intersectionality in feminism distinguishes how colonial legacies, religion, economic hardship, traditional norms and political systems intersect with gender to affect women's lives in complex ways. It therefore calls for solutions that are sensitive to this complexity and inclusive of all women's experiences, particularly those who are most marginalised [Crenshaw, 1989; Mama, 2001; Gaidzanwa, 2004]. We find the concept of intersectionality useful because it directs us to examine the multiplicity of women's experiences and oppression based on factors such as geographical location, marital status, religion, disability, political, economic and social status. It also directs our analysis to how various categories of women are navigating some of these vectors of oppression. One area of contention within feminism is:

***"what counts as feminist organising or feminist practice?"***

There are those who contend that feminism should only exhibit itself through coalitions or political alliances, either temporarily or over prolonged periods [Schuster, 2017]. In other words, they advocate that collective activism i.e. group marches or petitions, forms the essence of "genuine" feminism/feminist practice; the one which has the potential to dislodge structural forms of gender discrimination. While recognising the significance of women's collective action, we find this standpoint too narrow as it obscures or ignores individual practices that occur beyond group action, thereby erasing women's individual agency and self-determination.

It is in the context of this critique that 'everyday feminism' emerged. It forms a branch within the third wave of feminism and refers to a large array of practices that focus on what feminists can do to challenge gender inequalities as individuals in their day-to-day lives, ones which do not involve collective action [Schuster, 2017: 648]. Proponents of everyday feminism argue for the recognition of individualised activism because feminists have always implemented feminist principles in their personal lives. We are particularly swayed by Schuster's perspective:

***"collective action does not necessarily imply that the action has to be carried out in a collectively organised way. Instead, it may imply, as is the case with everyday feminist practices, that feminists share a collective identity and this identity informs the actions of the collective members in their individual lives." [Schuster, 2017: 654]***

Essentially, the above quote is an indication that feminist practice can be demonstrated either collectively in groups (e.g. women's movements or coalitions) or by individuals, but that both contribute to the achievement of feminist goals. In our essay, we also get inspiration from the famous feminist slogan "the personal is political" coined by Carol Hanisch

which highlights, not only the close relationship between public and private aspects of feminist struggles, but also considers how individual feminist practices should be perceived as political as long as they promote feminist ideas and values [Schuster, 2017]. In other words, we go beyond looking at everyday feminist practices as exhibited only by those who identify as feminists. As Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warned in The Danger of a Single Story [Adichie, 2009] presenting feminism through one lens erases the many faces, forms and everyday expressions of the movement.

Recognising that everyday feminist practices manifest in many forms, we extend our interpretation of everyday feminism to examine feminist activities practiced by women who would not ordinarily identify as feminists because this serves two purposes. On the one hand, it illuminates the impact of feminist activism in ushering in and sustaining feminist practices in the daily lives of ordinary women. On the other hand, historical and contemporary accounts of women in Zimbabwe who challenged sexism, as well as traditional and colonial gender norms, helped to quash the myth that feminist principles are Western and foreign. It is therefore liberating and empowering to consider everyday feminist practices as located in the personal lives of feminists and non-feminists alike. This is because the significance of feminism should also be seen in its power to strengthen women's agency.

Before turning to an analysis of how women enact feminism in their everyday lives, it is necessary to first consider the myths and tensions embedded across the individual, interpersonal, community, institutional, and societal levels of the social ecological model that have historically contributed to the resistance to feminism and the adoption of feminist identities [Bronfenbrenner, 1979; McLeroy et al., 1988; Connell, 2009].

# 2. Debunking Feminist Myths

Anti-feminist positions are widespread in Zimbabwe and Africa [Oyewumi, 2003]. The idea of sisterhood advanced by feminists in general considering the "ambivalence of many African women, is also contested especially along racial lines. In her famous book 'We Should All Be Feminists", Adichie notes that "the word feminist and the idea of feminism itself is limited by stereotypes" [Adichie, 2014]. This is also articulated by Schuster who argues that 'feminism constantly negotiates contradicting perspectives and positions within itself' [Schuster 2017]. Rightly so, if we consider the varying standpoints of feminism competing for recognition and relevance.

This points us to several reasons why feminism in Zimbabwe is often misrepresented and misunderstood. One of the most common myths is that feminism is "anti-men". This misconception misreads feminist critique, which targets patriarchal structures rather than individual men. Arndt observes that "feminism is often equated with radical feminism and this in turn with hatred to men, the non-acceptance of African traditions, the fundamental rejection of marriage and motherhood, the favouring of lesbian love and the endeavour to invert the relationship of the genders [Arndt, 2002]. In Zimbabwe, feminism was blamed for perceived moral decadence seen through increasing rates of prostitution, divorce, schoolgirl pregnancies and baby dumping [Essof, 2013]. The negative portrayal of feminism and the backlash experienced by and directed towards those who publicly identify as feminists could also explain why women in general are not prepared to identify as feminists or identify with feminism broadly. The misconceptions not only distort the true purpose of feminism, but also erase the diverse and everyday ways in which Zimbabwean women assert agency and challenge patriarchal norms.

Feminism has also been historically rejected in many African countries due to its association with Western ideologies, which are often perceived as incompatible with African cultural values and traditions. Patriarchal norms, religious conservatism, and nationalist discourses have further reinforced the belief that feminism threatens family structures and social cohesion. Additionally, early feminist movements were seen as elitist and urban-centred, thus disconnected from the lived realities of ordinary African women especially those in rural areas [Oyewumi, 2003]. The idea of sisterhood advanced by feminists is also contested especially along racial lines. Arndt notes that 'the patronizing and racist behaviour which many White feminists display towards African women, coupled with an ignorance of Africa's special situation, was one reason for many African women's difficulty in identifying with feminism [Arndt, 2002: 19]. This culminated in the emergence and growth of African feminism as an alternative that locates gender justice in local African cultural and communal frameworks. African feminism, like its western counterpart, comes in various versions, implying different feminist priorities, hence calls to speak of African feminisms in the plural [Lewis, 2001]. This is despite scholars such as Patricia McFadden and Rudo Gaidzanwa emphasising that African feminism is not a replica of Western feminism but an indigenous response to gender injustice shaped by local cultures, histories, and power dynamics [Gaidzanwa, 2004; Mama, 2001]. However, we argue that local African feminists can also be equally patronising when they portray ordinary women as ignorant about feminism or when they ring-fence who qualifies as feminist and what actions qualify as feminist practices worth celebrating.

There is also an ideological and linguistic divide between "formal" feminists who are often located within academia, NGOs women's rights organisations or advocacy spaces and the everyday women who live feminist values through practice. Feminism as taught in academia tends to use abstract, theoretical language that often times may not resonate with the lived realities of rural, working-class, or older women. Terms commonly used in feminist discourse such as "patriarchy", "intersectionality", or "gender justice" often seem distant from the immediate concerns of survival for women's families and their communities [McFadden, 2005; Tamale, 2020]. At the same time, the fact that feminism and its other related terms were coined in the West should not suggest that feminist values and practices were absent in Zimbabwe or the rest of Africa even when they were not named as such. This disqualifies another myth that feminist acts are only exercised by those who self-identify as feminists.

# 3. Contextualizing Feminism in Zimbabwe

Women in Zimbabwe have a long history of organising collectively, a tradition that predates the colonial era. In pre-colonial times, women formed co-operative networks for farming, craft production, and social support, often embedded within kinship and community structures. These networks ensured food security, childcare, and the preservation of cultural practices.

The historical roots of feminist resistance in Zimbabwe can also be traced through women's active participation in liberation struggles, traditional leadership, and land reform movements. As far back as the First Chimurenga, Mbuya Nehanda, a spirit medium and anti-colonial leader, as well as Queen Lozikeyi Dlodlo symbolised indigenous forms of female authority and became powerful nationalist symbols of resistance [Ranger, 1999]. During the Second Chimurenga (1966–1979), considerable numbers of women joined the liberation war as combatants, messengers and caregivers within liberation movements such as the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). Female figures became guerrilla commanders, challenging gender norms by taking on leadership roles in the armed struggle [Barnes, 1999]. The women in the nationalist liberation movement thus challenged what Essof called 'the image of the subservient mother or daughter' by disrupting pre-existing gender relations in political life from pre-independent Zimbabwe [Essof, 2013]. Restrictions on African women's mobility, land rights, and economic participation during the colonial period also prompted the emergence of formal and informal women's groups as sites of resilience. Examples include the Harare African Women's Club founded by Mai Musodzi in 1938, which combined mutual aid with advocacy for maternity facilities, and the Zimbabwe Women's Bureau, established in 1978, which grew into a national force for rural women's collective power which provided both spiritual fellowship and economic solidarity. Faith-based collectives like the Ruwadzano/Manyano women's guild in the Methodist Church, the Catholic Women's Sodality and independent religious movements also offered women platforms for leadership and resource-sharing.

Shereen Essof, in her book SheMurenga [Essof, 2013] notes that early educational opportunities in the diaspora led to the emergence of university-educated and professional women who organised themselves and began to challenge women's subordination in post-independent Zimbabwe. Together, their activism contributed towards advocating for legislative changes that accorded women to enjoy rights such as equal pay for equal work as well as enjoyment of maternity leave. One key legislation to emerge in the immediate post-independence era was the Legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA), 1982 which helped women attain legal status at the age of eighteen years ensuring that they participated in economic and political life, and ensured they can also inherit property [Essof, 2012].

Feminist consciousness-raising in the post-independence era saw the emergence and expansion of women-led NGOs, advocacy networks and microfinance initiatives to promote gender justice for women in both urban and rural areas. Organisations like the Musasa Project, Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association, and Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) have advanced women's rights, while the Girl Child Network mobilised thousands of girls against abuse. Organisations such as Women and Land in Zimbabwe (WLZ) mobilised rural women to demand secure land tenure and decision-making power following the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in the early 2000s. Women's economic empowerment also took new forms through savings clubs, rotating credit schemes, and dedicated institutions like the Zimbabwe Women's Microfinance Bank. However, over the years, women's rights groups became somewhat too uncoordinated to sustain collective action. In some ways, this was because they could not agree on processes or approaches, as some took a more radical and openly feminist approach, while others were more conservative in their quest to address various aspects of women's lives.

# 4. Everyday Feminist Practices by Zimbabwean Women

In this section, we will illustrate how feminist values in Zimbabwe are present in many everyday acts of resistance and care, even when they are not necessarily labelled as such. We delve into what we believe are some of the everyday feminist practices demonstrated, firstly by women as individuals, and secondly as collectives, in various spaces historically and in contemporary Zimbabwe.

### 4.1 Individual Feminist Practices

This section focuses on individual feminist resistance throughout the history of Zimbabwe in the creative industry, faith and political sectors. For example, in the former, the late Stella Chiweshe (1946-2023), was one of the first women to play the mbira (a traditional thumb piano) predominantly played by men. As a young woman, she was reproached by both men and women, not only because she dared to play the instrument in a period that no male musicians and mbira makers were willing to teach or even build an instrument for a woman [Ncube, 2023] but also because she played in public for an audience. Such was the hostility that she risked imprisonment by the colonial administration [Denselow, 2023]. Tsitsi Dangarembga, an author and film maker, is another example of a creative who challenged power structures through her novels and plays often featuring female characters who resist patriarchal norms.

In the faith sector, Theresa Nyamushanya, popularly known as Mai Chaza, defied patriarchal, colonial, and religious taboos by becoming the first Zimbabwean woman to start and lead a church, contributing to the emergence and rise of female-led churches in Zimbabwe [Masvotore, 2024]. Breaking away from the Methodist church, she established Guta Ra Jehova (GRJ), an African initiated, pro-women church where she demonstrated her prophetic, healing and deliverance ministry especially helping barren women to conceive in order to address societal stigma [Mare, 2023].

Within the political space, Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga used the parliament space between 2015 and 2018 to individually and radically advocate for nursing facilities for female parliamentarians and access to affordable sanitary pads. Her unconventional strategies to secure the dignity of women and girls helped to centre menstrual health and child care issues which ordinarily would be considered taboo and peripheral issues in parliament. Although we honour these women and their contributions, they represent a small minority of exceptional women that have "broken the glass ceiling" and this has its limitations as the ordinary woman may not be able to relate to this. Hence, we shift focus to women collectives.

### 4.2 Collective Feminist Practices in Contemporary Zimbabwe

It is important to note that women will always organise themselves around a cause, for example around sexual and reproductive health rights. Zimbabwe is characterised by some hardline religious conservatives such as apostolic, zionist and prophetic sects that prohibit the use of modern medicines such as contraceptives, thereby limiting women's bodily autonomy. However, women from these sects are exercising agency by taking contraceptives behind their husbands' backs in defiance of the church's doctrines which bar the use of any birth control methods [Mwanengureni, 2023]. The women are colluding with local health workers and clinics who are offering them back-door contraceptive services in order to address high maternal and infant mortality rates in their sects.

Sex workers on the other hand are exercising agency also forming collectives e.g. the Zimbabwe Sex Workers Alliance (ZIMSWA) and feminist circles to strategise, share experiences, and advocate for their rights and challenge injustices in an environment that criminalises sex work. For instance, a group of sex workers in Harare, publicly challenged police inaction regarding violence against sex workers with support from organisations such as Just Associates [JASS, 2024]. In addition, female sex workers are demanding safe sex from their clients by insisting on the use of condoms, while older sex workers are acting as guardians for vulnerable younger sex workers providing them with information on HIV and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, especially along the transport corridors [Saunyama, 2018]. Young women are also asserting agency by discussing safe sex, abortion rights,

marriage choices, and family planning.

Women with disabilities are also fighting against economic marginalisation, stigma and discrimination. Through establishing and participating in Disability Support Groups in rural areas to promote learning and sharing experiences as well as engaging in economic empowerment initiatives. They are also raising awareness on the double marginalisation they experience in communities, firstly as women and secondly as women with disabilities. Saving clubs (mukando), women church groups (ruwadzano), funeral support groups, clean-up community groups, co-operatives, community gardens, informal economy associations e.g. of street vendors, domestic worker associations and collectives working against gender based violence (GBV) are some of the ways women are organising to deal with socio-economic issues that disproportionately affect them such as economic exclusion and GBV.

In addition, the idea that feminism is only for elite and urban women also fails to account for widows in rural areas who are challenging harmful cultural practices of wife inheritance by refusing to remarry into the late husband's family even if they risk being stripped of their right to the deceased's estate [Jirira, Palpart, 2000]. Rural women, often excluded from formal politics, also engage in everyday acts of resistance by challenging land dispossession, negotiating customary law or forming informal co-operatives to support one another economically. The list goes on. These actions reflect feminist values of agency, solidarity and resistance to injustice, even if they are not labelled as such [Mutopo, 2011; WLZ, 2010]. Through these practices women establish relationships that weave collective care into their everyday community life.

The Women's University in Africa founded by two women, Professor Hope Sadza and Dr Fay Chung was designed to expand women's access to higher education. The work of women's organisations such as Jekesa Pfungwa, Women and Land Zimbabwe, Women and Resources in Eastern and Southern Africa (WARESA), the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) and Kunzwana Women's Association illustrates how grassroots women are at the forefront of gender justice struggles, advocating for equitable access to land, resources, and decision-making power. These examples from church-based savings circles to rural women's farming co-operatives in Manicaland and solidarity groups show that women's organising in Zimbabwe has always been multifaceted, rooted in community and adaptive to shifting political and economic contexts. They also demonstrate strong feminist consciousness rooted in resistance, survival and gender equity.

# 5. Bridging the Gap: Feminist Identity vs Practice

In the previous section, we showed that many women engage in everyday acts that challenge gender inequality by asserting control over family-planning decisions, resisting harmful cultural norms, advocating for women's inclusion in male-dominated spaces, or advocating for bodily autonomy – even when they do not identify as feminists. While there is often a disconnect between feminist identity and feminist practice, the everyday feminist actions suggested above help to emphasise the political value of such behaviours located in women's personal lives. These everyday acts of resistance are powerful as they challenge the notion that real change only happens through traditional activism and electoral politics. Instead, they remind us that agency is exercised in many ways, in both private and public fora, and that ordinary people can be agents of feminist change; thus, also reminding us to celebrate women's achievements situated in their local context with their own local strategies.

In reflecting on the examples discussed in the previous section, we see how valuable it is to refer to the statement made by one feminist participant in one of the articles we reviewed:

***"Small victories often mean the most, making a difference in an individual life. Although the big picture is important, it's sometimes more difficult to get people motivated in the big picture because it often takes a long time to get it organised or get stuff done. Whereas sometimes it's easier to focus on a smaller issue first and then slowly move forward." [Schuster, 2017: 655]***

The value of everyday feminist activities (even though regarded by some as small and insignificant) partially lies in their contribution to incremental social change. An action, no matter how small, also helps to overcome the frustration associated with the slow and often futile efforts towards large-scale activism (e.g. advocating for changes in the law). We do not, however, intend to discredit the relevance of a collective women's movement because we believe it can work alongside individualised activism by feminists – and ordinary women who do not identify with this label.

This raises the question of how to meaningfully connect these actors, and what strategies can be used to bridge conceptual or ideological gaps for the purposes of strengthening the feminist movement in the country. We propose the following recommendations:

- Decentering academic or donor-driven discourse and adopting accessible and inclusive language that resonates with Zimbabwean women and enables them to speak, organise, and transform their communities. The relevance of feminism needs to be understood and made relatable to rural women, informal workers, traditional leaders, and young people alike.

- Identifying and embracing indigenous/African feminist frameworks for theoretical grounding of everyday feminist practices, as these offer more culturally aligned models which validate care, compromise, and collective responsibility as feminist acts [Nnaemeka, 2004; Ogunyemi, 1985]. They also challenge external models of feminism seeking to educate rather than learn from women in the community.

- Harnessing the power of storytelling through community dialogues, poetry, theatre, photo essays in order to extend feminist narratives into every corner of the community.

- Leveraging mainstream and social media to connect with diverse audiences and build inclusive networks.

- Working with male allies, using accessible language and targeted engagement strategies, in order to advance gender equality in the community.

# 6. Concluding Reflections

This reflective essay has explored how feminism is misrepresented in Zimbabwe, the dangers of these misrepresentations, and the need to recognise the diverse, context-specific expressions of feminist practice within Zimbabwean society. It has attempted to demonstrate how focusing on acts such as informal economic participation, grassroots organising, community leadership, and advocacy for land rights, help to uncover how women in their diversity assert agency and resist systems of domination, often without claiming the label 'feminist'. The essay has also illuminated the importance of recognising and validating all forms of feminist resistance and women's agency including those exhibited through individual and collective acts. It opens opportunities to connect formal and informal actors, which has positive implications for feminist movement building in Zimbabwe. It is also a clarion call for inclusive movement language, intergenerational dialogue, intersectional awareness, and solidarity across differences.

If the aim of feminism is to create a just society by challenging systems that sustain gendered oppression and limit the potential of both women and men, then less focus should be on whether those embodying feminist practices identify with the feminist label. Instead, we argue, the focus should be on partnering with these groups and connecting them to the broader feminist movement by grounding feminism in local realities and honouring the diverse ways women resist oppression. This way, we can move toward a more inclusive, decolonised, powerful, and sustainable feminist movement.

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**Hellen Venganai** is a feminist and gender equality advocate with a PhD in Sociology from Stellenbosch University, South Africa. She is the current Director for the Gender and Diversity Centre at Women's University in Africa. She has a wealth of knowledge in the field of gender studies, women's rights as well as gender policy analysis. Inspired by postcolonial and post-structuralist feminism, her research interests mainly revolve around gender as it intersects with sexuality, culture, social justice, and development policies. She has published almost 20 journal articles and co-edited a book on Gender, Disability, and Tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## About the Feminist Reflection and Action Group, Zimbabwe

**The Feminist Reflection and Action Group, Zimbabwe** brings together feminists from diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise to increase feminist intellectual discourse. Rooted in collective inquiry and solidarity, the group creates an alternative space for reflection, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration in pursuit of advancing feminist thought and action in the country. This reflective essay emerges from the work of the Feminist Reflection and Action Group and contributes to broader efforts to advance feminist analysis and practice. The group's activities are made possible through the support of the Anglican Relief Development in Zimbabwe, Christian Aid, and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Zimbabwe.

# Everyday Feminism in Zimbabwe

This essay seeks to debunk enduring myths about feminism by clarifying feminist ideology and principles, and by demonstrating how ordinary people, collectives, and organisations often live feminist values without explicitly identifying as feminists. It challenges narrow ideas of power that locate influence and resistance only within formal political arenas and activist spaces, showing instead how they manifest across everyday life. Drawing on Zimbabwe's history, culture, politics, economy, and contemporary society, the essay traces how feminism has been expressed and practised in diverse and often unrecognised ways. Finally, it explores how to bridge the gap between actors who live feminist ideals outside formal feminist identification and those who self-identify as feminists, with the aim of strengthening collective efforts for gender justice. Ultimately, the essay seeks to create space for connection and solidarity between these groups, contributing toward a broader and more inclusive feminist movement.

For more information on the topic:

↗ **https://zimbabwe.fes.de/**

↗ **https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/where-we-work/zimbabwe**