

Namibian Lesbian Festival 2025

Report from Nadia Revonia April, Women's Leadership Centre, Namibia





This year marks the 7th annual gathering of this unique regional LBQ space, a celebration of resilience, solidarity, healing, and creativity. Our theme, “Stronger Together Through Unity, Solidarity, and Power,” calls on us to stand firm in our truths, to resist global anti-rights movements, and to embrace the strength of collective action.

The festival was born out of a dream: to create a space where activists, artists, and creatives could live in their truth, build visibility, share struggles, and heal together. It is a space where friendships, solidarity, and collective healing are nurtured, because we believe transformation begins in community.

The Namibian Lesbian Festival 2025 was held from 26 to 31 August 2025, bringing together 45 participants from Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, and Zambia. The regional representation included six participants each from South Africa’s Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), Botswana’s Black Queer Dox, and Zambia’s Women’s Alliance for Equality (WAFE), alongside 18 Namibian participants, including eight core space holders.



The week-long festival, hosted at Hasego Guest House and coordinated by the Women’s Leadership Centre (WLC) in partnership with Y-FEM, provided a creative and healing space centred on lesbian visibility, empowerment, and solidarity. The programme included daily workshops, film

screenings, healing sessions, and artistic activities designed to foster feminist consciousness and collective expression.

A highlight of the festival was the final performance held on 30 August 2025 at the Franco-Namibian Cultural Centre (FNCC) in Windhoek, where participants presented a creative production combining music, dance, and storytelling, capturing the realities and triumphs of lesbian life. The event attended by over 200 audience.


A poster for the Namibian Lesbian Festival 2025. The top half features a stylized white line drawing of a woman's profile with a large, ornate earring, set against a background of overlapping purple and orange shapes. The text "NAMIBIAN LESBIAN FESTIVAL 2025" is prominently displayed in white and yellow. Below this, the slogan "Stronger together through UNITY, SOLIDARITY and POWER" is written in white. The middle section lists the activities: "Cultural performances with Spoken word Music Dance", followed by "With participants from Botswana, South Africa and Zambia". The date and location are given as "30 AUGUST 2025 At the FNCC 118 Robert Mugabe Avenue, Windhoek, Namibia". The time is "18:30 for 19:00" and the entrance is "FREE ENTRANCE! Everyone is welcome!". The bottom of the poster features a row of logos for various organizations, including WLC, FLP, Black Queer, helix Africa, Y-Fem, Afrika, and others.

NAMIBIAN LESBIAN FESTIVAL 2025

**Stronger together through
UNITY, SOLIDARITY and POWER**

Cultural performances with
**Spoken word
Music
Dance**

With participants from
Botswana, South Africa
and Zambia

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WLC
Women's Leadership Centre

FLP
Franco-Namibian Forum

BLACK QUEER

helix Africa

Y-Fem

Afrika

AFRICA SALUTEM

PRIDE VIBES

#WHAT GIRLS WANT

2025

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CENTRE



The festival concluded with a Feminist Sports day held in collaboration with the One Billion Rising campaign to stand against Gender based violence through sports with the Okahandja community and schools.



Participants described the festival as a powerful experience of community healing and regional sisterhood, with the Zambian team highlighting how the blend of advocacy and storytelling inspired their own organisational work. Despite some logistical challenges, such as sound issues and travel fatigue, the festival successfully created a safe, empowering, and transformative space for lesbian women across Southern Africa.

Overall, the Namibian Lesbian Festival 2025 strengthened regional connections, amplified lesbian voices, and demonstrated the power of creative expression in advancing feminist activism, healing, and visibility.



The Namibian Lesbian Festival was made possible through the collective efforts and solidarity of individuals, international sisters, and partner networks including our sister in Germany from FliP- Frauenliebe im Pott who believe in our work and stand in solidarity with the feminist movement-building efforts across Africa. We also received invaluable support from feminist organisations such as the Afrikagrupperna (AGS) We extend our deepest gratitude for their support, trust, and belief in our vision and ongoing work.

Reflections from participants

Mwale, Director of WAFE, Zambia: “Good morning Nadia and Iris 🌻. How are you both doing? We wanted to express our deepest gratitude for the incredible support and hospitality during the festival week. The space you created was truly special, it served as both a great source of inspiration and a reawakening for our team regarding the power of authentic community engagement. We learned so much from witnessing and participating in the amazing unique ways WLC and Y-FEM blend advocacy with storytelling. This is a powerful model that is often missing in the activism spaces, and it left a lasting impression on us. To be honest, simply saying thank you 🥰 doesn't feel like enough for the support you provided. It made all the difference to our experience, and we are so grateful. The festival has really energized us to strengthen our work, and we would want explore how we can build on this experience through collaboration or partnerships with your organizations. Thank you again for the support, hospitality and for sharing your impactful with us 🌹❤️”



Nadia: For me, the festival was about re-energising our spirits and our collective power as a movement, as well as organising to learn from each other, our strategies and what others are doing in their countries. It was about understanding how to better support each other across borders, aligning with the theme of the year: *Stronger Together through Unity, Solidarity, and Power*.

It was important to create spaces to have conversations that build and strengthen regional strategies in terms of countering anti-rights movements and changing narratives. One of the strong points that

emerged from this year's conversations was the intersectionality of religion and spirituality, and the importance of working in these areas as a movement and raising awareness. We realised the strategies of anti-rights movements, especially in their use of human rights language and targeted groups to spread their messages, and it became imperative that we also work more on those levels and engage with those groups.

The Feminist Lesbian Festival is a political space where we shape, organise, plan, and build connections, while also recognising the different needs within our communities and remaining rooted in breaking down the structural barriers that exist.

The difference in this year's festival compared to previous years was the collective support we received from individuals and sister groups, demonstrating the impact and need for this space. It also encouraged us to think deeply about the sustainability and growth of the festival moving forward.