

**ADVANCING
MENSTRUAL
JUSTICE
, SRHR & SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT IN
A CHANGING
CLIMATE**

CONVENING FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE



WHS
Regional
Meeting

NAIROBI | APRIL 27 - 29
2026

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**MENSTRUAL RIGHTS GLOBAL
PRESENTS, WITH CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM UNICEF, PATHFINDER
INTERNATIONAL, IRISE INTERNATIONAL,
IRISE INSTITUTE EAST AFRICA AND
AMREF HEALTH AFRICA**

ON THE SIDE-LINES OF THE WORLD HEALTH SUMMIT REGIONAL MEETING 2026, MENSTRUAL RIGHTS GLOBAL CONVENED A HIGH-LEVEL BREAKFAST POLICY DIALOGUE AT THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT NAIROBI ALONGSIDE PARTNERS INCLUDING UNICEF, PATHFINDER INTERNATIONAL, IRISE INTERNATIONAL, IRISE INSTITUTE EAST AFRICA AND AMREF HEALTH AFRICA TO EXPLORE THE INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN MENSTRUAL HEALTH, SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR), SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE.



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CONVENING FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE: POST EVENT READ OUT

AGAINST A BACKDROP OF ESCALATING CLIMATE INSTABILITY, SHRINKING DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AND WIDENING GLOBAL INEQUALITIES, THE DIALOGUE BROUGHT TOGETHER POLICYMAKERS, MULTILATERAL AGENCIES, GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS, RESEARCHERS AND ADVOCATES TO EXAMINE HOW CLIMATE CHANGE IS INTENSIFYING SYSTEMIC FAILURES ACROSS HEALTH, WASH, EDUCATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND FINANCING SYSTEMS. DISCUSSIONS CHALLENGED THE CONTINUED TREATMENT OF MENSTRUAL HEALTH AS A SILOED OR PRODUCT CENTRED ISSUE, INSTEAD POSITIONING MENSTRUAL JUSTICE WITHIN BROADER CONVERSATIONS ON SRHR, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

PARTICIPANTS EMPHASISED THAT CLIMATE SHOCKS ARE NOT OCCURRING IN ISOLATION, BUT ARE EXPOSING AND ACCELERATING LONG STANDING STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES, PARTICULARLY FOR WOMEN, GIRLS AND MARGINALISED POPULATIONS LIVING WITHIN FRAGILE AND UNDER RESOURCED SYSTEMS.

A PARTICULARLY POWERFUL CONTRIBUTION CAME FROM LILLIAN MABONGA (IRISE INTERNATIONAL), WHO REFLECTED ON THE LIVED REALITIES FACING GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN ACROSS EAST AFRICA AS FLOODING, DISPLACEMENT AND FAILING SANITATION SYSTEMS CONTINUE TO DISRUPT DAILY LIFE AND EDUCATION.

“A GIRL MISSES SCHOOL NOT SIMPLY BECAUSE SHE LACKS A MENSTRUAL PRODUCT. SHE MISSES SCHOOL BECAUSE THE TOILET HAS NO LOCK. BECAUSE THERE IS NO WATER. BECAUSE SANITATION SYSTEMS FAIL DURING FLOODS. BECAUSE SHAME STILL SURROUNDS HER BODY. THESE ARE NOT SEPARATE PROBLEMS. THEY ARE INTERCONNECTED FAILURES WITHIN THE SAME SYSTEM.”



HER REFLECTIONS REINFORCED A CRITICAL DISCUSSION EMERGING THROUGHOUT THE CONVENING: MENSTRUAL INJUSTICE CANNOT BE SOLVED THROUGH PRODUCTS ALONE BECAUSE THE BARRIERS WOMEN AND GIRLS FACE ARE DEEPLY EMBEDDED WITHIN WIDER SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS. PARTICIPANTS EXPLORED HOW CLIMATE ADAPTATION STRATEGIES CONTINUE TO OVERLOOK MENSTRUAL DIGNITY, DESPITE CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT CLIMATE SHOCKS ARE DIRECTLY DISRUPTING SANITATION SYSTEMS, EDUCATION CONTINUITY, SAFETY AND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS. THE DIALOGUE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED TO MOVE BEYOND TREATING MENSTRUAL HEALTH AS AN “ADD-ON” WITHIN HUMANITARIAN AND CLIMATE RESPONSES, AND INSTEAD POSITION IT AS FOUNDATIONAL TO RESILIENCE PLANNING AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

FINANCING EMERGED AS ANOTHER MAJOR AREA OF DISCUSSION. ANNE MUTHONI GITIMU (AMREF) REFLECTED ON HOW FRAGMENTED AND HIGHLY VERTICAL FUNDING STRUCTURES CONTINUE TO UNDERMINE INTEGRATED RESPONSES ACROSS SRHR, CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEMS.

“IT IS THE INTENTIONALITY OF WORKING TOGETHER, ALIGNING TO COUNTRY PRIORITIES, HAVING THOSE CONVERSATIONS AND WORKING WITH THE GOVERNMENT THAT ALLOWS SUSTAINABLE IMPACT.”



DISCUSSIONS EXPLORED HOW DONOR FRAGMENTATION, INFLEXIBLE FINANCING AND DISCONNECTED IMPLEMENTATION MODELS OFTEN PREVENT ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS FROM RESPONDING TO THE REALITIES COMMUNITIES ARE FACING ON THE GROUND. PARTICIPANTS EXAMINED THE IMPORTANCE OF DOMESTIC FINANCING, POOLED FUNDING MECHANISMS AND MORE FLEXIBLE FINANCING APPROACHES THAT ALLOW PROGRAMMES TO ADAPT DURING CRISES AND CLIMATE-RELATED DISRUPTIONS.

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY ALSO FEATURED PROMINENTLY THROUGHOUT THE DIALOGUE. SENATOR GLORIA ORWOBA (KENYA) REFLECTED CANDIDLY ON THE GAP BETWEEN POLICY AMBITION AND IMPLEMENTATION, INCLUDING THE POLITICAL REALITIES OF ADVOCATING FOR MENSTRUAL JUSTICE WITHIN GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS.

SHE ALSO CHALLENGED PARTICIPANTS TO THINK MORE CRITICALLY ABOUT POLICY-PROGRAMME DESIGN, TAXATION AND DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING, ARGUING THAT LONG-TERM APPROACHES TO ENDING PERIOD POVERTY MUST INCLUDE INVESTMENT IN LOCAL MANUFACTURING CAPACITY, STRONGER ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS AND IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAYS THAT MOVE BEYOND SYMBOLIC COMMITMENTS.

“WE HAVE VERY GOOD POLICIES. KENYA WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY TO HAVE A MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT POLICY IN AFRICA. THE ISSUE IS IMPLEMENTATION.”



DISCUSSIONS HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATING NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS INTO ENFORCEABLE SYSTEMS CHANGES ACROSS SCHOOLS, WORKPLACES, SANITATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. AS JOAN MASINDE FROM JACARADNA HEALTH STATED,

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

“OUR FUNDING STRUCTURES OFTEN MIRROR THE VERY SILOS WE CLAIM TO DISMANTLE, FRAGMENTING GENDER-INCLUSIVE WORK INSTEAD OF ENABLING IT. WHEN WE BEGIN TO DESIGN PROGRAMMES COLLABORATIVELY, ACROSS SECTORS AND MANDATES, WE COMPEL FUNDING SYSTEMS THEMSELVES TO EVOLVE, BECOMING MORE FLEXIBLE, MORE RESPONSIVE, AND ULTIMATELY MORE ALIGNED WITH THE REALITIES OF INCLUSIVE CHANGE.”

AS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT OPERATING ACROSS MORE THAN 45 COUNTRIES, MENSTRUAL RIGHTS GLOBAL CONTINUES TO CONVENE ACTORS ACROSS SECTORS TO STRENGTHEN DIALOGUE, FACILITATE CONSENSUS AND SUPPORT COLLECTIVE ACTION ON MENSTRUAL JUSTICE GLOBALLY. THROUGH CO-DESIGNED PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICY DIALOGUES, MRG WORKS TO CONNECT ACTORS ACROSS HEALTH, CLIMATE, EDUCATION, WASH, HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND GENDER EQUALITY TO ADVANCE INTEGRATED APPROACHES GROUNDED IN DIGNITY, RIGHTS AND SYSTEMS CHANGE.



POLICY TO ACTION: KEY PRIORITIES EMERGING FROM NAIROBI

1. MOVE MENSTRUAL HEALTH FROM THE MARGINS OF CLIMATE POLICY INTO RESILIENCE PLANNING

CLIMATE ADAPTATION FRAMEWORKS CONTINUE TO OVERLOOK THE PRACTICAL REALITIES WOMEN AND GIRLS FACE DURING CLIMATE SHOCKS, INCLUDING LOSS OF SAFE SANITATION, DISRUPTED EDUCATION AND REDUCED ACCESS TO SRHR SERVICES. MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND BODILY DIGNITY MUST BE EMBEDDED WITHIN CLIMATE RESILIENCE, HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS AND SOCIAL PROTECTION PLANNING.

2. SHIFT FROM FRAGMENTED INTERVENTIONS TOWARDS SYSTEMS IMPLEMENTATION

THE DISCUSSION REINFORCED THAT PRODUCTS ALONE CANNOT RESOLVE MENSTRUAL INJUSTICE. SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS REQUIRES FUNCTIONING WASH SYSTEMS, SAFE SCHOOLS, HEALTHCARE ACCESS, FINANCING ALIGNMENT, COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS SECTORS.

3. REFORM FINANCING APPROACHES TO SUPPORT INTEGRATED AND LOCALLY-LED ACTION

VERTICAL AND INFLEXIBLE FUNDING STRUCTURES CONTINUE TO LIMIT RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING. PARTICIPANTS HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED FOR POOLED FUNDING, DOMESTIC FINANCING, FLEXIBLE CRISIS-RESPONSIVE MECHANISMS AND GREATER INVESTMENT IN GRASSROOTS AND WOMEN-LED ORGANISATIONS DRIVING IMPLEMENTATION ON THE GROUND.

4. STRENGTHEN POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAYS

COUNTRIES INCREASINGLY HAVE POLICIES RECOGNISING MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND SRHR, YET IMPLEMENTATION REMAINS WEAK. PARTICIPANTS HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED TO MOVE BEYOND SYMBOLIC COMMITMENTS TOWARDS ENFORCEABLE STANDARDS, BUDGET ACCOUNTABILITY AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP WILLING TO PRIORITISE MENSTRUAL DIGNITY WITHIN NATIONAL SYSTEMS.



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CLOSING REFLECTIONS

THE NAIROBI DIALOGUE REINFORCED A GROWING GLOBAL REALITY: MENSTRUAL JUSTICE CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE WIDER SYSTEMS SHAPING HEALTH, DIGNITY, EQUITY AND RESILIENCE. CLIMATE CHANGE IS NOT OPERATING AS AN ISOLATED CRISIS. IT IS INTENSIFYING LONG STANDING STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES ACROSS HEALTHCARE, SANITATION, EDUCATION, FINANCING AND GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS, WITH WOMEN AND GIRLS DISPROPORTIONATELY ABSORBING THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNDERINVESTMENT, FRAGMENTATION AND POLITICAL INACTION.

THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION, PARTICIPANTS REPEATEDLY CHALLENGED THE TENDENCY TO POSITION MENSTRUAL HEALTH AS A PERIPHERAL OR TECHNICAL ISSUE, INSTEAD CALLING FOR IT TO BE RECOGNISED AS CENTRAL TO CLIMATE RESILIENCE, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS. THE CONVENING HIGHLIGHTED THAT PROGRESS WILL NOT COME THROUGH ISOLATED INTERVENTIONS ALONE, BUT THROUGH COORDINATED SYSTEMS APPROACHES THAT CONNECT POLICY, FINANCING, INFRASTRUCTURE, IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP.

IMPORTANTLY, THE DIALOGUE ALSO DEMONSTRATED THE VALUE OF CONVENING ACTORS WHO DO NOT ALWAYS OCCUPY THE SAME SPACES. BY BRINGING TOGETHER POLICYMAKERS, MULTILATERALS, GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS, RESEARCHERS AND ADVOCATES, THE DISCUSSION CREATED OPPORTUNITIES TO MOVE BEYOND FRAGMENTED CONVERSATIONS TOWARDS MORE ALIGNED AND ACCOUNTABLE ACTION. AS GLOBAL SYSTEMS CONTINUE TO FACE MOUNTING PRESSURE, THE CHALLENGE AHEAD IS NOT SIMPLY WHETHER COMMITMENTS EXIST, BUT WHETHER INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS AND FINANCING STRUCTURES ARE WILLING TO ACT WITH THE URGENCY, COORDINATION AND POLITICAL COURAGE REQUIRED TO DELIVER MEANINGFUL CHANGE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS GLOBALLY.

SUSTAIN
DEVELOP
GOALS



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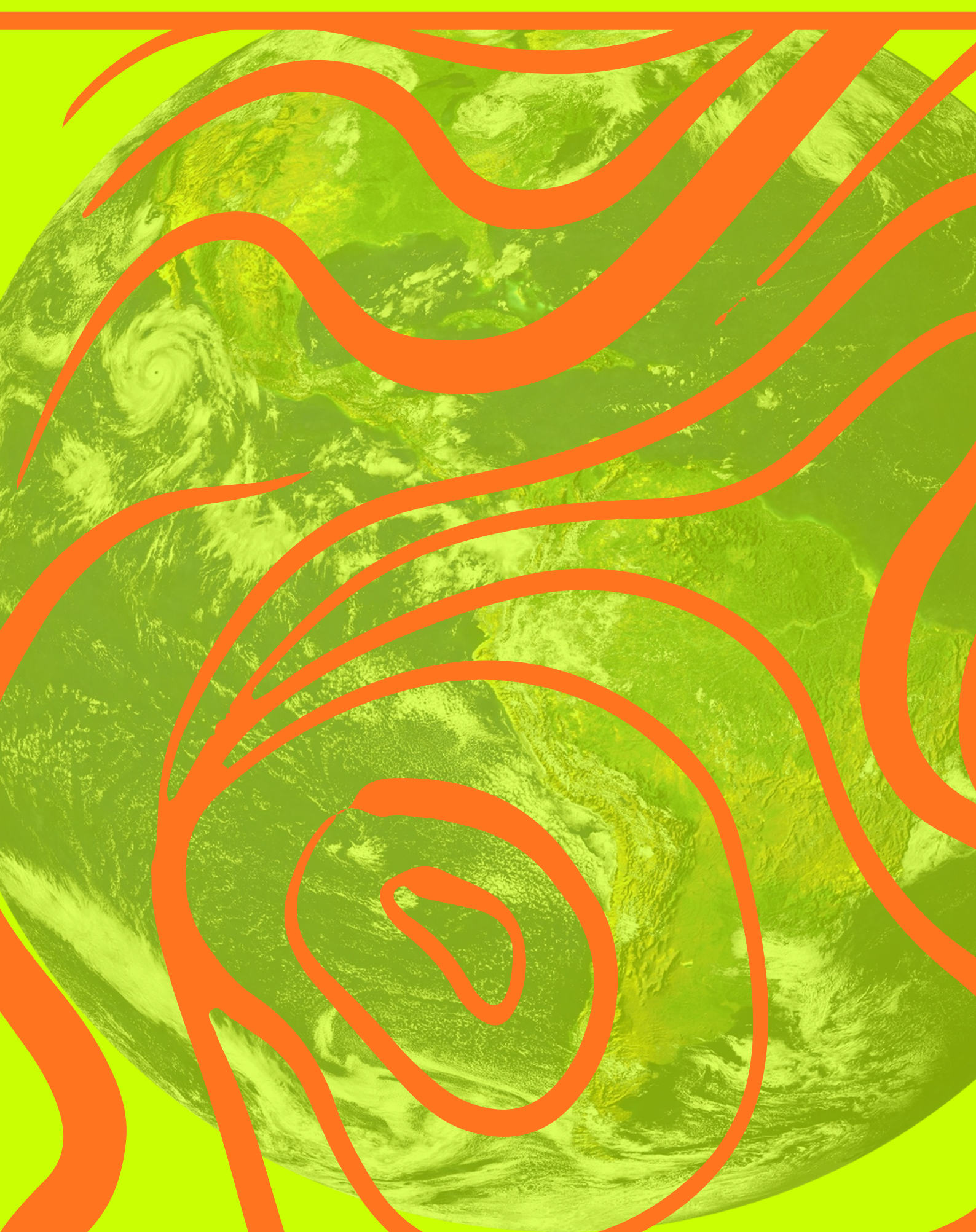


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