



Naming the Current Political Moment

Overview: This exercise uses a timeline process but focuses on the current political situation in a given country -- sometimes called naming the moment or a “conjunctural” analysis.

Purpose: Analyze the current political moment of a country at a national level and identify key forces, pro and con, that are affecting women’s rights and movements.

Time: 90 minutes

Materials:

- Lots of flip chart paper and markers
- Copies of questions

Credit: Adapted from Deborah Barndt’s “Naming the Moment”

Process:

Facilitator Note: There are two basic approaches to this activity: If people are from different countries, break up into country-based groups. If you are doing it this way it will take longer in small groups (approx. 45 mins). If everyone is from the same country the divide into small groups with different parts of the analysis. Allow more time for presenting. It is best to focus on a select constituency or movement agenda – here we are using women and women’s rights, but it could be indigenous struggles, LGBT, small farmers, union members, etc.

In plenary:

- Introduce exercise and its purpose. Remind people that this is an overview to get a picture of the moment without capturing every detail.
- Divide into small groups. All the questions should be either written up on flip chart paper or copies handed out.





In small groups: Complete the following analysis; capture key points on flip chart paper:

1. **WOMEN'S AND FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS/ OTHER SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**
 - What is current shape of women's rights organizations and other organizing and social movements in your country? Which are strongest?
 - What are 2-3 important allies?
 - What 2-3 major forces are undermining women's rights/human rights and/or other forms of justice in your context? Local, regional, global?
2. **STATE/GOVERNMENT**
 - What 3-4 policies and laws are currently in place that most affect women and other key constituencies - both pro and con?
 - What allies in government at any level might you have on these different issues?
3. **ECONOMIC/PRIVATE SECTOR**
 - What 2-3 current economic forces are most affecting women's economic situation and well-being either positively or negatively?
 - What forces or economic interests are impacting women?
 - Are there economic alternatives or organizing that is helping (e.g. collectives or organizations of domestic workers)?
4. **CULTURE AND MEDIA:**
 - How are your constituency and its concerns presented in the media?
 - How are beliefs and social norms being used to support and/or undermine you?
 - What story or message are you communicating and how?
5. **OVERALL MOMENT AND CONTEXT:**
 - What does this analysis of the current moment tell you about what's happening in your country that is relevant for your efforts?

In plenary: Present analysis and focus on final questions:

- *What does this analysis tell you about what's happening in your country and with the issues that matter to you?*
- *What opportunities may it hold for organizing for women's rights and feminist movements?*

Wrap up: Synthesize discussion and link to strategy possibilities.