



*Chevs Five Year Strategic Plan*

# **BUILDING COLLECTIVE POWER FOR JUSTICE**





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# INTRODUCTION

*CHEVS was born from an urgent need:*

As a collective where young LGBTQI+ people in Africa could organize, build power, and shape a future grounded in dignity, justice, and collective care.

*Over five years, we have grown from a youth-led initiative into a community-rooted regional partner, working at the intersections of human rights, digital rights, economic justice, gender justice, and inclusive feminist futures. Our work centers the leadership, safety, and aspirations of young LGBTQI+ communities while fostering solidarity across movements in the region.*

These first five years have been formative. CHEVS has invested in building networks of activists, supporting community resilience, responding to emergencies, and amplifying progressive voices in regional and continental spaces such as the United Nations and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

**Through programs like Tech4Pride, movement convenings, advocacy efforts, and community-led initiatives, we have contributed to strengthening a growing ecosystem of LGBTQI+ and feminist organizing in Africa.**

The landscape for rights-based organizing across Africa has become increasingly hostile. Anti-rights movements are better coordinated and resourced, pushing regressive laws, promoting exclusionary narratives, and targeting feminist and LGBTQI+ organizing. Activists and communities face growing risks amid restrictive laws, political hostility, and shrinking civic space.

***At the same time, funding for social justice movements is uncertain.***

Reductions in international support, shifting donor priorities, and structural inequities in resource distribution create new challenges for youth-led, feminist, and LGBTQI+ organizations, despite their critical role in driving social change.

It is within this evolving context that CHEVS presents its **Strategic Plan** for the next phase of our journey.

**Building on the lessons, relationships, and impact of our first five years, this strategy reflects our commitment to deepening our work while adapting to a rapidly changing environment.**

It outlines how CHEVS will continue to support movements, strengthen digital and physical safety for LGBTQI+ communities, advance economic and social justice, and cultivate feminist leadership among young people.

This strategy is both a reflection of where we have come from and a roadmap for where we must go. It affirms our belief that transformative change requires sustained organizing, collective imagination, and solidarity across movements. As anti-rights forces grow more organized, progressive movements must remain equally committed to building power, protecting gains, and envisioning new possibilities for freedom, justice, and inclusive democratic futures across Africa.

Guided by feminist principles and rooted in community leadership, CHEVS enters the next phase of its work with renewed clarity of purpose to strengthen movements, expand possibilities for LGBTQI+ communities, and contribute to building societies where all people can live with dignity, autonomy, and hope.

## OUR GROUNDING

### Who We Are

CHEVS is a youth-led, movement support organisation strengthening LGBTQI+ and feminist organising to advance gender justice, tech justice, and human rights accountability across Africa. We operate as both a connector and a catalyst—bridging grassroots movements, regional platforms, and global spaces. Rooted in collaboration, care, and feminist leadership, we ensure that those most affected by injustice are not only visible but are shaping the agendas, strategies, and futures that define our work





## OUR MISSION

To mobilize and strengthen young feminist and LGBTQI+ communities for collective actions towards achieving equality, freedom and justice through movement strengthening, Advocacy and narrative change efforts.



## OUR VISION

An Africa where everyone can live in safety, dignity and freedom; experiencing true liberation and abundance

## OUR CORE VALUES

### COURAGE

Standing firm in the face of hostility and naming oppression as it is.

### INTERSECTIONALITY

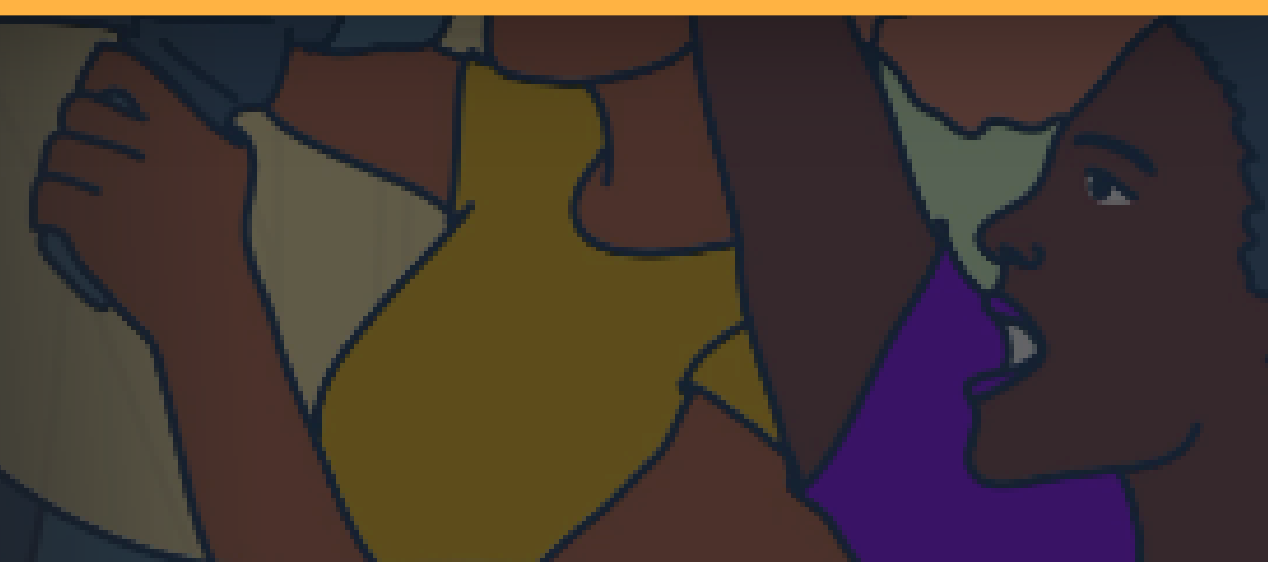
Addressing overlapping systems of oppression and ensuring no one is left behind

### COMMUNITY CENTERED

Grounding our work in the lived realities of queer communities and ensuring their voices shape our agenda.

### COLLECTIVE CARE & SOLIDARITY

Centering collective care and recognizing that our well-being is interconnected.



## OUR CURRENT LANDSCAPE OF ORGANIZING

Across Africa, struggles for justice are unfolding within a landscape marked by both democratic aspiration and deepening repression. Feminist, queer, and youth movements are navigating intersecting systems of power shaped by colonial legacies, economic inequality, religious fundamentalism, and rapidly expanding digital technologies.



These forces profoundly shape the conditions under which LGBTQI+ people, women, and young activists organise and imagine their futures. In recent years, the continent has witnessed a coordinated resurgence of anti-rights politics.

Laws and policies such as Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act and Ghana’s proposed “Family Values” Bill reflect a broader transnational movement that mobilizes religion, nationalism, and narratives of “African values” to undermine feminist and queer organising.

Often supported by global conservative networks, these efforts seek to restrict bodily autonomy, silence dissent, and roll back democratic freedoms.

These dynamics are intensified by economic precarity across the region.

**Decades of structural adjustment, privatisation, and extractive development have deepened inequality and weakened public systems.**

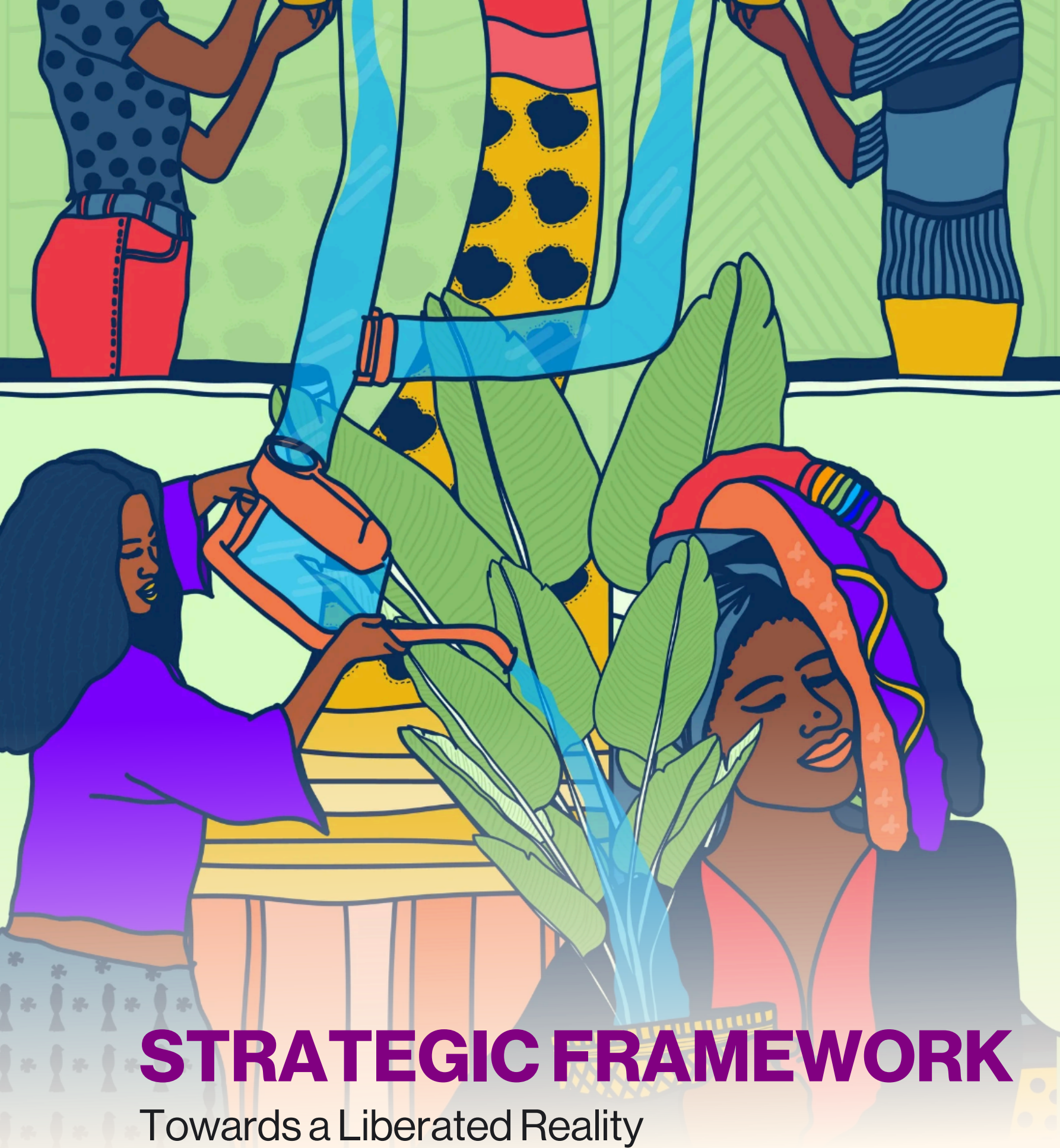
For many LGBTQI people—particularly women, sex workers, and gender-diverse youth—economic marginalisation intersects with legal discrimination and social violence, limiting access to livelihoods, safety, and participation.

**Yet** governments increasingly deploy surveillance, internet shutdowns, and digital repression to monitor activism, while technology companies continue to extract African data and inadequately address online violence targeting feminist and queer voices.

Despite these challenges, feminist and queer movements across Africa remain resilient and innovative. Young activists are redefining participation through art, digital organising, protest, and community care. Regional mechanisms such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights continue to offer important—though contested—spaces for advocacy, while cross-border solidarity networks are strengthening collective power across the continent.

It is within this complex and shifting landscape that CHEVS positions its work. We believe that advancing queer liberation and democratic futures in Africa requires confronting power across economic, digital, political, and cultural spheres.

**Our role is to support movements, challenge authoritarian narratives, and nurture the feminist and decolonial infrastructures necessary for long-term transformation.**



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Towards a Liberated Reality

## OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

If diverse young feminist and LGBTQI+ movements across Africa are connected, resourced, and supported to build collective power, shape narratives, and influence policy and digital ecosystems, then they can more effectively challenge anti-rights agendas, resist repression, and expand democratic space.

Through sustained movement building, advocacy, and narrative strategies, these movements will shift public discourse, influence institutional decision-making, and advance feminist alternatives for technology, governance, and economic systems—resulting in greater safety, autonomy, and justice over time.

CHEVS plays a catalytic role in enabling this by bridging country-level movements, regional advocacy spaces, and global platforms.

# OUR BELIEFS & ASSUMPTION

- 1 Patriarchal and heteronormative systems drive the exclusion,** discrimination, and violence experienced by women and LGBTQI+ people; dismantling them requires sustained feminist organising and leadership.
- 2 The rise of authoritarian and anti-rights politics across Africa increases risks for feminist and LGBTQI+ organising,** making coordinated advocacy, narrative resistance, and regional solidarity critical to defending democratic space.
- 3 Transforming oppressive and authoritarian systems requires youth mobilisation and leadership.**
- 4 Transformative change depends on building feminist alternatives** that reimagine democracy, technology, and economic systems around care, justice, and collective well-being.

## PORTFOLIO AREA

Where we work

CHEVS will drive systemic transformation through three interconnected portfolios that define our strategic direction

### > Tech Justice

CHEVS understands technology as a political terrain shaped by power, capital, and ideology. For queer and young feminists, digital spaces are simultaneously sites of connection, organising, violence, and control. Tech justice requires contesting how technologies are designed, governed, and deployed, particularly where they intersect with state repression, corporate power, and anti-rights mobilisation.

#### Under the Tech Justice portfolio, CHEVS contributes to change by:

Strengthening the capacity of queer and feminist movements to safely organise, communicate, and resist digital harm and violence

Advancing alternative narratives about technology that centre justice, care, and collective well-being rather than control and extraction



Engaging digital governance debates at regional and national levels to challenge exclusionary or punitive tech policies and practices

Producing and sharing Knowledge on how Tech systems intersect with human rights, democracy, and economy in Africa

## >> Gender and Economic Justice

This portfolio is anchored on the reality that LBQ/TGNC people experience violence as a continuum across intimate, community, digital, and institutional contexts. Violence is not only interpersonal; it is also systemic, produced through criminalisation, hetero-normativity, economic exclusion, discriminatory service systems, and hostile cultural norms. These forces constrain safety, limit autonomy, and shape access to livelihoods, SRHR, and support services.

### Under the Gender and Economic Justice portfolio, CHEVS contributes to change by:

Strengthening LBQ/TGNC women's collective power, leadership, and mutual support systems to prevent and respond to violence across offline and online settings

Advancing LBQ/TGNC belonging in existing feminist response to gender and sexual violence ensuring intersectionality and inclusion in their response approach.



Influencing institutional and policy environments to advance inclusive economic empowerment and protect autonomy

Protect and Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

Generating and using feminist knowledge grounded in the lived experiences of LBQ women on how violence operates across intimate relationships, digital spaces, public systems, and economic structures to inform movement strategies, strengthen accountability demands, and advance economic justice.

## >> Rights, Democracy and Civic Freedom

CHEVS understands rights and democracy as contested, uneven, and deeply political. Across Africa, democratic institutions are under strain, civic space is shrinking, and anti-rights actors are increasingly organised across borders and governance levels. Queer and feminist communities are often targeted as symbols of moral panic and political distraction.

### Under the Rights and Democracy portfolio, CHEVS contributes to change by:

Supporting collective resistance to anti-rights laws, policies, and institutional practices

Contesting narratives that frame queer and feminist rights as foreign, immoral, or incompatible with democracy



Engaging regional and national human rights and democratic governance mechanisms to advance accountability and protection

Strengthening the ability of movements to navigate, survive, and shape democratic systems over time.

Advance human rights and self determination for LGBTQI persons across africa.

# STRATEGIC APPROACH

## How we work

CHEVS uses the following approaches to shift power across all portfolios, anchoring movements in feminist practice, building collective power, and ensuring that queer and feminist communities not only survive repression but shape the future of Africa. We recognize that liberation cannot be achieved through fragmented efforts but through collective strategies that connect communities, movements, and allies across divides.



## 1. Movement Building

Movement building refers to CHEVS' work to strengthen the collective power, leadership, infrastructure, and resilience of queer and feminist movements. This includes cultivating leadership, fostering trust and collaboration across actors, supporting networks and collectives, and embedding care and healing justice as political practice. Movement building focuses on people, relationships, and organisational ecosystems as the foundation for sustained social and political change.

## 2. Advocacy

Advocacy and policy engagement refers to CHEVS' efforts to influence laws, policies, institutional practices, and decision-making processes at national, regional, and transnational levels. This includes engagement with governance institutions, strategic litigation, policy analysis and submissions, and direct interaction with decision-makers. Advocacy translates movement power and political analysis into concrete institutional and policy shifts.

### 3. Narrative Change

Narrative change refers to CHEVS' work to shift dominant stories, frames, and discourses that legitimise exclusion, violence, and anti-rights agendas. This includes producing and amplifying counter narratives, cultural and media interventions, strategic communications, and storytelling that reframe queer, feminist, and democratic futures as legitimate, desirable, and necessary. Narrative change operates across public, political, and digital spaces.

### 4. Knowledge, Learning & Imagination

Knowledge, learning, and imagination refers to CHEVS' generation, synthesis, and circulation of analysis, evidence, and alternative futures that inform movement strategy and public discourse. This includes research, documentation, political education, learning loops across portfolios, and imaginative work that challenges dominant economic, technological, and democratic models. This approach ensures CHEVS' work remains adaptive, grounded, and future-oriented.

# CHANGES WE SEEK

Outcomes we hope to contribute to by 2030



# COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES

CHEVS is uniquely positioned within Africa's civic and human rights landscape. As a regional, youth-led LGBTIQ+ organization, we bring a set of strengths that enable us to add distinct value to movements, partners, and allies:

- **Youth-led and community-rooted.**

CHEVS is driven by young queer leaders whose strategies are grounded in lived realities. This ensures our work remains relevant, bold, and responsive to emerging challenges.

- **Regional reach, local grounding.**

With team members drawn from and actively engaged in country-level movements across Anglophone and Francophone Africa, we are uniquely positioned to bridge linguistic, cultural, and geographic divides, translate local realities into regional strategy, and amplify grassroots priorities on global platforms.

- **Connector and convener.**

We bring together movements, organizations, and allies across identities and sectors, creating collaborative spaces where strategies are aligned and collective power is amplified.

## Movement Power

Young feminist and LGBTQI+ movements are more connected, better resourced, and more resilient in responding to repression, violence, and co-optation across the region.

## Challenging Anti-Rights Power

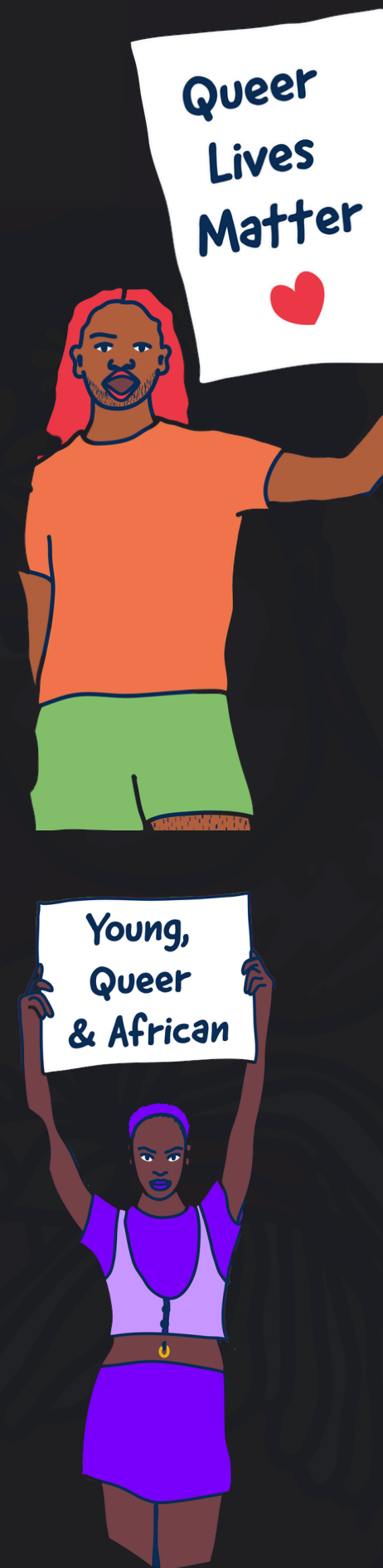
Negative narratives, laws, policies, and institutional practices that legitimise criminalisation and anti-rights agendas are increasingly contested and transformed through organised feminist and LGBTQI+ advocacy.

## Feminist Futures

Feminist and LGBTQI+ movements advance alternative visions of democracy, technology, and economic systems grounded in care, justice, and collective well-being.

## Safety and Autonomy

LBQTI and gender non-conforming women experience increased safety, bodily autonomy, and freedom from violence across social, institutional, and digital environments.





## **FUTURE-SMART OPERATIONS**

To deliver on our strategic objectives, CHEVS must strengthen how we operate. Our future-smart approach ensures that we remain agile, resilient, and aligned with the values of the communities we serve.

### **Language Justice**

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### **Resource Mobilization and Sustainability**

CHEVS will diversify its funding base by cultivating relationships with feminist funders, human rights allies, and innovative philanthropic actors. By advocating for flexible, core, and multi-year support, we aim to build a resource base that enables rapid response in moments of crisis while sustaining long-term change.

## **Youth Leadership and Governance**

As a youth-led organization, CHEVS is committed to embedding inclusive leadership and accountability structures that elevate the voices of young queer people. Our governance model prioritizes transparency, shared responsibility, and intergenerational knowledge transfer to strengthen long-term sustainability.

## **Care-Centered Organizational Culture**

Our staff and partners operate in contexts of hostility and risk. CHEVS will prioritize collective care, healing justice, and well-being within our operations. By embedding practices of care into our systems, we ensure that our people remain resilient, creative, and connected to the communities we serve.



**Through these enablers, CHEVS will operate not only as an effective organization but also as a model of the liberated futures we envision:**

***multilingual, youth-led, sustainable, and rooted in collective care.***