

VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 2

SISTAH SISTAH

THE SECOND ISSUE



THE NEW WAVE OF ZAMBIAN FEMINISM



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THE RECREATIONAL HEALING SUPPORT PROJECT FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

**SISTAH SISTAH FOUNDATION'S
CURRENT PROJECT**

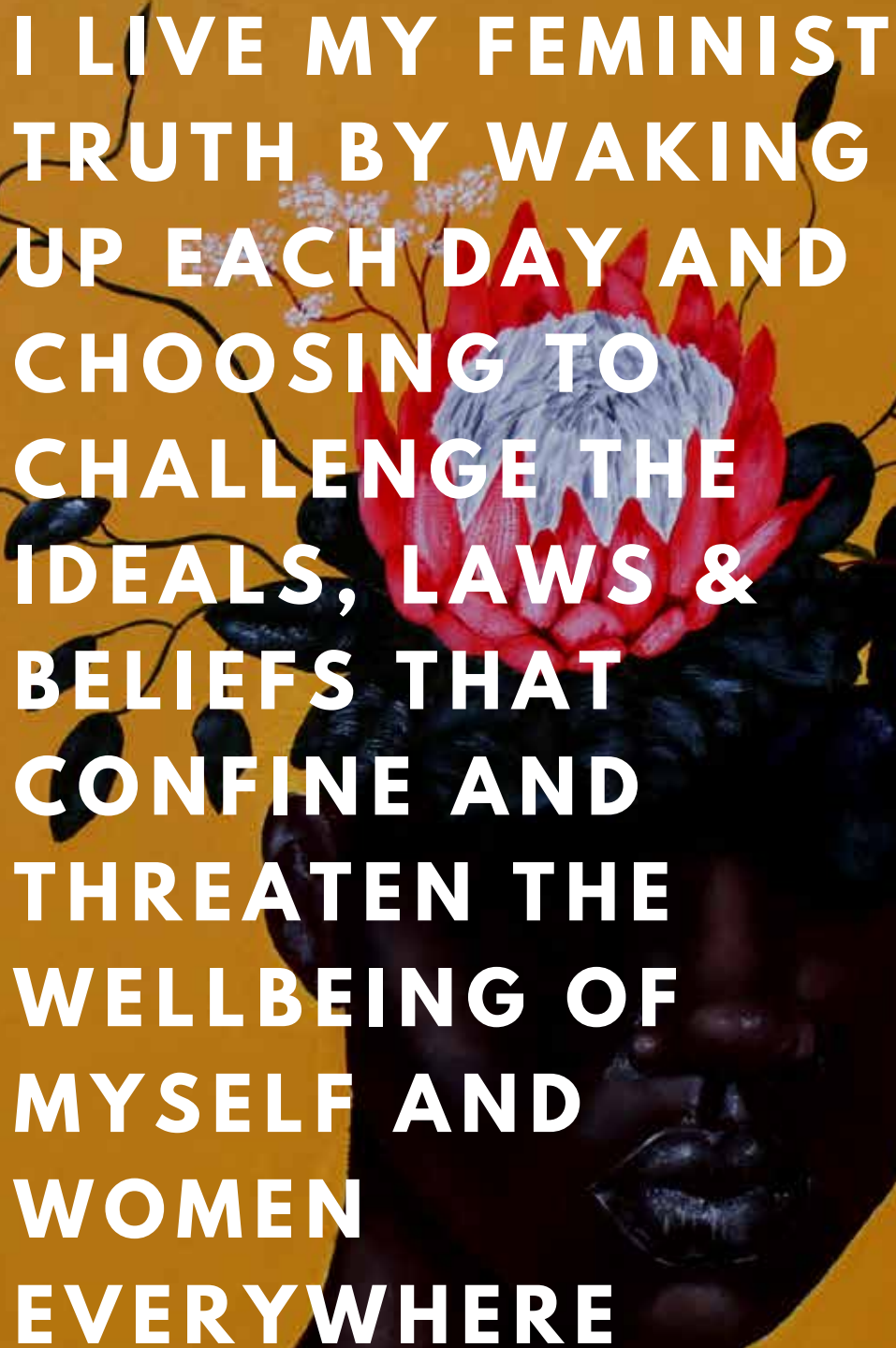


In the past year, The Sistah Sistah Foundation has been running a project focussed on recreational and group therapy to support survivors of sexual assault. Group Therapy is a unique kind of therapy where a group of people who are likely experiencing similar challenges in the period of their lives gets together to share their difficulties which as a result give and at the same time, receive help from each other. We make sure to maintain a safe environment that is conducive both for sharing and accepting each other where each can grow and trust one another and where each and everyone will feel respected and valued.

The Sistah Sistah Foundation Recreational Healing Program, focuses on a group therapy method that uses recreational methods such as: Yoga and meditation, creative writing, dance and sport and arts and crafts.

Below are reflections of two of the project's facilitators focussing on the power of Art and dance in recreational healing.





**I LIVE MY FEMINIST
TRUTH BY WAKING
UP EACH DAY AND
CHOOSING TO
CHALLENGE THE
IDEALS, LAWS &
BELIEFS THAT
CONFINE AND
THREATEN THE
WELLBEING OF
MYSELF AND
WOMEN
EVERYWHERE**

- MWABA CHANDIA

©MWABA MARIE CH



MWABA CHANDIA

FEMINIST FEATURE

When did you become a feminist, what is the back story?

I can't think of one defining moment when I realized I was a feminist but I do know that it has everything to do with how I was raised. I grew up in a multicultural household so from a young age I was taught to be open to different ways of thinking & behaving. I was also raised predominantly by a proudly feminist mother.

She and her friends organized the first women artist workshops here in Zambia and were at the forefront of advocating for more recognition and support for Zambian women in the arts who much like most women artists were (and continue to be) overlooked by their male colleagues. My mother constantly talked to my siblings and I about the inequalities of the world and encouraged us to speak up for not just ourselves but for anyone who is oppressed and treated unfairly- especially women. Watching her pave her own way in this world

world whilst challenging the patriarchy is what made me aspire to be like her. Throw in the fact that I am a woman and learned as a young girl how this world does not cater to me as well as watching my mother's experiences and listening to her talk about them I guess you could say feminism seemed to always be engraved in me.

When I moved to Vancouver, BC for university I was exposed to more academic definitions of feminism and that's when I started learning more about it's complexities, what it means and how important it is to openly identify as a feminist especially through my art and advocate for women who are oppressed far much worse than I ever have been.



MY WORK IS CENTERED AROUND THE NOTION OF IDENTITY AND SO THE FEMALE FORM IS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN ALL OF MY WORK

Tell us about yourself and the work you do and how it ties into feminism.

My work is centered around the notion of Identity and so the female form is an important figure in all of my work. My identity is tied to Zambia and my experiences growing up here as well as my Zambian heritage. Things like chitenge fabrics have always been a huge inspiration

when it comes to the patterns I often include in my work and so I use that as a way to communicate the complexity of identity specifically that of the black female form. I also explore the idea of hair as a defining aspect of many black individuals across Africa and the diaspora. Watching my mom actively take part in using art as a tool to enact change contributed to my understanding of how impactful art can be.



This is why I use my work as a way to highlight black women and do my best to contribute to their accurate representation. Some of my work highlights the misrepresentation and erasure of black women and some of it is simply a celebration of black women. For instance, In 2017 I created a limited edition pop-up book that consisted of “chitenge fairies.” These fairies had different hairstyles made of fruits and was accompanied by a poem about loving and taking care of one’s hair. I made the book for the little girl in me who never saw herself or her friends represented on in books, tv & the media growing up. I think artists have to power to contribute towards representation and that’s why I created the book which I hope to publish some day for all the other little brown girls who deserve to see themselves in a whimsical and positive light

**I THINK ARTISTS HAVE TO
POWER TO CONTRIBUTE
TOWARDS REPRESENTATION
AND THAT’S WHY I CREATED
THE BOOK WHICH I HOPE TO
PUBLISH SOME DAY**

What's it like being a generation Z feminist, what do you like about it and what are your struggles?

I would say that because my work only carries a nuance of feminism I haven’t received much criticism or recognition as a feminist artist. And so, I don’t feel as though I’ve encountered many challenges aside from figuring out how to share my messages through my work. However, I’m currently working on a collection of sculptures that feature different women’s bodies. I am yet to find out how they will be received here in Zambia but I hope they will be appreciated by the women I have created them for-all women. My hope is that by creating a work of art that is accessible to women (specifically here in Zambia) and highlights our bodies, I will be able to encourage a celebration of women as Devine beings. The purpose of the sculptures is also to remind women to take ownership of their bodies in a world & culture that teaches us otherwise.

How do you live your feminist truth?

I live my feminist truth by waking up each day and choosing to challenge the ideals, laws & beliefs that confine and threaten the wellbeing of myself and women everywhere. The best way I know how to do this is through my art but I never back down from an opportunity to educate ignorant people on their harmful behavior towards women and I will always uplift my sisters in any way I can whether it is through social media, action, referring businesses e.t.c. I am also committed to learning as much as I can and being actively involved in feminist efforts which is why I was so honored to begin working with the Sistah Sistah Foundation! You are doing incredible and impactful work.



“

I LIVE MY FEMINIST
TRUTH BY SELF-CARE
AND CARING FOR
OTHERS, SELF-
AWARENESS,
DISMANTLING BIAS,
INCLUSION, SHARING
POWER, RESPONSIBLE
AND TRANSPARENT
USE OF POWER,
RESPECTFUL
FEEDBACK, COURAGE,
AND ZERO TOLERANCE
TO INJUSTICE

”

CHILOMBU KABAMBI KAHILA



CHILOMBU KABAMBI KAHILA

FEMINIST FEATURE

When did you become a feminist, what is the back story?

I became a feminist in the year 2019 albeit unknowingly. I attended a march against sexual violence to support my cousin who at the time was in charge of the protest. I was merely going for the thrill, noise and getting to meet new people but as I got to the meeting point I saw women with determination, anger, and a zeal to be heard and understood.

The women marched with their children, friends, husbands, co-workers and most importantly their motive. I looked around me and saw tears, stress, anger, and all sorts of emotions to express what they felt and as we continued to march the cry to end rape turned from a "please stop" to an "I warn you to stop", in the process I become angry at the world for not listening so I ran to the front of the march and danced. Eyes that had looked away turned and looked at me,

, in my mind all I wanted was for people to hear the cry and read the signs so I danced until the march was over I felt strong, responsible, and at the time I wanted to do more for women who had no one to help them or hear their cry. My dance made me feminist. Now I do dance therapy for women who were oppressed, abused, raped and made to feel less of themselves. In general feminism is a movement to put an end to sexism, exploitation and oppression,

these cause stress, anxiety, and depression to victims that's why I use dance therapy as a tool to cure, heal and mend the minds of my clients because dance isn't just merely moving the body to and fro but it is a key to a new start and a strong mind with determination to get rid of all negative and oppressing thoughts..

What's it like being a generation Z feminist, what do you like about it and what are your struggles.

Being a generation Z feminist is hard, most people know feminists as lazy women who just want to move around naked and not get questioned while other people take it as just noise. Reaching out to victimised people in order to give a helping hand is accepting to be criticized, judged and being called names. Most of our mothers believe a woman who has been victimised should stay at home and keep her mouth shut, she should wear her chitenge and lock herself in her room and think of why she got victimised and never to mention the incident to a soul. This causes one to become suicidal, drug abusive and mentally unstable due to lack of attention and justice. The fact that their own look down upon them closes their minds to people and so to open up to others is hard because they don't want to me mocked or made to feel like it's their fault.





HOW DO YOU LIVE YOUR FEMINIST TRUTH?

I live my feminist truth by self-care and caring for others, self-awareness, dismantling bias, inclusion, sharing power, responsible and transparent use of power, respectful feedback, courage, and zero tolerance to injustice.

WHAT DOES A FEMINIST WORLD LOOK LIKE TO YOU

My feminist world today looks like a dirty room that needs cleaning and new paint to the walls. I won't say it will be easy but I have to try and clean the mess that's been created by me, by others and by negligence.



A photograph of a person with dark, curly hair lying down, wearing a white tank top. The person is positioned on the right side of the frame, with their head tilted back and eyes closed. The background is a solid, light-colored surface. The word "INTERVIEWS" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

INTERVIEWS

THE POWER OF GEN Z...

Generation Z are an amazing powerhouse, that much we know. Marching to the beat of their own clued-in drum, the young people of today have gained notoriety for being more progressive, socially and politically engaged, and liberal than the past generations. At helm of it all are some amazing trailblazing womxn who've cut out spaces for themselves to rock the boat and become voices for their generation. They've started movements, driven socio-political developments, and all before the age of 30. In numerous social settings, Generation Z has all the earmarks of accepting feminism as something positive, exhibiting trust in the force of activism, especially by means of social media. The voices of the Gen Z feminists appear to be more revolutionary yet strategic, more brave and to some degree in-your-face which eventually influences narratives within communities. Political correctness isn't their issue to worry about, theirs is to revolt against injustices and to break the social divides affecting marginalized groups in society. We sat down with three amazing young ladies whose pronouncements for change are showing potential to grab the eye of policy makers, supported intergenerational joint efforts, and blended the advancement of social, political, and environmental issues in the right direction. Below are the interviews we had with these amazing Gen Z feminists impacting their communities in wonderful and innovative ways:



OUR FIGHTERS



Mukapu Sitali (Uchi)

**Singer, Songwriter,
Student**

I don't feel the need to keep myself in situations that go against those values and beliefs. I simply do not tolerate what goes against what I'm fighting for. I speak up about the issues I've come across and express myself always

Ntiusha

Volunteer

Throughout our whole lives, we are raised to make a man comfortable or happy, our lives are our own and I want even in the tiniest daily routines for that to be practiced



Joan Dingatse Msoni

**Creative, Sex
Educator, Student**

I love being a generation Z feminist because at a young age I know my rights and I am learning to take up spaces that I was once told were reserved for men or for the rich exclusively



INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST- JOAN

When did you become a feminist, what is the back story?

Well I have always been a feminist because even when I was younger, I would be at home preaching gender equality when my male cousins would be in bed all day simply because they were boys or when I learnt about the victim support unit and I made it my business to observe and report any acts of harassment I saw. It was only in 2018 that I first came into contact with the term feminist and I knew that, that was a term I identified with heavily

Tell us about yourself and the work you do and how it ties into feminism.

My name is Joan Dingatse Msoni and I am a 22-year-old queer black woman who is passionate about the arts. I am a sex educator, an ambassador for a program called girl talk and I am a creative who mostly does poetic writing, makeup, cooking, blogging, visual arts and crafts. I am currently working on getting my certification in events and project management and that work ties into feminism because I will be able to work closely with many

organizations and people to manage and plan many feminist rallies, discussions and many other activities. My writing ties into feminism because I try to write about social issues from a different perspective and bring feminist principles into it. I have a YouTube channel where I talk about a lot of things including Educating people on safe sex, sexual liberation, sexuality and consent. Lastly as a girl talk ambassador we aim at teaching girls on social issues that affect us like rape culture and teenage pregnancy.

What's it like being a generation Z feminist, what do you like about it and what are your struggles?

Being a generation Z feminist is actually interesting because it's either I receive praises for being young yet so empowered, well informed and determined to change the world or I get scolded at by men and even women for being too young to know how the world works or for being too stubborn when I don't agree with their patriarchal views. I love being a generation Z feminist because at a young age I know my rights and I am learning to take up spaces that I was once told were reserved for men or for the rich exclusively. Part of the struggle is that most people are hell burnt on misunderstanding you as a feminist and want to discredit your work as soon as you show them your humanity and that you are no Saint.

How do you live your feminist truth?

I live my feminist truth by simply being me. I am a queer black woman and that in itself is an act of rebellion against the society I live in. I help those I can in my communities, I advocate for causes that have feminist principles and I take up opportunities and spaces meant for me.

What does a feminist world look like to you?

A feminist world is one where girls and women are free to be anything they want and to truly express themselves without fear of being judged or harmed. A world where all intersectionalities in one's identity are respected and treated equally. A world where women and all other marginalized groups are free and safe.





THE MUSIC WITHIN- UCHII

When did you become a feminist, what's the story behind this?

The year was 2018 and I had just finished high school and I became more active on social media. I would come across stories both local and international and it would always end with me thinking to myself "this is unfair". A lot of the stuff I came across depicted modern day struggles of women and what caught my eye was that some of these so called "modern" day issues are issues women have been dealing from time immemorial.

Issues that have been passed down for generations. And the more I read and the more information I came across, the more uncomfortable and unsafe and angry I felt. And that's how it began. I was angry and I wanted better. I wanted things to be different. I had this urge, this desire to help others feel safe and seen. And so I decided to become intentional about my journey as a feminist.

Tell us about yourself and the work you do and how that ties into feminism?

My name is Mukapu Sitali, also known as "Uchii." I'm 21 years old. I am a singer/songwriter but also a student pursuing a degree in Business Administration. I've been putting out music for about 2 years now though I've been singing for as long as I can remember. It's just something I always did.

I like to believe that my music speaks volumes. And not only my music, the way I carry myself as an artist as well. I put a lot of thought into my music, the entire process, the lyricism of it all. And so all these things in one way or another reflect my values as a feminist.

I do things in a way that I want other women and girls to be unapologetic about who they are and what they choose to pursue and do with their lives. The goal, always, is to help people feel seen and liberated and comfortable enough to be exactly who they're meant to be and that, I think is part of what feminism is about and I think I try my best to make sure my music and persona as an artist reflect that.

What is it like being a generation Z feminist? What do you like about it and what are your struggles?

I love it. I learn so much every day from so many different people. It makes me feel powerful and the more I learn, the more this desire to fight keeps growing. I like the sense of unity it comes with because at the end of the day its one fight and everyone gets to be a part of it and that's such a beautiful thing. That we don't just accept what has been given to us, we deserve more and so we demand for that and we will not rest until we get it. It comes with so much freedom and the journey has truly been liberating thus far.

I notice that people focus more on the fact that you're angry instead of focusing on the actual reason why you're angry. You have people who aren't really for the movement, people who are misinformed and ignorant, telling you how to go about fighting for these changes. It can be extremely frustrating and it tires you out to a point where you find that you're giving more attention to these people than to the actual cause. So the struggle has been knowing when to take a step back and just deem this/these person/s as unteachable and carry on doing your work and taking your energy where it's actually needed, where it'll actually make a difference.



What does a feminist world look like to you?

A world where women and girls are free to pursue their own personal interests without being questioned or judged for it. A world where I don't have to work twice as hard to be respected. This is a world where human rights of all people no matter their sexual orientation or biological makeup, are respected. A world where the playing field is equal. Where I'm entitled to the same opportunities.

A world where societies protect their women and people who commit crimes of violence, sexual assault and rape etc. get the punishments they deserve. A world where I'm allowed to live freely as a person without the pressure of who society thinks I should be as a woman.





DEFIANCE-NTUISHA

When did you become a feminist, what's the story behind this?

I started learning more about feminism when I was in grade 11, having grown up in a home where male patriarchal behaviour was immense and we were literally taught that men will always be greater than women, I grew up hating everything about how we lived and when I reached high school I decided it was time to find my voice and speak against the patriarchy openly. Growing up, my

mom always told me of how the family refused to sponsor her when she passed her grade 9 despite her passing with flying colors and instead chose to pay for my uncle because according to them she was a woman and would get married, I saw of how it affected her and how this hurt her so much and that was one of the reasons that motivated my feminism.

Tell us about yourself and the work you do and how that ties into feminism?

My name is Ntiusha. I would say I'm someone who is passionate about helping others, loves nature, traveling, watching movies and discovering new things. I started to volunteer when I was 14 and in 2018 I decided to open my foundation that helps children and women, I advocate against abuse and GBV, I also speak and teach about women's rights. I believe we wouldn't talk about women's rights without feminism because it's basically advocating for women's rights and equality of both sexes, women and men are equal beings and deserve equal opportunity in every sector and my work is directly tied to feminism as before anything I'm a feminist

What is it like being a generation Z feminist? What do you like about it and what are your struggles?

Being a feminist in this generation is kind of challenging(I wouldn't say the most challenging because obviously people before us fought greater battles for us to even be here) but one of the greatest challenge is that a lot of people don't know what feminism is and what it stands for hence being against the cause and objecting even the things they also need to stand. However, I love the fact that we have all the power to speak up and I can stand up and speak for those who can't

How do you live your feminist truth?

I live my feminist truth by teaching my family, friends and everyone around me about what feminism is and educating girls and women of the rights they have (because I have come to realize some women don't even know the rights they have), by practicing my truth and living by what I stand for. I don't conform to the patriarchal culture of our society, I live my life the way I want to live it not the way society wants me to.

What does a feminist world look like to you

A feminist world to me is a world where all persons would be considered equal individuals, a world where we as women can be raised been told our lives are ours and we can dress, walk, and do whatever we wanted with it, a world where a woman who has chosen to be single is not looked at like an outcast or where our girls wouldn't be told to learn chores because if they didn't they would make a bad wife. Throughout our whole lives, we are raised to make a man comfortable or happy, our lives are our own and I want even in the tiniest daily routines for that to be practiced.



**THE GEN Z FEMINISM
REPRESENTS POWER,
RESILIENCE, DEFIANCE,
INTERSECTIONALITY
AND THE HUNGER FOR
A STEADFAST
REVOLUTION AND AS
GENERATION SPROUTS
MORE ACTIVISTS AND
ALLIES, THE HOPE FOR
POLICY AND SOCIAL
REFORM SEEMS
BRIGHTER**



FEATURE

THE GEN-Z FEMINIST WORLD

In a world where to be female bodied is to be obedient and submissive, it sounds like a dream when one speaks of a world where equality is exactly what it means... to be equal. Growing up, I was always told that I needed to go to school and learn because a man wouldn't want to get married to a woman who isn't educated. I was also told to learn how to cook, clean and do house chores because 'how are you going to take care of your husband and your family?' Furthermore, I was told to make sure I stuck to tradition because a man loved a cultured woman.

I started having my menstrual cycle when I was 12, but they were always irregular so the elders in my family decided to start giving me herbs that could get my periods started in a day, because 'you are a woman, you are supposed to have your periods.' Once I turned 19, I discovered I had PCOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome) and was told that it would be difficult for me to have children with the way my cycle was, I only had my periods once a year without those herbs. I was put on medication to help regulate my hormones in hopes that I would at least have a regular period, but when my mother and grandmother noticed the pills weren't 'working' ?

they decided, it was time for more herbs and prayers because 'how can you be considered a woman if you can't even give birth?

**NOT ALL WOMEN ARE
FEMINISTS, BUT EVERY
FEMINIST SPEAKS FOR
THE RIGHTS OF ALL
WOMEN**

Who will want to marry you? If you find a good man who takes care of you and your family, the least you could do is give him children.'



Notice how every single thing revolves around men? I have to go to school because 'a man' won't want to marry an illiterate. I have to learn chores, not for the basic human need to know how to do chores and self care, but for the mere fact that 'a man' wouldn't marry a person who is unable to do chores. Even my health is only considered when thinking about the possible future children I would give 'a man' who takes care of me and my family, like I would be incapable of taking care of myself. Not a single time in my life had my family ever thought of what I wanted personally. . I was instead degraded constantly and it got me thinking, if my own mother can say such things about me, does that mean she too was raised to think she has to do everything to please men? I never wanted that for myself.

Of course I wanted to go to school, but not because of a man, it was because I saw the importance of education when I pictured my future career. Of course I needed to learn house chores because who would do them for me once I was alone? I definitely wanted to learn about my tradition because that's where my roots are, that's my culture.

Of course I wanted to go to school, but not because of a man, it was because I saw the importance of education when I pictured my future career. Of course I needed to learn house chores because who would do them for me once I was alone? I definitely wanted to learn about my tradition because that's where my roots are, that's my culture. Of course I wanted to be healthy too, the side effects that came with my PCOS weren't fancy, but me going to the hospital had nothing to do with the possibility of having future children. With or without children, I wanted a less painful life.

**'HOW CAN YOU BE
CONSIDERED A WOMAN
IF YOU CAN'T EVEN GIVE
BIRTH?**

Feminism looks different in everyone's eyes. When I think of feminism, I look at a world where I can have the right to make decisions for my own body and my own future. My future shouldn't be based off of what is considered norm in a patriarchal society. Equal rights and opportunities are what I need as an individual, living a life where I have to always question what men will think, isn't ideal for me. Most feminists feel the same way I do. Majority of them have different reasons for advocating for feminism and for being very vocal about it, but the common ground we all have is the need for equal rights for all genders.

In universities, there was a time 2 years back when female students were told to not wear anything that could show their shoulders or knees when they walked into the library. Why, you may ask? Because the male students would get distracted.

New rules are made every living day, in order to justify men's ill behavior. Men's disgusting mindsets and horrible lifestyles. Women deserve to be free enough to be able to wear a sleeveless top and not be accused of indecency when they are sexually abused. Women deserve the right to be able to wear clothing that makes them feel good about themselves without being accused of seduction and blamed for being degraded and raped. Female bodied people deserve the right to make decisions over their own bodies. The freedom to walk down the streets and not fear attack.

It's an ongoing cycle that needs to be broken, men aren't the center of everything. They, just like women, are human. The same rights they possess, should be equally possessed by other gendered people. The same opportunities they have presented to them, should be presented to the rest too.

New rules are made every living day, in order to justify men's ill behavior.

A feminist world to me is one where I am able to function without fear in my own society. It's one where girls are taught to love themselves first and not seek validation from men in order to feel like they matter. It's where having a baby is a choice made by the one who owns the body that carries the child, not by the one that wants to control how another person uses their body. It may seem like such trivial things to most, but to me... to us women, it's the foundation of a better world. A better future. A future where we aren't seen as minorities but as people of equal rights and status.

Not all women are feminists, but every feminist speaks for the rights of all women. A feminist world is one where every woman and female bodied person, understands that their freedom from the patriarchy is hidden in their ability to stand up for themselves and those around them suffering from different effects of this horrid society.



THE GEN Z ALLY

Every movement needs allies to succeed; from the Abolition of Slavery, the Civil Rights movements, and Independence of Africa. In these movements we saw allies who had benefited from the system stood up to use their privilege to help those who the system was not made for. And yet Feminism is one movement that has seen very little to no support from the allied community, in this case cisgender men.

The active fight for equality amongst the sexes has been going on for over two centuries, where women and minority groups and key populations have actively fought to create an equal world.

One would think after a couple of hundred years cisgender men would have gotten on board as allies and helped change the world around for others. But like another disappointing Tyler Perry movie, cisgender men have been consistent with their hate and abuse for women and non binary persons.

From as far back from The Lost Generation to Millennial Men, cisgender men have chosen to use their power and privilege to be as loudly ignorant and silent patterning the violence enacted on women by their kind.

One would think for Zambia, Generation Z men and boys would follow the footsteps of their ignorant forefathers and yet they haven't. Unlike the men who like to brag about how they drug women's drink, sexually exploit children, Generation Z men and boys of Zambia are standing up and showing up for those who need it. They are practicing allyship and pushing for men to be accountable

In this article we feature Nason Banda, a Mental Health Activist and Feminist Ally. In his own words he tells us what being an ally looks like and how he got here



"He's doing it to sleep with women." "He's such a simp." "What about the rights of men, you don't care?" "Are you female to care about them like this?"

You may wonder what these are, they are simply the things you have to hear when you become an advocate for women to have human rights as well as a feminist ally. The idea of male allyship has of course been tainted by heavy acts of performative activism throughout the years. However, in my own journey, I have realised that the idea of an actual male ally fighting against the misogynistic and patriarchal "norms" scares the society, especially men.



HOW DID I BECOME A FEMINIST ALLY?

Growing up, I never really subscribed to patriarchy and toxic masculinity. I grew up in a house where equality was the norm. My parents ensured we all had tasks and never assigned them according to gender. So being an adult it shocked me to see the horrible things women actually go through everyday and how men are the biggest perpetrators of violence and inequality against women. I wanted to do more, I didn't have the power nor finances to help but I had a voice I could use and I did.

BEING A FEMINIST ALLY

First and foremost, I am a cishet straight man. I will never know the struggles that women and other groups of marginalised people go through. Whether I want it to or not, patriarchy will always benefit me. Acknowledgement of your privilege is the first step to becoming an ally. As an ally, my duty is to hold men accountable for the danger we cause women as well as the danger we cause ourselves when we embrace patriarchy and toxic masculinity. My role is to ensure that I actively participate in creating a safe world for women. I do this by educating men, feminists have provided enough material for us to learn and help and yet so many men choose to be bigoted. What I do, is put in time and make these men learn, read and listen to all the material provided to us. When they don't listen, I continue until they learn and understand. Women do not have the luxury to wait around for men to get on board, so I know better than to stop.

It would be beautiful if other men hoped on because feminism doesn't only fight for the equality of women but it also benefits men. It addresses the toxic norms that patriarchy imposes on us which lead to high suicide rate.

Male allyship can play a pivotal role in ending inequality and the patriarchy. This can be achieved because as beneficiaries of the patriarchy, we can actively push for equality because we are part of the oppressors who prevent women and minority groups from attaining their rights.

FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

As an Ally, it is also important that we fight for the rights of young boys. You may wonder how the two issues are related, let me explain. Patriarchy is a double-edged sword. This means that in as much as it benefits men, it also hurts men and the ones who end up suffering are young boys. Being an ally helps saves young boys from some of the most dangerous and toxic parts that come with patriarchy such as: being unable to report sexual abuse, being taught to acknowledge and process feelings. Allyship gives young boys the choice to grow up people who get to express their humanity in the most healthy way t and not the people society forces them to be as "men".


A photograph of a person's back, showing their skin and the straps of a dark garment. Several stems of baby's breath flowers are placed across the upper back. Two hands are visible at the bottom, holding the green stems of the flowers. The entire image is framed by a thick orange border.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE FEATURE



IN THEIR EYES

16 Days of Activism
Against Gender
Based Violence kicks
off today, the 25th of
November, 2021. This
year's theme is
"Orange the World:
End Violence against
Women Now! ". With
GBV cases still
occurring in Zambia,
three youths gave
their takes on GBV
for this feature.





TINA

I live in Bauleni. One of the areas with the highest cases of GBV. I like to think of the struggles we deal with under gender based violence to equal a nation's debt. We don't know why the debt is increasing, where it started, who started it and why it's never ending.

Why is there GBV? Where did it start from, what prompted it to start? Who thought it was meaningful to be violent towards another person? And even after so many years of speaking on it and calling it out, why is it never ending?

Funny thing is, women, girls & marginalized genders are always at the receiving end of gender based violence. So it's clear to see who exactly is the main cause, but does the cause care to change?

People will sit down and talk about GBV like it's not something happening to 1 in 4 women in our very own societies. It's a constant cycle of trying to raise awareness hoping to be heard, only to be given attention for a short period of time before it's all pushed under the rug again, before we are being blamed for what's happening to us. Before the people meant to protect us are laughing and saying, 'They hit you? What exactly did you do wrong? Prove you didn't deserve it.'

People always look away, pretending they don't see what's happening. Only paying attention when things go too far. I have seen it happen before and I can assure you it will happen again if nothing serious is done about it. If we aren't heard and understood. All I hope for is to be heard.

CLARA

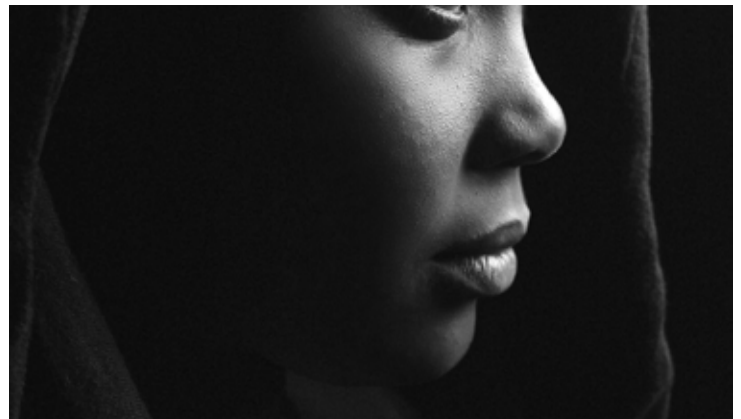
I personally haven't experienced SGBV nor GVB but I have seen a friend who's been through enough for me to know it's effects.

The disgusting thing is, the perpetrators don't even see their wrongs. They don't realise they are wrong. With their superiority complex and their "Alpha Male" mentality, they believe they have to 'teach a lesson' to people who don't agree or see eye-to-eye with them. They don't care about the implications of their actions. They don't care about what the other person is experiencing until it happens to one they are closely related to—like their mothers, sisters or daughters—which is the worst type of reasoning ever. I will never understand it.

Gender Based Violence has to end and the only way to end it is by making sure every perpetrator pays for their actions! Abusers should get the life sentence while rapists should be castrated and given maximum life. Talking about it and raising awareness is good and all, but action must be taken. New laws that protect and support survivors must be implemented.

Therapy and other health care services must be provided for free to the survivors.

Most importantly, the lives of women, girls and female bodied persons **MUST** be protected at all costs. We can't live in constant fear in our own societies.





BENARD

Ignorance towards GBV is very common. If something happens to someone, it's easy for one to just pretend they have no knowledge about it. In as much as we would like to deny it, this is very real and happens around us everyday. I have heard people say 'every woman knows at least another woman who has experienced SGBV, but only 1 in 10 men can point out another man who has committed SGBV' and it honestly never hit me until I was personally asked to expose a friend who was suspected to have abused a girl and the first thought in my head was "bro code".

We as men have always chosen to protect each other but the question I ask myself is, from who? Who exactly are we protecting ourselves from? The answer is 'From the possibility of being blamed for something we probably did

It's ridiculous to think about now, how I would hear my friends talk about how their girlfriends can't even dare talk to other men in front of them otherwise they'd end up being beaten up. How their girlfriends wouldn't even deny them sex otherwise they would end up being forced because they had rights to their girlfriend's body. I listened to them talk and nodded along, laughed even, chuckled on most days, all because I feared having no friends.

We tend to pretend that these things aren't happening around us when they are right in front of us, in our societies, in our friend groups, in our schools and work-places.

Feared being called weak and female degrading terms. I feared being isolated. To think of it now, I have realised that my actions also helped in promoting the never ending violence against girls and women. They encouraged such vile behavior and because I didn't speak up or educate my friends, those girls and probably many other girls, ended up suffering at the hands of such men. We tend to pretend that these things aren't happening around us when they are right in front of us, in our societies, in our friend groups, in our schools and work-places. GBV isn't only in toxic marriages and relationships, it's everywhere around us and it is never ending. Change is overdue and it's about time men realised that them speaking up can save someone's life. It can give someone a chance for a happier life. It's really all in speaking up