

# MAMA'S MANIFESTO



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women help women



# MAMA

## - Mobilizing Activists around Medical Abortion -

MAMA -Mobilizing Activists around Medical Abortion- is a network of organizations centered on disseminating knowledge about and expanding access to medical abortion at the community level in Sub-Saharan African countries. As such, MAMA sits at the heart of a large grassroots activist movement seeking to change the narrative on reproductive justice in Africa through community activism for safe abortion.

MAMA generates and supports collaborations among grassroots activists and organizations working to create the conditions for women and pregnant people to safely access medical abortion.

MAMA improves practices of dissemination of information about the potential of medical abortion at the community level.

MAMA aims to transform the landscape of reproductive care in Africa by introducing medical abortion as a safe, accessible and effective procedure to end an unwanted pregnancy outside of the clinical setting.

## Mama's core values are:

### **(i) Participatory justice:**

We believe that the communities affected by the problems are the ones who should decide their priorities and be actively involved in promoting the changes they see as important for them;

### **(ii) Horizontality:**

We are a network and, as such, we work as peers: everyone has an equal space and ability to voice their opinions and shape our collective action;

### **(iii) Collaboration:**

While we acknowledge that individual work is important, in MAMA we strive for collective work, done in partnership and with the inclusion of a plurality of perspectives

### **(iv) Solidarity:**

We are group connected through our common objectives and principles



**(v) Mutual respect:**

We acknowledge the differences that exist amongst us and value these differences by being respectful towards one another, open to listen and be persuaded by different points of view

**(vi) Trust:**

We believe in each other, in our communities and in the power of our collective action


MAMA understands that abortion pills create a universal opportunity for safe abortion regardless of how abortion is regulated by national laws. By providing women with accurate information about abortion with pills, activists challenge restrictive laws' legitimacy, contribute to dismantle abortion stigma and shame, foster women's empowerment and respect women's autonomy. Access to abortion with pills also enforce several human rights, such as the right to life, to survival, to security and to sexuality, the right to non-discrimination, the right to make decisions about one's sexual and reproductive life, including the freedom to choose maternity, the right to the highest attainable standard of health and to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress, the right to be free

from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to privacy and confidentiality; and the right to health information and education.

MAMA believes that self-managed abortion is a transformative practice that disrupts the legitimacy of restrictive abortion laws, contributing for their change, while at the same time providing a realistic and practical solution to an actual and urgent need.

MAMA trusts in community activism, because it makes safe abortion access affordable and available; free of coercion, stigma and discrimination; unbiased; youth friendly; without bureaucracy; and not influenced by traditional, cultural and religious beliefs that deny women basic human rights.

MAMA holds that the model of community activism for medical abortion is part of a larger commitment to reproductive justice, a framework that acknowledges the negative impact of class, gender, race and sexual oppression on women's capacity for making decisions about their reproductive lives. A woman's rights to end a pregnancy and to have children and raise them with dignity are a matter of justice and entail the dismantlement of structural inequalities.



MAMA claims that no laws, no institutions, no diplomas, and no stigma should be gatekeepers to reproductive justice.

MAMA's main strategy identifies and promotes grassroots work and peer to peer support, developed by health workers and women themselves, that disseminates accurate information about medical abortion, facilitate access to reliable medication and a spectrum of care practices, reduces harm and meets people where they are.

MAMA grounds its advocacy on data and evidence that shows how these strategies combined as activism to share information directly with those that most need it on community level, radically transforms the landscape and opportunities to contribute to social change. Our activism reduces harm from unsafe abortion; fights abortion stigma; allows women to control their sexual lives and reproduction, empowering them to make decisions about their bodies and families; reduces the rates of maternal mortality; popularizes and demystifies medical knowledge; and promote community engagement and supportive environments. These contributions, in turn, strengthen women's autonomy, reduce harm coming from unjust laws, amplify women's exercise of their civil, political, sexual and reproductive rights, allow women to enjoy their sexual and reproductive lives more fully,

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enhance solidarity within communities, and produce a shift in the power balance of gender relations, dismantling sexual roles and gender stereotypes.

MAMA trusts women, above all, because they are the experts on what they want and need in their lives.





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