

Resourcing Movement Building

Lessons from the Black Tuesday Movement in Sierra Leone

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The First Black Tuesday

On 4 December 2018, a large crowd all dressed in black, filled a large hall in the centre of Freetown, Sierra Leone. One after another, survivors of sexual violence and their allies stood to testify to their experiences of rape and sexual abuse.

Students, adolescent girls, service providers, and activists from Purposeful, L.A.W.Y.E.R.S., and Rainbo Initiative all called for safer communities for girls and women.

The pain and conviction in the room was raw and overflowing when Cherner Bah, Co- Founder and Co-CEO of Purposeful, turned to Asmaa James, a renowned Sierra Leonean journalist and activist, who had convened the event, to suggest a march. Undeterred by their lack of official permission, the crowd spilled out from the convening hall to the Ministry of Justice, police headquarters, and Cotton Tree, the symbolic centre of Freetown. Along the way, the protest grew, drawing more students and young people, all of them calling for an end to rape and sexual abuse.

From that seemingly spontaneous moment, a movement was born. Rooted in decades of organising, it succeeded over the next two years in transforming the language, policies, and practices of a whole country. As a result of the mobilisation, decisionmakers at the highest levels of government took notice - the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone declared a State of Emergency on rape and sexual violence, and Parliament passed an amendment to the Sexual Offences Act.

This is the story of the Black Tuesday movement, and the politics and practices that fuelled its success.

Introduction

Over the course of 2017–2018, Sierra Leone had seen an increase in reported rapes. One of the cases was that of Wuyatta, who was only five years old when she was paralysed after being raped by her uncle. Asmaa James had learned about Wuyatta’s abuse from her family and was deeply affected by the case. In response, she convened what came to be known as Black Tuesday. James put out a call to listeners of her popular morning radio show to wear black as a symbol of grief and protest against rape and to join her for a morning event to discuss how to bring an end to rape.

Though James had only called for a one-day protest, it quickly became clear that there was a desire to take collective action toward concrete change. Aminata Kamara, a feminist activist who was, at that time, the coordinator of the Salone Adolescent Girls Network, reflected on how she felt that day:

“As a woman raised in Sierra Leone, as a survivor and mother, I felt I couldn’t just be an observer. I need to be in that boat, to organise our efforts and our voices, [even if it wouldn’t be part of my day job]. [Rape] was seen as individual issue, but when groups of people are speaking with one voice, it’s hard to ignore. Hearing those stories of really young girls, I wanted to be part of creating a country that is safe for me, my kids, and all kids growing up in the country.”

Over the next two years, the movement grew, making major gains for girls and women in Sierra Leone and inspiring activists globally. The Black Tuesday movement is an example of the power of survivor leadership, collective action, and

movement building to transform the culture of silence surrounding sexual violence, change the policy landscape, and support girls and women.

The success of Black Tuesday movement has broad implications for movement hubs and funders of movements. Purposeful has chosen to offer this reflection of our organisational experience as a resource for funders who wish to deepen their impact by partnering with movements.

Power, Violence and the Role of Social Movements

The Black Tuesday movement is a call for a world in which all girls and women can live in safety, dignity, and freedom. The movement is also a collective response to high levels of sexual violence and rape. According to the 2019 Demographic and Health Survey, 61% of women ages 15–49 have experienced physical violence by anyone since age 15.¹ Younger girls also report violence; in a 2020 survey conducted by Purposeful, one in four girls aged 13 to 19 years old say that girls experience rape as a form of violence in their community.² In schools, homes, workplaces, and communities, sexual violence affects women, children, and gender expansive people of all ages wherever they go.

Rape and sexual violence are manifestations of unequal distributions of power in our societies. While rape and sexual violence are just one example of gender inequality,

¹ Sierra Leone 2019 Demographic and Health Survey, (2020). Statistics Sierra Leone. Retrieved from this PDF file on the UNFPA website: https://sierraleone.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/sldhs_2019.pdf

²The State of Out-of-School Girls in Sierra Leone. (2021). Purposeful. Retrieved from this PDF file on the Purposeful website: <https://wearepurposeful.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/out-of-school-girls.pdf>

patriarchy is always one of the root causes. Patriarchy– in the form of social relationships, values, narratives and norms – facilitates men’s disproportionate control over power and resources and legitimises violence against girls and women.

Patriarchy is interlinked with other social hierarchies, like those organised along the lines of race, class, ethnic group, sexual orientation, migration status, ability, and age. Simply being young and female places most girls at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Despite the multiple forms of structural inequality that girls face, they are often left out of programming focused on youth or women, and their concerns are overlooked in policy agendas. Because they navigate social realities that separate them from power and resources based on their youth and gender, girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence.

The power structures that allow sexual abuse to persist are hundreds of years old. Rape culture is normalised in the form of narratives that shame and discredit survivors. Policies that place undue burdens on survivors reporting abuse, institutionalise rape culture. Underinvestment in Comprehensive Sexuality Education for youth and psychosocial support for survivors are barriers to changing the status quo. But these systems are not inevitable, and girls and women are resisting every day as they have done for millennia. When survivors come together to take collective action, they can shift power.

The Role of Movements

Ending sexual violence and rape is a longstanding priority of organisations like Purposeful who are committed to the collective liberation of girls. While there are

many approaches to addressing sexual violence, decades of research and experience have taught us that movements are uniquely effective. Understanding how movements work is an important step for philanthropists seeking to deepen their impact.

As feminist scholar and activist Srilatha Batliwala describes, movements are “an organised set of people vested in making a change in their situation pursuing a common political agenda through collective action.”³ Throughout history, people have radically reimagined relationships of power by coming together to critically analyse their conditions, and on that basis, organising themselves and others to demand change.

Women and girls working together, have repeatedly demonstrated this pattern: feminist activists helped fuel the movement to #EndSARS in Nigeria, which resulted in the dissolution of a law enforcement entity notorious for rape and rights abuses. Indigenous women across Guatemala united to successfully challenge the exploitation of their traditional weavings by major brands – exploitation was eroding their cultural heritage and making them vulnerable to gender based violence. Migrant farmworkers in North America united with students and faith communities to compel major restaurant chains to buy food only from farms who ended the culture of rape in their fields. Indeed, data from 70 countries over the course of four decades found that the presence of independent feminist movements was the single most important

³ Batliwala, S. (2012) *Changing their World: Concepts and Practices of Women’s Movements*, 2nd Edition, Toronto: AWID

factor in advancing action to tackle violence against women – more important than a country's wealth or the number of women in government.⁴

Movements work by shifting power, but power is sticky. It's difficult to renegotiate social relationships that are generations in the making. Shifts in relationships of power are not the product of outsiders bestowing 'empowerment', nor of isolated individuals working independently.

So what does it take to shift power?

By taking collective action, like public protests, community engagement, boycotts and advocacy, movements build a constituency that power holders must engage with. Movements shift power by claiming moral authority and thereby attracting public support. They decrease investment in patriarchy and other oppressive systems by building solidarity and articulating a vision of a future in which girls and women are safe. They hold space for people to analyse their experiences, consciousness-raising and political education. Movements also give those impacted by violence alternatives in the form of healing spaces, refuges, and support meeting basic needs. This focus on shifting power is what makes movements so effective when it comes to addressing abuses of power like rape.

⁴ Weldon, SL and Htun, M. (2013). Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women. *Gender & Development*, 21:2, 231-247.

Movements and Philanthropy

There is no doubt of the growing recognition of the importance of social justice movements in creating long-term change.⁵ But even for funders who are aligned on the important role movements play in creating social change, the reality of actually funding movements can be a struggle. While there have been some notable bright spots in recent years, like the launch of the Equality Fund, recent research affirms that there is an enormous philanthropic opportunity to step up support for movements.⁶

Some of the many questions we hear coming up when we engage in donor advocacy inside Sierra Leone and beyond include:

- But what is it? Are they registered?
- Is there a board?
- But who's in charge?
- We need to see audited accounts, where are they?
- What are their metrics to measure change?
- What is their record of success?
- What if the movement fails – would funds then be wasted?
- Isn't it too risky?

⁵ Ozden, J. (2022). "Protest Movements Could be More Effective than the Best Charities." Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved from this PDF file on the Stanford Social Innovation Review website: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/protest_movements_could_be_more_effective_than_the_best_charities

⁶ Read more in this report on the Shake the Table website: <https://www.weshakethetable.org/report>

Aside from these structural challenges in funding – which in our experience can be overcome much more simply than many funders initially realise – many of the questions we hear that come up in our work relate to the ‘entry points’ into movements. That is, how can funders better understand the constituent parts of movements so that they can move resources to them? What are movements made up of? We aim to offer answers to these questions through the example of the Black Tuesday movement.

Learning to Look Beyond the Hashtag

From the outside, it can seem like movements burst into the streets from nowhere. In this case, Asmaa James used her public platform to call for Black Tuesday in response to a horrific act of violence against a young girl. Funders may wonder how they can support movements when what they see are Twitter trends and spontaneous marches. But movements are more than just agitation, which usually isn't enough to change the status quo. It takes the articulation of compelling alternatives and a lot of coordination to turn agitation into durable change.

In their 2021 book, *Power for All*, researchers Julie Battilana and Tiziana Casciaro identify three prerequisites for social change: agitation, or broad-based critique of the status quo; innovation, or an inspiring vision for an alternative future; and orchestration or coordination across diverse groups to bring such a vision to life. We can use this framework to understand how the Black Tuesday movement came together and identify routes for funders to support movements.

Girls' and women's rights organisations in Sierra Leone had been envisioning a safer future for girls and women for decades, like the Rainbo Initiative which has provided services since 2003. The organisation was created as part of the reconciliation process after Sierra Leone's 11-year war, in which civil society leaders called not just for an end to war but to an end to the violence of rape. Similarly, L.A.W.Y.E.R.S., an organisation of female lawyers, use the law to protect and promote the rights of girls and women. Formed in 1997, it played a key role in the passage of the Gender Acts, including 2012 Sexual Offences Act.

Nicky Spencer-Coker, Senior Legal Advisor for Purposeful, and a practising lawyer who has worked for years to address sexual and gender based violence in Sierra Leone, reflects:

"There had been a back and forth between those who were naming the problem of sexual and gender based violence in Sierra Leone, and those who were saying it wasn't an issue."

Black Tuesday was not the first recent example of public outcry against rape. Nicky recalled a 2015 case in which a girl named Hannah was sexually assaulted and killed. Frustrated with the lack of public outcry, PowerWomen232, a network of women leaders of which Asmaa James was also a member, took action. They held a candlelight vigil and supported Hannah's family to call for justice. Nicky adds:

"The movement kept growing from here as people started turning their eye toward the scourge of sexual violence in Sierra Leone."

By the time Asmaa put out the call for Black Tuesday on her popular radio show, she was already well-networked with the girls' and women's rights movement in Sierra Leone. Chernor Bah explained:

"We are friends, we talk about [feminism and ending sexual violence]. We had debates over the years."

There was also a history of coordination and collaboration amongst girls' and women's rights organisations. The Salone Adolescent Girls Network formed to uplift the needs and interests of adolescent girls during the Ebola crisis in West Africa that began in late 2013. The network is open to all organisations working on girls' rights and issues, and has grown to include 150 organisations. The Network offers skills and knowledge building opportunities, coordinates campaigns and catalyses collective voice.

Purposeful, which provides secretariat capacity to the Network, formed in 2017 as a feminist movement hub for resourcing adolescent girls' activism. Because we think of ourselves first as a movement hub rather than a funder, we have a set of partnership building principles that mean our network stretches very far beyond the group of organisations that we directly fund. Anyone who applies for our funding rounds is included in movement building activity and capacity building support.

Role	Agitation	Shared vision	Coordination
	Articulate a critique and mobilise a grassroots base around it (organising, disrupting)	Develop a compelling alternative to the status quo that poses a solution to the critique (shared vision, narrative)	Coordinate action across the movement to ensure that the solutions are implemented at scale (coalition building)
Black Tuesday	The march to Cotton Tree in December 2018 put collective grief and rage on public display.	Town by town through in-person dialogue, the Black Tuesday movement helped communities see that rape culture is not inevitable.	Longstanding relationships and trust between activists, coupled with Purposeful's flexible funding and staff capacity allowed for quick mobilisation.

Note: the framework in the preceding table is adapted from Julie Batillana & Tiziana Casciaro's 2021 book 'Power for All'.

Growing a Movement

Aminata Kamara was deeply moved by the December 4th event. She recalls a dialogue with Chernor:

“What’s next? We can’t just let this be a one-day event where everyone vents out their anger and frustration, but nothing concrete happens afterwards.”

Chernor offered to host a meeting at Purposeful's offices the next week to draft a campaign plan. As a movement hub, Purposeful had an organisational mandate to support emergent work like this, and we engaged more formally to support the movement.

At that next meeting, the group began to align around what they wanted to achieve, envisioning futures in which girls and women could live safely, in their full power.

During a series of facilitated discussions and round tables, we analysed the context in which Wuyatta's abuse had occurred, identified the root causes of the violence, and developed an action plan to address them. The activity plan included a focus on engaging communities, lobbying government, outreach with print and digital media, and a priority on adolescent girls' leadership.

Aminata Kamara recalls an increase in coordination amongst the group, enabled by prior relationships and trust:

“When this case came to the fore, we focused on coordinating our efforts better. For example, we were able to use data from service provision to inform advocacy, dialogue with governments and community stakeholders.”

Along with Asmaa James and the Asmaa James Foundation, Purposeful, L.A.W.Y.E.R.S., the Rainbo Initiative, and Salone Adolescent Girls Network, the movement grew to include organisations Smartwomen, Aberdeen Women's Center, Renaissance Movement Sierra Leone, A1 Brothers and Sisters, and the Media Initiative for Women and Girls Empowerment.

The group that formed to power the Black Tuesday movement is an intergenerational community of women and girls who identify as survivors and leaders in their communities. Josephine Kamara, a survivor leader and now Head of Media,

Advocacy and Communications for Purposeful, emphasised the importance of survivor leadership:

“If anyone knows what survivors of rape and sexual penetration need, it’s survivors. A survivor knows that one protest march doesn’t solve the problem, but a systematic change in how services and support are provided is needed. For Black Tuesday, survivors led the way and showed the way forward.”

To ensure strong and healthy intergenerational leadership, it was important for young women, who otherwise would not be able to participate, to be compensated for their time. Young women who took key leadership roles were hired as consultants in recognition of their time and expertise.

The group decided early on that it was an imperative to take the conversation beyond Freetown, into smaller towns and villages. With radio as the primary connection technology in many towns, digital organising was not a strong option. Aminata Kamara reflects:

“We needed to be there on foot to have this conversation and foster a dialogue in which the community could ask questions,”

The group identified that one of the dynamics that allows sexual violence to persist is a cultural taboo around talking about sex and sexuality with kids:

“Kids couldn’t report violence to their parents because no conversations about sex or sexuality were happening.”

The silence around sex was a barrier to having more difficult conversations about the sexual abuse and rape that many children were experiencing.

The movement began to host Black Tuesday community dialogues around the country. These spaces were open to male allies, but were explicitly young women owned spaces. They set the scene with pre-work, they coordinated the dialogues, spoke as experts, performed their songs and poems, and documented these encounters. In each community dialogue, the group discussed rape and consent, the laws against rape, channels for reporting, available services, and the harm of ‘compromise’ or out-of-court settlements. The movement engaged parents and young people to have an honest conversation about healthy sexuality, consent, rape and abuse.

Extensive preparation went into each dialogue. Members of the movement conducted pre- visits to each site in which they worked with local partners to lead the event and tailor it to the local context and engaged local stakeholders. They developed plans to follow up with survivors who might disclose their experiences or require support after the event.

Aminata Kamara asked:

“The capacity of services was inadequate to meet the increasing numbers of reports. How do we make it so that people are not frustrated when they come in to report violence?”

Sometimes this took the form of helping survivors access transportation to report their case or travel to court for hearings.

In line with our action plan, the messages from these sessions were amplified into decision making spaces from the local to national level. Josephine Kamara, reflected on the goals of the strategy:

“Our vision was breaking the silence culture. The more people who interacted with the movement on radio and TV, the more people would be comfortable countering the myth that when rape happens, you blame the girls. We wanted survivors to know that they are not alone.”

Multiple partners started using the narrative from the sessions to lobby in their various spaces of influence, including at the highest levels of government.

Nicky Spencer-Coker recalled the orchestration that was happening behind the scenes to harmonise the community engagement, policy, and communications work:

“Coordinators were organising transportation, logistics, coordinating meetings, thinking about which leaders were best positioned to speak in various events. You

can't really get away from the fact that if you want to maintain a movement or campaign, you need some kind of committee and meeting structure."

The Government Responds

By early February 2019, the movement galvanised a major policy response – a declaration from President Bio that rape was a national emergency – a state that had previously only been declared during war, political crisis, and the Ebola epidemic.

According to Chernor Bah:

"This was the highest level of government acknowledgement of something that from time immemorial was debated."

Aminata Kamara recalls her experience at the State House the day that the declaration was declared:

"It gave me chills to know that someone cared and was listening to survivors. Someone agreed that this was a problem that needed to be addressed. To get that support from the President helped the work a great deal. People were listening, concerned and shared a vision. I felt sad that so many people had experienced rape, but also felt good that leaders were listening."

The emergency declaration opened up a season of intense political negotiations as politicians moved to amend the Sexual Offences Act. International press coverage earned by the movement intensified the pressure on legislators to take swift action. The initial draft of the Amendment did not reflect the movement's nuanced

understanding of rape and sexual abuse. Activists were concerned that very harsh punishments would deter survivors from reporting and lead to an uptick in ‘compromises’ or informal settlements that would do little to deter repeat abusers. Concerns with the legislation were raised by a number of organisations who otherwise supported a stronger public response to rape. The coordination mechanisms and trust built amongst the movement took on new importance during an intense period of lobbying during which the movement tried to improve the legislation.

An amendment was ultimately passed in September 2019 that made progress, although it did not fully address the activists’ concerns. The new policy took steps like outlawing sexual exploitation by anyone in a position of power, like religious leaders, bosses, and teachers, employees, and students, forbidding out of court settlements. The law’s speedy passage clearly demonstrated the power of the movement, but for many, this was just the beginning.

Sustaining Momentum through Autonomous Resources

Despite the amended law, the movement still faced the reality of widespread sexual violence. The mobilisations and community conversations were chipping away at the silence around rape and victim shaming, and more survivors were coming forward. It was clear that increased investment was needed to meet the demand for services and support long-term change.

In 2020, Purposeful launched the Survivors Solidarity Fund (SSF) with a vision of a new world where Sierra Leonean women and girls are safe. The Fund’s tagline is

‘we will no longer wait for others to fund our safety and dignity’. Co-Chaired by prominent Sierra Leoneans and members of the diaspora, Isha Sesay, Idris Elba, and Asmaa James, a Champions Circle was also formed for resource mobilisation efforts. The fund was able to raise an unprecedented SLL1,046,592,200 (109,020 USD) in less than two months. Nicky Spencer-Coker reflected:

“The SSF was not something that was external – the majority of funds were raised within Sierra Leone for Sierra Leonean institutions.”

A future of safety and dignity for survivors required not just more resources, but a different kind of funding, based in trust and solidarity with survivors. That meant doing away with the usual constraints of project based funding, and lifting up survivor-led projects even if they did not take place within formal civil society organisations. Reflecting on the experience of launching the fund, Chernor Bah and Josephine Kamara wrote:

“The whole process was guided by the lived experiences and opinions of survivor leaders. This survivors-led approach informed the process of the fundraising drive, and the influence of our Champions, Co-Chairs; and stories from ordinary Sierra Leoneans, including students and business owners, who also, attracted more donations.”

The SSF offered a concrete way for Sierra Leoneans who were outraged by reported rape cases to support systemic change – as Josephine Kamara put it:

“Sierra Leoneans are tired. People are now willing and ready and able to invest in the change they want to see.”

The funds contributed to activities like dignified and appropriate legal services for survivors, better access to services for survivors who are speech or hearing-impaired, dignity kits for survivors seeking medical and/or psychosocial support, and child-friendly services for child survivors. The fund’s distribution was informed by survivors, and used a flexible model that could support strong survivor-led work even if it was being conducted outside of formal NGOs.

The Black Tuesday movement has galvanised an overdue conversation on what it will take to ensure that all girls and women can live in safety. The collective action of girls, women, and their allies forced a public policy response and unlocked new resources to support survivors in very short order. While the work continues, in Sierra Leone and beyond, there are important lessons to be learned from Black Tuesday. We explore the implications for funders in the next section.

Funding the Core Capacities of Movements

The Black Tuesday movement used agitation, innovation, and orchestration to change the conversation and policy landscape around rape and sexual violence in Sierra Leone. Each movement is different, tailored to its goals, constituency, and context. In their work with movements over decades, Global Fund for Women has identified that most effective movements share five core capacities, despite their differences; a mobilised grassroots base, skilled leaders, a shared vision for the

future, infrastructure to support coordination, and a plan for the wellbeing and safety of participants.

How do we define movements?

Movements are “an organised set of people vested in making a change in their situation pursuing a common political agenda through collective action.”⁷

What capacities power movements?	What role do funders play?
Grassroots Base	Support transportation, meeting costs, and political education, for example.
Sustained Leadership Pipeline	Fund small, emergent groups. Make sure you are funding salaries and stipends for youth leaders.
Survivor Leadership	Work with survivors as the experts they are – invest in their solutions and their leadership.
Shared Vision	Convening support, travel funds, support for narrative development and communications planning.
Infrastructure	Flexible, multi-year support coupled with rapid response funding.
Wellbeing & Safety	Support for healing spaces. Resources to make safety plans with survivors. Digital security accompaniment.

Note: this framework is adapted from the Global Fund for Women’s Movement Capacity Assessment Framework (2021).

We have chosen to specifically highlight survivor leadership as foundational to the success of Black Tuesday, but no matter the issue being funded, the leadership of

⁷ Batliwala, S. (2012) Changing their World: Concepts and Practices of Women’s Movements, 2nd Edition, Toronto: AWID

those with experience of resisting violence and oppression is fundamental. Each capacity offers an entry-point for funders who want to support movements.

How could a donor support a sustained grassroots base?

Black Tuesday was able to build sustained trust with grassroots survivors because we could help meet immediate needs at the same time as we addressed the root causes of sexual violence. As conversations about rape became more public, many survivors came forward to disclose their experiences. Rapid response funds were needed to provide transportation to survivors who lacked a means to reach police stations, courts and hospitals, to restock medical supplies at clinics that were overwhelmed by reports, and to create security plans with survivors who faced threats after speaking publicly about their abuse. Funders can help support these costs by providing support to movement-involved groups.

While digital organising is an important part of many movements, the importance remains of building in-person relationships. Funders can also contribute to the costs of convening movement participants. Support to provide refreshments at public events, transport for participants to and from convenings, and the securing of appropriate space is tremendously helpful.

The experience of the Black Tuesday movement has led Purposeful to create Feminist Night School and Mentors' Academy – launched in 2022, activities focus on political education and consciousness-raising to build the leadership capacity and alignment of members in the movements. Funders could consider, for example, supporting curriculum development and delivery, compensation for facilitators and

experts – including elders – and participatory action research or research led by girls and other communities whose expertise is often discounted.

How could a donor support a strong leadership pipeline?

Financial precarity and lack of financial independence can be a barrier for movement leaders to participate, but it doesn't have to be. Funding for young women's time was instrumental in ensuring that they could participate as leaders in the Black Tuesday movement. Funders who wish to support movement building should also prioritise funding salaries and staff time. While volunteers and members play a crucial role in movements, and when leaders are consistently unpaid or underpaid, this is a recipe for burnout.

Rather than only working with long-established groups, funders can prioritise emergent funding for nascent groups who are at the 'formation' stage, which could include providing direct funding for travel, facilitation, and to liberate leaders' time to engage in planning processes.

Finally, funders can prioritise expanding the definition of leader. Many philanthropic practices inadvertently screen out excellent leaders. Can a grant process accommodate a collective leadership model? Is there space for young women and girls to inform the strategy? How can the number of languages be expanded in which the organisation operates?

How could a donor support survivor leadership?

The leadership of survivors of sexual violence was critical to the success of the Black Tuesday movement. But often survivors who are taking action in their community, based on their specific expertise, are overlooked by funders in favour of more institutionalised organisations. Funders should consider how grantmaking practices can be adjusted where they might be inadvertently screening out grassroots survivor leaders.

How could a donor support the development of shared vision and narratives?

In addition to supporting coordinated action, coalitions like Salone Adolescent Girls Network and Coalition for Girls' Education are important spaces for building shared vision and analysis. Since the very first days, Black Tuesday has been working in deep dialogue with women's and girls' rights actors across Sierra Leone, because sexual violence cuts across everything we do. With these groups, there's a very explicit strategy to communicate the clear linkages between sexual violence, teenage pregnancy, and the education system in Sierra Leone. The coordinated effort to draw these links has strengthened our advocacy because we are communicating and applying political pressure with a shared vision and analysis.

It takes resources to convene these spaces well, and funders can contribute to support coalition building along with providing funding for message development and communications planning. Travel funds to conferences and support for national and transnational convenings are also useful ways for organisations and leaders to build shared vision and alignment with allies.

How could a donor support infrastructure?

Black Tuesday has been able to cover some extraordinary ground and engage a huge range of stakeholders and organisations in Sierra Leone in part because Purposeful was able to offer logistical support. We were able to support the extensive logistics and coordination that went into the community conversations around the country because we had multiyear, flexible funding. Flexible, core funding is a leading practice in social change philanthropy because it allows organisations to respond to emergent needs and opportunities in their communities. Movement hubs like Purposeful can set aside flexible resources for rapid response.

Black Tuesday was extremely fast moving and emergent. It was not something that Purposeful was able to anticipate in our annual budget setting, so it was key for us that we had an urgent action and responsive advocacy pot of funds ring-fenced. Donors should consider the role of urgent action funds, responsive funds, and spark funds – either housed in their own institutions, or through investments in women’s funds or intermediaries.

Another approach would be to build resources for urgent action or rapid response into core support grants. Overheads are another consideration – is the standard overhead rate sufficient to produce organisations that are strong and resilient enough to take rapid action in key moments?

How could a donor support wellbeing and safety?

Resources for healing and restoration are crucial, and one of our intentions with Black Tuesday was to identify funding to hold healing spaces. While collectivising

and taking part in movements can be a source of profound strength, consistently bearing witness to so much trauma can be painful and triggering, particularly for survivors. So often leaders have learned to de-prioritise their own needs.

As a funder, are there possibilities to offer distinct pots of funding for trauma-informed or healing work within movements? Can optional accompaniment and resources for partners be offered to improve their practices?

Recommendations for Funders

Funders wanting to deepen their social change impact are increasingly prioritising support for movements. We wholeheartedly encourage this and champion the inclusion of movement building as part of grantmaking strategy.

Consideration should be given to a strengths-based approach to funding movements. Movements are often informal, flexible, coalitional, and led by people with lived experience of injustice – in our case survivors and particularly adolescent girls. Movements offer different strengths than NGOs and require a different funding approach.

1. ***Provide flexible, long term funding*** to movement-aligned organisations – look for the innovators, the agitators, and the orchestrators – and supplement it with rapid response funding.
2. To reach movements, ***think outside the NGO box***. In addition to registered organisations, movements are often made up of individual activists, collectives, and unregistered groups. If your organisation does not have the

capacity to provide this type of support, consider partnering with a feminist funder or intermediary experienced in this approach.

3. ***Value the expertise of people who are resisting multiple forms of injustice.*** Consider using participatory approaches to setting grant strategy and awarding grants. When engaging young people directly, don't forget to compensate them for their time and expertise. Prioritise funding constituency led groups who are accountable to and deeply attuned to the realities in their communities. Align donor processes with their needs to avoid screening out strong groups that do not have the capacity to manage complex application and reporting processes.
4. ***Build trust to support learning and collaboration.*** Listen deeply to partners to learn about the movements they are building and the power structures they are shifting. Consider how to fund an ecosystem of groups working together, bringing philanthropic peers alongside. An ecosystem approach helps build trust by steering clear of stoking competition. And finally, be mindful of the trade-offs of reporting for trust building and programmatic work.

Movement Strengths	Aligned Grantmaking Practice	Black Tuesday
Autonomous, accountable to community	Flexible, long term funding	Purposeful was able to say yes when asked to play a coordination role because of flexible, multi-year funding.
Adaptive and nimble	Rapid response funding	Purposeful was able to dedicate flexible, rapid response funding to support the ecosystem without onerous eligibility or reporting requirements.
Flexible structures	Don't confine yourself to NGOs. Partner with locally- rooted feminist funds if you need partnership to reach informal groups	Purposeful moved resources across the ecosystem, including to individual activists outside NGO structures. Concrete, non-financial support like vehicles and transportation, office space, and communications coordination were also instrumental in maximising participation.
Led by and accountable to survivors, people experienced at resisting multiple forms of injustice	Value this expertise with shared decision making, compensation and commitment to constituency led groups	Black Tuesday engaged young women and survivors as consultants to ensure they were able to contribute to strategy.
Broad coalitions, emergent work	Build trust to support learning	The movement was sustained in part because of the trust that had been built over years of work in coalition.

The Way Forward

We have movements to thank for many of the rights and freedoms we enjoy today. In particular, feminist movements are uniquely effective when it comes to building safe, dignified futures for all of us.

Globally, we are living through a period of crisis and opportunity. Strong movements are needed to confront a status quo that is not working for the vast majority of us. Communities will continue to come together to demand change as they always have. Philanthropists have the opportunity to stand with communities working toward justice by meaningfully partnering with movements. We urge you to join us in seizing the opportunity.

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