

Integrating Self-Care into VAW Programming and Organizations

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What inspired us to focus on self and collective care ?

Our own experience and concern for ourselves and our partners.

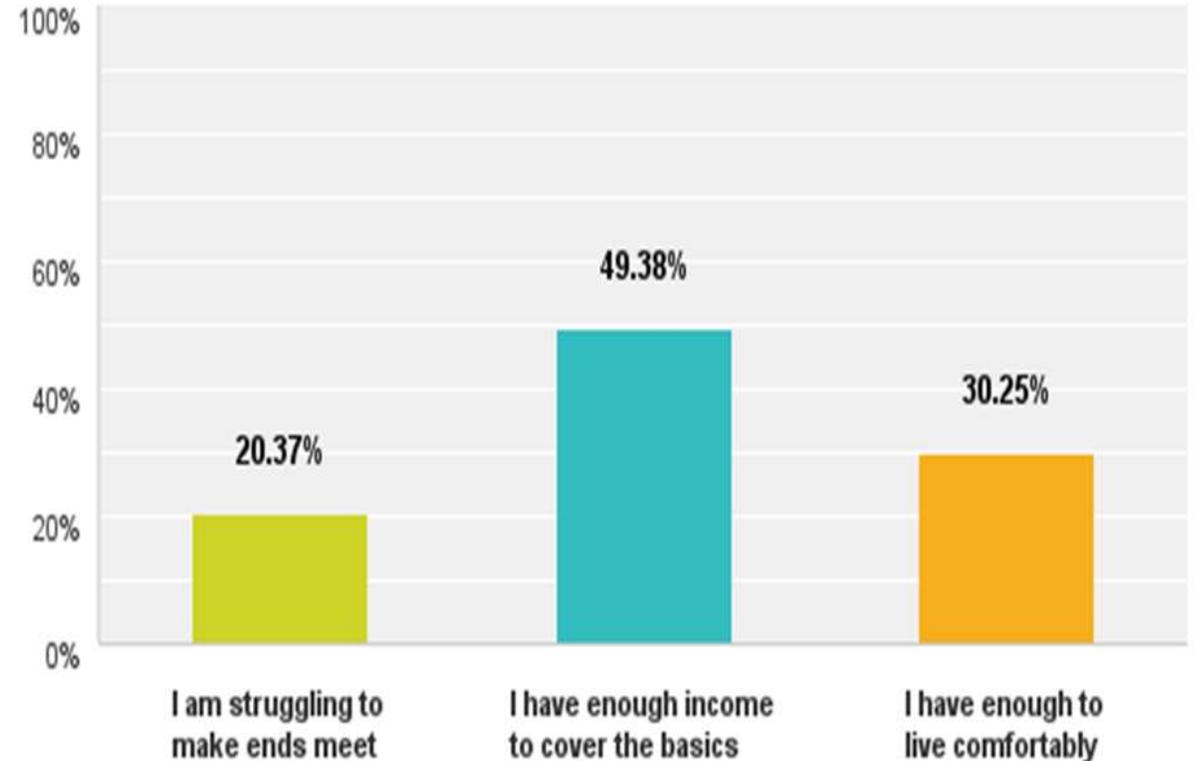
Raising Voices conducted a global consultation with over 260 activists across the Global South working on violence against women to:

- Learn how they are doing
- Understand their hope, struggles, concerns
- Explore their perceptions of their national/regional movement and the global VAW prevention movement

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Findings: How are activists feeling?

- Many inspired, hopeful, working hard
- Many tired, less hopeful, feeling some despair about the work and themselves
- Burn out is major concern
- Lack of self-care, no space for recharge, recovery
- Older and younger activists leaving the work
- Income concerns



Findings: Activist Health

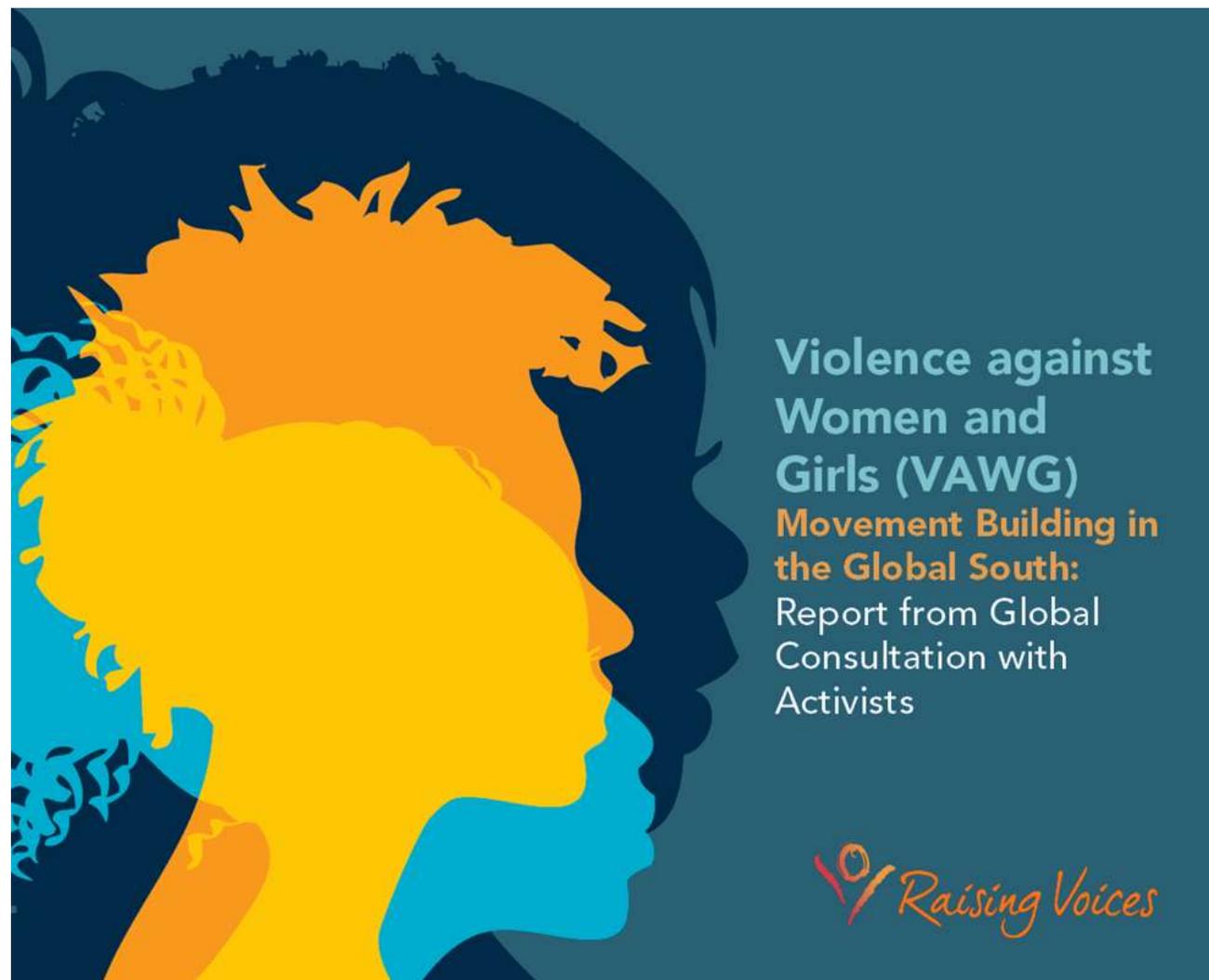
“The complexity of the reality around me pushes me. I like what I do, I like the people I work with. My partner is a feminist, a defender. I like to feel part of a process and of a group of people who are working to make things better. The feeling of belonging.” Activist from El Salvador

“Sometimes I become very frustrated because of the growing violence and I think that frustration also fuels me. The negative energy becomes the catalyst for me.” Activist from Bangladesh

“...this work is done at the expense of my health. I should learn how to take some time for myself. We take very little care of ourselves.” Activist from Algeria

“It is very tiring and very heart wrenching work.” Activist from Botswana

Activists are
calling for
attention and
time for
regular self &
collective care.





Self and Collective Care



What does self-care mean to you?
Collective care?

What is Self and Collective care?

- Kindness and compassion to oneself and towards each other
- Nurturing own / each other's well being:
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Spiritual
 - Social





Why is it important?

- It is political:
 - challenging patriarchy
 - reclaiming self-worth
- Empowering
- Prevents burnout and compassion fatigue
- Sustains activism
- Especially important when working on VAW, minimizing secondary trauma

Self-Care Activity



Start with
self, expand
out



