

## **Abstract**

This paper discusses the importance of moving towards African centered feminist theories. The paper argues that bringing feminism home to Africa will greatly impact our understanding of development processes in Africa. Scholars, world over, have come up with feminist theories, frameworks and ideologies in order to respond to the realities of women at particular moments in history. That there is a plethora of feminist theories out there is an understatement. We have heard of renowned feminists in the West. Feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft,<sup>1</sup> Virginia Woolf,<sup>2</sup> Andrea Dworkin,<sup>3</sup> Catherine Mackinnon<sup>4</sup>, Carol Smart,<sup>5</sup> Betty Friedan<sup>6</sup> and so on. We are also familiar with the many different kinds of feminisms that exist to explain women's realities universally. Feminisms such as liberal feminism,<sup>7</sup> radical feminism,<sup>8</sup> black feminism,<sup>9</sup> materialist feminism,<sup>10</sup> environmental feminism,<sup>11</sup> and postcolonial (third world) feminism<sup>12</sup> The theories are drawn from a wide range of disciplines such as philosophy, law, sociology, psychology, Marxism, post colonialism and the list goes on. These feminist theories and perspectives have a lot to say about non-discrimination, equality, representation of women, domestic violence, class and racial differences and so on.

What is interesting however is that these approaches to the woman question have predominantly been developed based on the experiences of women in the West and yet we continue to rely on these forms of feminism, feminist thought and frameworks to describe African women's experiences.<sup>13</sup> We need to COME HOME. It's time to come home! We need to consolidate the efforts of various African women across the continent and come up with ways of critically engaging with the realities of women of Africa. The Kenyan women and many African women have, through the constitution making process, agreed resoundingly with Chinua Achebe's famous statement "if you don't like someone else's story, you need to write your own".<sup>14</sup> That is why this seminar is so important. We are beginning to tell a narrative. A narrative about how women have told and continue to tell their own story of hope, their own story of joy, their own story of resistance, their own story of how they conceptualize themselves and their world