

Uthara
Narayanan
& Dave
Jongeneelen

THE BUZZ WAY

*Buzz
Women
From
A to...*



Stop empowering us.

We are already powerful.

We don't need to be given power.

We've had it all along.

We know the truth:

Power lives within us.

It always has.

This book is a gift.

This book is not for sale. It is a gift, passed from hand to hand, just like the Buzz Women movement has been spreading from woman to woman.

This book is written to be used, not to be put on a shelf.

Everything in these pages - the ideas, the concepts, the language, the frameworks - is meant to travel across the world, get borrowed, get argued with, get adapted, and show up in someone else's work and life.

Please copy it, quote it, teach it, remix it. If it helps you move the world a little, use it. We only ask that you carry the spirit forward. And if you build something beautiful with it, we'd love to hear about it.

© 2026 Buzz Women

Book design: Sabine Roodt & Positivity Branding

Photography credits: Buzz Women, Marquis Palmer, Laika,
Studio Birthplace, Sjors Obbens (So Foto)

Printed by: Knijnenburg Producties

info@buzzwomen.org
www.buzzwomen.org



THE BUZZ WAY

Buzz Women from A to Z

WE INVITE YOU



When Buzz Women approached the milestone of having trained one million women, we - as founders of this movement - felt it was time to pause and reflect. Not to celebrate ourselves, but to share what this journey has taught us about change, leadership, and what it truly takes to shift systems from the ground up.

This reflection has taken shape as an A to Z of Buzz Women: a collection of insights, principles, and hard-earned lessons drawn from over a decade of practice. This is an open invitation to learn from what we learned, to build on what worked, and to avoid some of the mistakes we made along the way. Together, these elements reveal the underlying philosophy, practical choices, and impact that define the Buzz Women movement.

When we began in 2012, we did not set out to reach a specific number, nor did we imagine the scale this movement would one day reach. What started as a dream and a simple idea, has grown across countries and cultures, shaped by the women who carry it



*What did it truly take
to shift systems from
the ground up?*

forward. We are still humbled when we listen to their stories, but above all, we are proud of the collective courage, persistence and leadership that made this possible.

More than anything, Buzz Women belongs to the women who form, lead, and grow this movement every single day. We remain deeply grateful to all those who have walked alongside us - team members, partners, supporters - and especially to the women whose choices, voices, and actions continue to redefine what is possible.

Enjoy the read & spread the Buzz

*Uthara Narayanan
& Dave Jongeneelen*



CONTENTS

I BUZZ ORIGINS

8

II BUZZ ESSENTIALS

A	Anchor Women	20
B	Beehive	22
C	Community Trainers	25
D	Doorstep	26
E	Ecopreneurship	28
F	Fellowship	32

III BUZZ PHILOSOPHY

G	Gift	36
H	Holistic	39
I	Inner Strength	42
J	Joy	47
K	Kindle	49
L	Listening	52
M	Men	54
N	Non-attachment	59

IV BUZZ IMPACT

O	Opportunity	64
P	Practical	70
Q	Questions	74
R	Ripple	77
S	Systemic	80

V BUZZ LEARNINGS

T	Trust	86
U	Universal	90
V	Volunteers	94
W	We	97
X	Xponential	101
Y	Yatra	106
Z	Zeal	109

VI BUZZ DESTINATIONS

112



*"Everybody
deserves
a dream"*

I.

BUZZ

Origins

HOW IT ALL STARTED

It must have been around 2006. Dave was facilitating a leadership program in a small, dusty village in The Gambia. Better Future, the social enterprise he co-founded, was hosting a leadership journey that brought together a local NGO team and a group of professionals from the Netherlands.

During a break in the program, villagers walked into the compound where the session was being held. Curious and eager, they began asking questions about what was happening. Soon, under the mango tree and around the flipchart, a lively discussion emerged, as if a new training had spontaneously begun.

Ousman Cham (then director of that local NGO) and Dave watched the scene unfold. Impressed by the villagers' eagerness to learn, a fundamental question arose: How could we reach all these people who were so motivated, yet had no access to learning opportunities? Ousman explained that starting a school would not solve the problem. Schools were often too far away, with no transport available, too expensive, and required time commitment which women simply did not have. Leaving their families for long periods was not an option. In addition, the psychological barrier of entering a school building could be too high. Listening to this, an idea sparked in Dave's mind: If they cannot go to school, let's take the school to them. That day, the idea of a school on wheels was born.

“*That day, the idea of
a school on wheels
was born*”



Fast forward to 2011. Another leadership program, this time in India. Better Future was working with the senior leadership team of Grameen Koota, a leading microfinance institution. During a break, Dave shared the idea of a school on wheels with Suresh Krishna, then Managing Director of Grameen Koota. Suresh did not need time to think. 'This is a great idea,' he said. 'This could be the missing link.'

After the program, during a four-hour bus ride back to Bangalore, Dave found himself sitting next to Arun, then the head of new initiatives and strategy of Grameen Koota. He shared the idea once more. Arun listened quietly. When Dave asked him what he thought, Arun simply replied, 'I am thinking about when and where to start.' A few days later, Arun called back. 'I know someone who could run this new initiative,' he said. 'She wants to apply for the job. Her name is Uthara, my wife.'

In 2012, Buzz India Trust was launched, with Uthara as founder, director, and only employee. She was supported by Suresh as board member and co-founder. At the same time, the Buzz Women Foundation was established in the Netherlands.

When we started, we had only two real assets: a dream and an idea. The dream was fueled by a deep sense of injustice: the lack of opportunity faced by so many women simply because of where they were born. More than anything, we wanted women to dream again. Our guiding question was simple yet bold: How could we enable women to break free from generations of poverty and patriarchy, using their own talents and their own voice? In those early days, this ambition lived in a single sentence: 'Everybody deserves a dream.'

The idea gave the dream its first shape. A school on wheels, bringing education and transformation directly to women, instead of asking women to cross physical, financial, and psychological barriers to reach education.

Then came the hard part. Armed with a big dream and a practical idea, Uthara took on the challenge of grounding the vision and making it work. While Dave - the dreamer - still spoke about a 'Harvard on Wheels,' Uthara - the changemaker - went into the villages of Karnataka to listen, observe, and understand the everyday reality of women. It quickly became clear that women were not waiting for high-level education on talent and leadership. They were in urgent need of money. 'If you can help us solve this challenge,' they said, 'you are very welcome.'

With funds raised in The Netherlands, through friends, family, colleagues, and clients of Dave, the first bus was purchased. It was too big, clumsy, and regularly got stuck in the village mud. Yet it brought the idea to life. More importantly, it proved that what we envisioned was possible: bringing life-changing education directly to women's doorsteps. Uthara developed a curriculum that addressed both immediate needs - gaining control over money and reducing daily stress - and deeper, underlying needs such as self-confidence and entrepreneurial skills.

“
The first bus was too
big, clumsy, and
regularly got stuck
in the village mud
”



Suresh,
Uthara &
Dave



Dave, Fatou,
& Ousman



UTHARA NARAYANAN

BUZZ INDIA

Looking back, those early days were as exhilarating as they were daunting. Exhilarating because a dream was becoming reality, opening doors for women who had never had such opportunities before. Daunting because each day brought a new challenge. In the first months, the phone rang constantly. One day Uthara would call, frustrated: 'The women are not coming.' The next week it was: 'They came, but they didn't come back.'

Somehow, we found our way. We navigated the challenges, listened carefully, and kept adapting. What started as a dream slowly became a project that worked. Then it grew into a program, and eventually into a real organization, with more and more people committed to the dream. What began small naturally wanted to expand: first across Karnataka in India, then to Africa with Buzz Women Gambia launching in 2018. Europe followed, with Georgia and later Ukraine joining the Buzz Women tribe. In recent years, more countries across the African continent have followed (Tanzania, Kenya, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire).

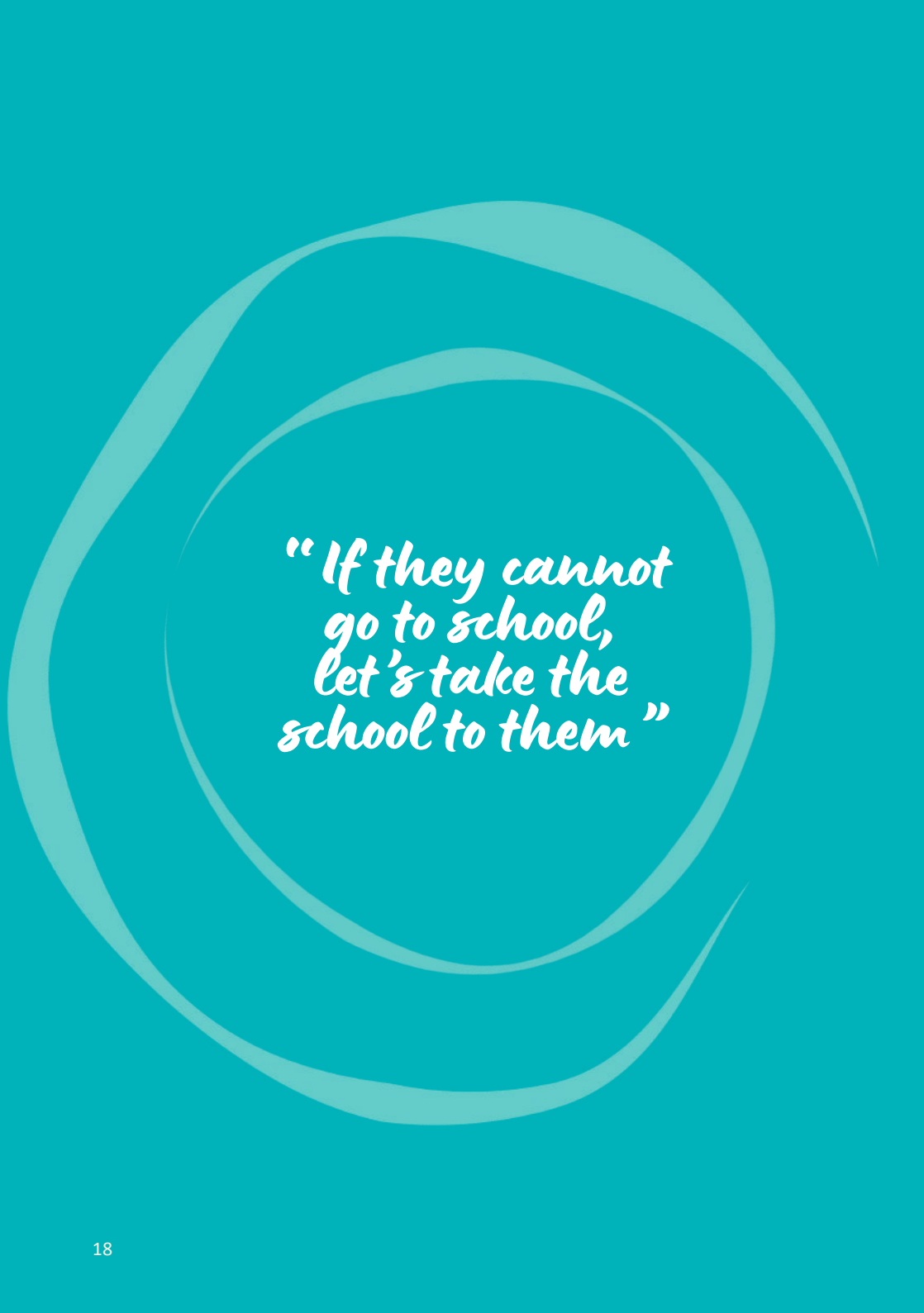
Today, with one million educated women leading transformation in their own communities, the original dream and idea have grown into a movement. A movement from the ground up, led from the heart by women with their feet firmly planted on the ground. Still, we feel this movement is only just beginning. We are convinced that, when women are given the space to dream again, the world will transform in ways beyond our imagination.

“

*When women are given
the space to dream
again, the world will
transform in ways
beyond our imagination*

”



The background is a solid teal color. In the center, there are three concentric circles of a lighter teal shade. The circles are slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text is centered within the innermost circle.

*"If they cannot
go to school,
let's take the
school to them"*

II.

BUZZ

Essentials

A NCHOR WOMEN

At the heart of Buzz Women are the Anchor Women: thousands of grassroots leaders igniting transformation within their own communities. Chosen by their peers, these women are trusted voices and natural changemakers, guiding others with wisdom, empathy, and a kind of 'tough love' that challenges the status quo with grace and courage.

Anchor Women lead the beehives, regular gatherings where women come together to learn, share, and uplift one another. They are not just facilitators, but catalysts, holding space for collective growth and bold dreaming. When we are asked who the CEO of Buzz Women is, there is only one answer: the tens of thousands of anchor women are our Chief Encouragement Officers – encouraging and guiding their fellow women in their personal and collective growth.

Through the Inspiration Fellowship, we support the Anchor Women in deepening their leadership. They learn to facilitate meaningful dialogue, navigate group dynamics, resolve conflict, mobilize their communities, and nurture a shared vision for change.

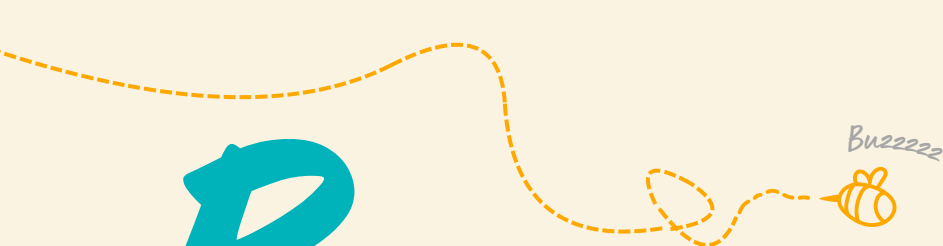
True to their name, Anchor Women ground and embody the inner power of women. They are living proof that when a woman stands in her strength, not only her own life changes, but also the patterns

of leadership, participation and democratic decision-making around her begin to shift.

When Anchor Women come together, the energy is electric. The collective power in the space is so strong that we gather outdoors, because if we meet inside, the roof might just blow off....



*When a woman
stands in her
strength, not only
her own life
changes*



BEEHIVE

Buzzzzzz



This is where the soul of the Buzz movement resides. A beehive is a circle of women, led by the Anchor women. This is the safe and brave space, where the women share what is in their hearts and minds. The place where they meet regularly, depending on the geography on a weekly or monthly basis.

In many cases, beehives are existing structures in society, like self help groups, or savings circles in which women put money together. However, beehives add a transformational layer to these existing structures. They open the pathway for women to deeply listen to each other, engage in deep dialogues, encourage each other and find so(u)lutions for personal and collective challenges. A beehive gives a deep sense of belonging and opens the path of transformation for the women. What is important is that the anchor woman leads in a horizontal way, fostering openness and creating trust without imposing any power or structure from above.



Beehives are the homes of Buzzing Bees, where sweet nectar is collected and distributed among the members. This is where learning, healing and transformation happens, time and time again. Energetically, beehives are like an oasis, a space where women are emotionally free to be themselves and can unload their daily stress and worries.

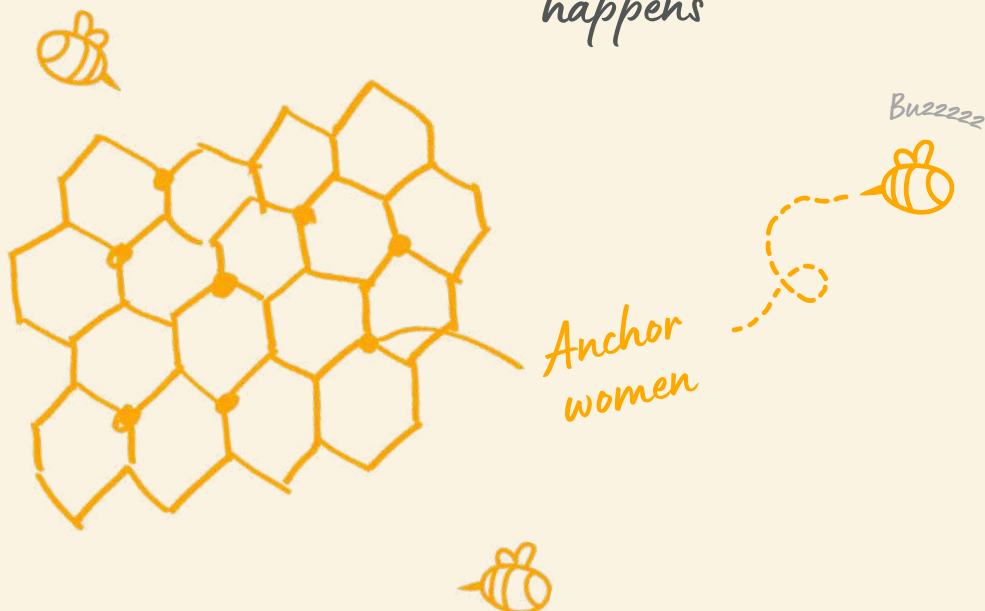


Buzzzzzz

What's happening in a beehive, what is it that women are discussing? In India we have done research on this. It turns out that about one third of the beehive meetings is used to share and discuss personal challenges, one third to exchange on personal finance & entrepreneurship and one third is used to discuss actions to be taken at community level - to improve the wellbeing of the community.

“

*This is where
learning, healing
and transformation
happens*”





C COMMUNITY TRAINERS

*Make communities
own the change*



Essentials

Over time we discovered something very exciting: our Anchor women (selected as natural leaders and groomed and coached as excellent facilitators) can train other women in their communities with as much (or even more) impact as our trainers. After years of lived experience, training and mentoring they receive a final ‘Training of Trainers’ which equips them to do the training themselves.

The beauty about this is that all knowledge, skills and tools are really transferred to the local communities and that Buzz Women can move on to other communities and kick-start the transformation journey there. In practice it is a ‘soft exit’ or ‘transition’ as we keep in touch with all our community trainers while they train more and more women (and hopefully in the near future also men and children).

This is also what makes Buzz Women an ‘exponential model’: not only do we embed knowledge within each community, we also extend our reach in an exponential way. Rather than relying on a linear growth model (more buses, more trainers) now we have thousands of trainers in thousands of communities.



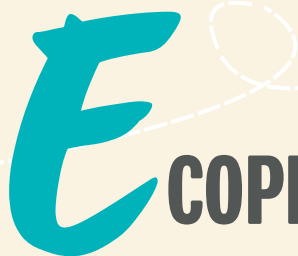
Access is key in everything we do at Buzz Women. The whole idea of Buzz Women originated in The Gambia when co-founder Dave was working in a local community and witnessed how eager villagers were to learn and grow. 'But setting up a school for them is not going to work,' a wise Gambian man said. 'The women won't come to any school because it is too far, too expensive, they can't leave their kids or the small business they run'. This was when the idea of schools on wheels was born: 'If women cannot go to a school, we'll bring it to them'.

This doorstep approach is critical, it removes the barriers that block women from developing themselves: the practical barrier ('I don't need to travel or leave my family alone for long'), emotional barrier ('school is just not meant for me') and financial barrier ('education costs money which I don't have').

Doorstep training is now a core building block in our approach. The schools on wheels travel to the women so that they can be trained in their own community, at their doorstep. We train women where and when it is convenient for them, mostly in time blocks of around 2.5 hours. As Uthara always says: we don't train in lengthy modules but in 'high impact capsules'.

*"Access is key
in everything
we do"*





COPRENEURSHIP

Enabling women to generate their own income has always been a major goal of our work. As all women have an entrepreneurial mindset and many of them are small scale entrepreneurs, understanding the nature of their business is vital. How do I make a profit, how can I keep track of my income and expenses, how can I invest to grow my business?

At Buzz Women we added, or better integrated another dimension in entrepreneurship: the ecological dimension. We are strong believers in natural wealth - where businesses are not extracting value from (or even destroying) nature, but work in harmony with nature. In our education programs we stimulate women to think about circularity in their businesses. We see many examples of women moving away from using chemical pesticides and fertilizers and embracing organic production ways. Many women start to create products made from organic local sources and sell them locally as well.

Green, local businesses are the ultimate win-win-win. Good for income for the women, good for health and great for the environment. In this way we are following the Gandhian philosophy of creating self-sufficient communities that can take care of their own needs in a natural way.

It also means redefining the concept of 'Wealth' beyond economic terms, we rather talk about Natural Wealth: wealth that is nature based and also more naturally distributed.

ECOPRENEURSHIP

BUILDING GREEN LOCAL ECONOMIES

WHEN WOMEN THRIVE
ECONOMIES THRIVE.
WHEN NATURE THRIVES,
WE ALL THRIVE. ♥

WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES
THAT WORK IN HARMONY
WITH NATURE AND
CREATE PROSPERITY
FOR ALL. ♥



SMART BUSINESS.
STRONG FOUNDATIONS.



KNOW YOUR
NUMBERS



MAKE A PROFIT



INVEST & GROW

GOOD FOR
WOMEN.
GOOD FOR
PEOPLE.
GOOD FOR
PLANET.



**GREEN, LOCAL
BUSINESSES**
ARE A WIN-WIN-WIN

THE ECOLOGICAL
DIMENSION.



USE NATURAL &
LOCAL RESOURCES



REDUCE WASTE,
REUSE, RECYCLE



PROTECT NATURE,
RESTORE BALANCE



REDEFINING WEALTH

Beyond economic
terms, we talk about
Natural Wealth



Nature
Based

Locally
rooted

Regenerative

Long-term
wellbeing

Shared

FELLOWSHIP

The spirit of fellowship is what characterizes the Buzz Women movement around the world. In the Cambridge Dictionary 'fellowship' is described as a friendly feeling that exists between people who have a shared interest or are doing something as a group. Not surprisingly, anchor women in India are named 'Gelathis' (pronounced - Gay-la-thi) in the local language: meaning 'friends'.



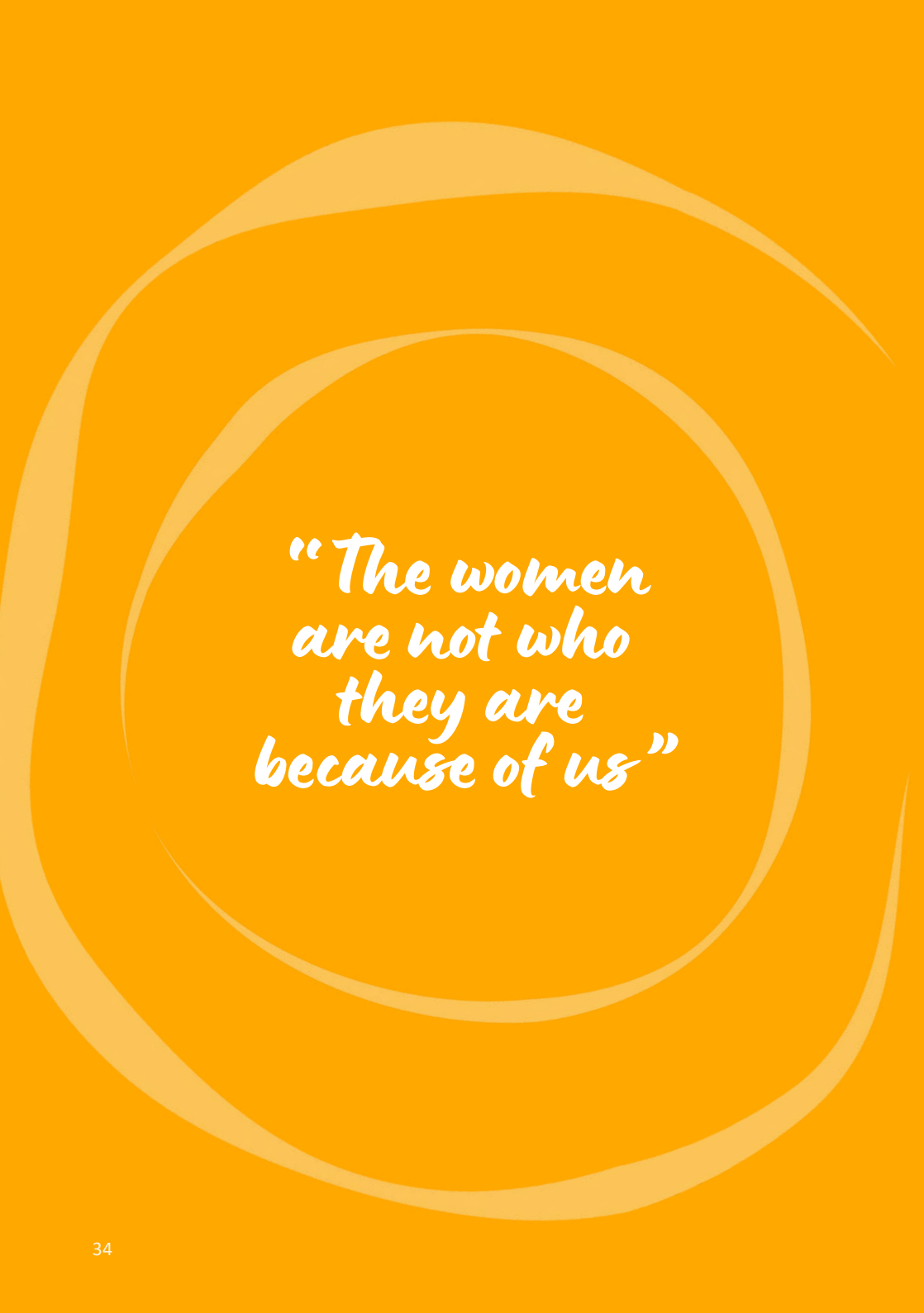
“

*The magic is that
collective and
personal interests
go hand in hand*

”

The Buzz spirit of friendship, accompaniment and solidarity is grounded in shared interests and shared realities. The magic is that collective and personal interests go hand in hand, with women realizing they are so much stronger together. In this it is important to realize that we are standing on the shoulders of giants: all the women groups that have existed (and still exist) in human history. From Self Help Groups in India to Osusu groups or Kafo's in West Africa and Chama's in Kenya, they are all based on solidarity among women.

At Buzz Women we are not only honoring these existing systems, but we build on them and extend them. Whereas many solidarity groups over time have become more transactional (especially for savings and credit groups), we enable them to become more transformational in nature by infusing knowledge and fostering peer learning.



*“The women
are not who
they are
because of us”*

III.

BUZZ

Philosophy



GIFT



*Free doesn't
mean it comes
without value*

Buzz Women is a living example of a gift economy in action: an ecosystem where countless forms of giving fuel transformation, connection, and change. At its heart lies the most powerful gift: a reminder to each woman of the strength, wisdom, and possibility already within her.

The doorstep education offered through Buzz Women is a gift free of charge, to ensure education is accessible and inclusive for all. Free doesn't mean it comes without value. On the contrary, its worth lies in the profound inner transformation and lasting impact

it ignites in the lives of women. Women who receive training have the possibility to contribute voluntarily to local pay-it-forward funds, making it possible for others to walk the same path.

This spirit of giving shows up in many forms. Anchor women offer their time, energy, and leadership to guide and support their groups. Community trainers voluntarily educate fellow women, men, and children, sharing their lived experience and knowledge. Funders contribute not just money, but trust and belief in the power of women-led change. And communities come together in reciprocity, circulating knowledge, support, and inspiration.

The gift of nature is embedded in the movement. Buzz Women nurtures awareness of the Earth's abundance while inspiring personal and collective action to protect the planet and address the climate crisis. Care for the self, the community, all living beings and the Earth are seen as deeply interconnected.

Together, these gifts create a movement grounded in solidarity, reciprocity, shared abundance, and mutual upliftment: a quiet yet powerful force of regeneration that grows not through consumption, but through contribution. For women in the movement, the beauty is that they are co-owners, contributors, and drivers of the change they wish to see. For outside funders, the beauty is that their gift is not used once but nurtured, passed on, and amplified within the community, creating ripples of lasting impact.



The beauty is that the women are co-owners, contributors, and drivers



HOLISTIC

In terms of our curriculum and learning goals we have only one core question that leads us: 'What matters most to women in their daily realities?'

When we started Buzz Women, Uthara went out to discuss the needs of women. She found out that their immediate concern was around money and the poverty they experienced. Lack of money (and often even having debts) were the main stress factors in women's lives. One level deeper, we found out that this lack of money had to do with the lack of knowledge on how to manage money in the first place. Women never learned how to save, invest and take care of their household expenses. Moreover, many women - no matter how entrepreneurial they were in terms of their mindset - didn't know how to account for their small business and calculate their profits.

Whereas the signs of poverty and daily stress and the lack of knowledge and skills were pretty apparent, there are more invisible barriers that withhold women from living their full potential. One major factor is the patriarchal societies in which they grew up and where the roles and value of women have been denied for generations. This has a major impact on the self-image and mental models that women have about themselves. Many women struggle with low self-esteem and self-confidence, living in a world shaped by poverty and patriarchy.

Despite serious pushback from funders in the early days ('you have to focus your work only on financial literacy and not do other things') we never doubted that our curriculum should be holistic in nature. Holistic both in a horizontal way, by addressing the core dimensions of women's daily reality, and in a vertical way, by working with the deeper mental models that shape confidence, participation and agency in family, community and economic life. This has resulted in our 5C curriculum in which we focus on Confidence, Cash (financial literacy and entrepreneurship), Climate (preventing and dealing with climate change), Care (physical and mental health) and Community (participation in decision-making).



CURRICULUM

Holistic, focused on what matters most to women



CARE

Women taking care of their physical and mental health

CASH



Women improving their financial security



CLIMATE

Women taking climate action

5C'S



CONFIDENCE

Women being certain of their abilities



COMMUNITY

Women using the power of the collective

Philosophy



INNER STRENGTH

If there is only one thing you should remember when thinking about Buzz Women, this is it! The innate belief in the inner power of women is center stage in everything we do.

From day one in Buzz Women we had serious problems with widely used words like 'empowerment' and 'beneficiaries'. Empowerment and beneficiaries imply that women are passive recipients, rather than active changemakers. 'Who are we to empower other people?' was a question we asked ourselves.

Rather than seeing ourselves as helpers we view ourselves as 'reminders' and 'accompaniers' in the inner transformation that women go through. By showing up and creating the safe and brave space to share, learn and dream we remind women of the limitless potential in themselves. An inner strength that often has been buried under layers of patriarchal dust.

“

*Who are we to
empower other
people?*

”

In our work we remind women that they are shapers of their own lives and give them knowledge, tools and skills to act on this. Once dusted off, the inner diamond starts to shine and illuminates the pathway forward. Self-Shakti was the best terminology to describe this. In Hinduism, Shakti is the 'Universal Power' that underlies and sustains all existence. In Sanskrit the term Shakti (Śakti) is the feminine word-meaning 'energy, ability, strength, effort, power, might, capability'. In everything we do, we remind women that Shakti and Universal Power are in all of us. We pride ourselves that around the world our starting or 'flagship' learning module is called Inner Strength.



We remind women that Shakti and Universal Power are in all of us

TURN ON YOUR LIGHT



by Ben Okri

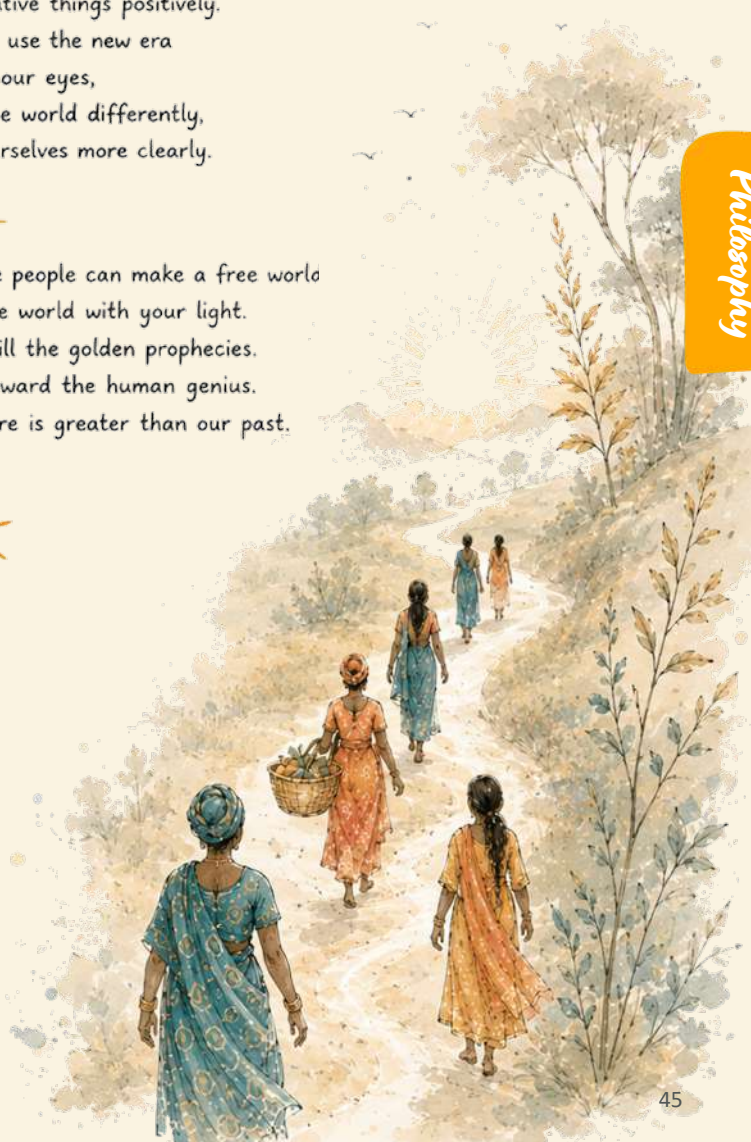
The new era is already here:
Here the new time begins anew.
The new era happens every day,
Every day is a new world,
A new calendar.
All great moments, all great eras,
Are just every moment
And every day writ large.
Thousands of years of loving, failing, killing,
Creating, surprising, oppressing,
And thinking ought now to start
To bear fruit, to deliver their rich harvest.

Will you be at the harvest,
Among the gatherers of new fruits?
Then you must begin today to remake
Your mental and spiritual world,
And join the warriors and celebrants
Of freedom, realisers of great dreams.

You can't remake the world
Without remaking yourself.
Each new era begins within.
It is an inward event,
With unsuspected possibilities
For inner liberation.

We could use it to turn on
Our inward lights.
We could use it to use even the dark
And negative things positively.
We could use the new era
To clean our eyes,
To see the world differently,
To see ourselves more clearly.

Only free people can make a free world
Infect the world with your light.
Help fulfill the golden prophecies.
Press forward the human genius.
Our future is greater than our past.







JOY

Yes, making a difference is hard work. It's extremely tough when you start something from scratch anywhere in the world. It is even harder when you are trying to grow and change systems that are so hard-wired and sticky in nature. Yet all the hardship, challenges, failures and long hours can't compare to the overwhelming joy which is inherent in our work. Seeing the smiles on the faces of women, feeling the radiant energy, listening to the compelling stories of how women change their lives.

Philosophy

“

*Where there is love,
there cannot be any
fear or anger*

”



‘Where there is love, there cannot be any fear or anger’ is a beautiful saying. We feel this is very true for Buzz Women. It is important to be aware that Buzz Women is rooted in love towards women, men and all living beings. We were not founded out of anger towards ‘the system’ or blaming ‘the men’ for any wrongdoing. Our focus is always on ‘how can this work’ rather than searching for explanations why things are not working or looking for others to blame.

Deep joy in life comes from the freedom of being your true self and making a meaningful contribution to the world. It is the sweet spot where the ‘Big We’ (our collective needs and aspirations) and ‘Healthy I’ (our unique individuality and contribution to the world) come together in harmony. At Buzz we try to foster an environment where the Healthy I and Big We can flourish, both for the women and for ourselves.

“ *The sweet spot where the
‘Big We’ and ‘Healthy I’
come together in harmony* ”

KINDLE



At Buzz Women we aim for long term, lasting change. Deeply anchored within the women and their communities. We are not striving for a sudden, forceful revolution, we ignite an ‘evolutionary revolution’, taking place step by step, woman by woman.

This long term approach requires a distinctive mindset and attitude that is best described by the word kindle. To kindle first of all means to start a fire burning. This is a delicate and typically a slow process, like when you're starting a fire in a fireplace. Kindling is little bits of wood, dry twigs or other material that you feed to the fire to get it going. This resembles very much the change we are igniting in women and their communities. It typically starts small and from within, but with continuous attention and reinforcement the fire gets stronger and stronger, slowly but surely.

Within the Buzz Women movement the anchor women are the core ‘kindlers’ of change; they guard the fire in the beehive and add new pieces of wood and oxygen to the fire. This brings to mind another meaning of the word ‘kindling’. It also means to stir up or arouse

someone's interest and cause something to glow. All our different interventions and learning programs stir up the interest of women to acquire new knowledge, develop new skills and to use their imagination.

What if we can kindle a fire that spreads around the world? Let us dream big and imagine how Buzz - as a global movement - gently kindles a fire that spreads from woman to woman, community to community, country to county and eventually lights up the entire world. A fire that illuminates the feminine pieces in our global puzzle, lifts them up and makes them glow again.

“ *A fire that spreads from
woman to woman,
and eventually lights up
the entire world* ”



Philosophy



LISTENING

Those who listen, change the world. At Buzz Women, we believe that listening is essential and that relationships with our movement are our greatest asset. When a woman is truly listened to, something deeper happens than just sharing her story. Beyond the words she speaks, and even beyond the stories she tells herself, her body and nervous system begin to relax. This is where real healing begins.

True listening naturally brings the Four A's to life: attention, acceptance, appreciation, and affection. These come from relational neuroscience and attachment theory, and are described in the book *A General Theory of Love* by Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon. Together, the Four A's describe the conditions that allow human beings to feel safe and connected. At Buzz Women we do this by creating space for trust and openness through full presence (attention), welcoming whatever is shared (acceptance), acknowledging each woman's value (appreciation), and offering warmth and kindness (affection).

In this kind of safe and brave space, women don't need advice to change. When they feel safe enough, their thoughts settle, their inner wisdom becomes clearer, and new insights emerge on their own. Healing happens not because someone tells a woman what to do, but because she can finally hear herself. This is why listening is vitally important within Buzz Women. It is not something passive, but active, relational and transformational.



*Those who
listen, change
the world*

Philosophy

*Healing happens not
because someone tells a
woman what to do,
but because she can
finally hear herself*



What about the.. **MEN**



‘What about the men?’ is one of the most frequently asked questions we come across when talking about Buzz Women. ‘How do they react and is there a lot of resistance you have to overcome?’ Reality is that when we started the Buzz Women movement, we expected a lot of pushback or resistance from men. The opposite is true. In general, men are very supportive of our work and proud of the visible growth and development of their wives, sisters, and daughters.

We believe that the underlying reason for this non-resistance lies in the fact that Buzz Women was never founded on the basis of anger towards patriarchy and never rooted in anger towards men. What also helps is that Buzz Women is very transparent in nature, with our schools in wheels clearly being visible in communities. After their initial training sessions women are encouraged to share their learnings and do their ‘homework’ together with their husbands and children.

This does not mean that there is no work to do. Stories of domestic violence, dominance by men and oppression of women continue to exist on a large scale and are deeply rooted in society. So far Buzz



*Proud men behind
a successful woman
entrepreneur*

Women has not been training men directly (with a few exceptions) or opening up the beehives to men, as we don't want to jeopardize the safety within the women groups. We will continue to reflect in the coming years on how we can engage men in the development of their families and communities. We do have male allies (like male village leaders and elders) encouraging women to take part in the training.

At the same time we realize that we need to see men neither as ‘obstacles’ or ‘allies’, but that they are stakeholders and co-owners of the development process. Men have much to gain from healthy family relationships, a stronger local economy and harmonious community relations.

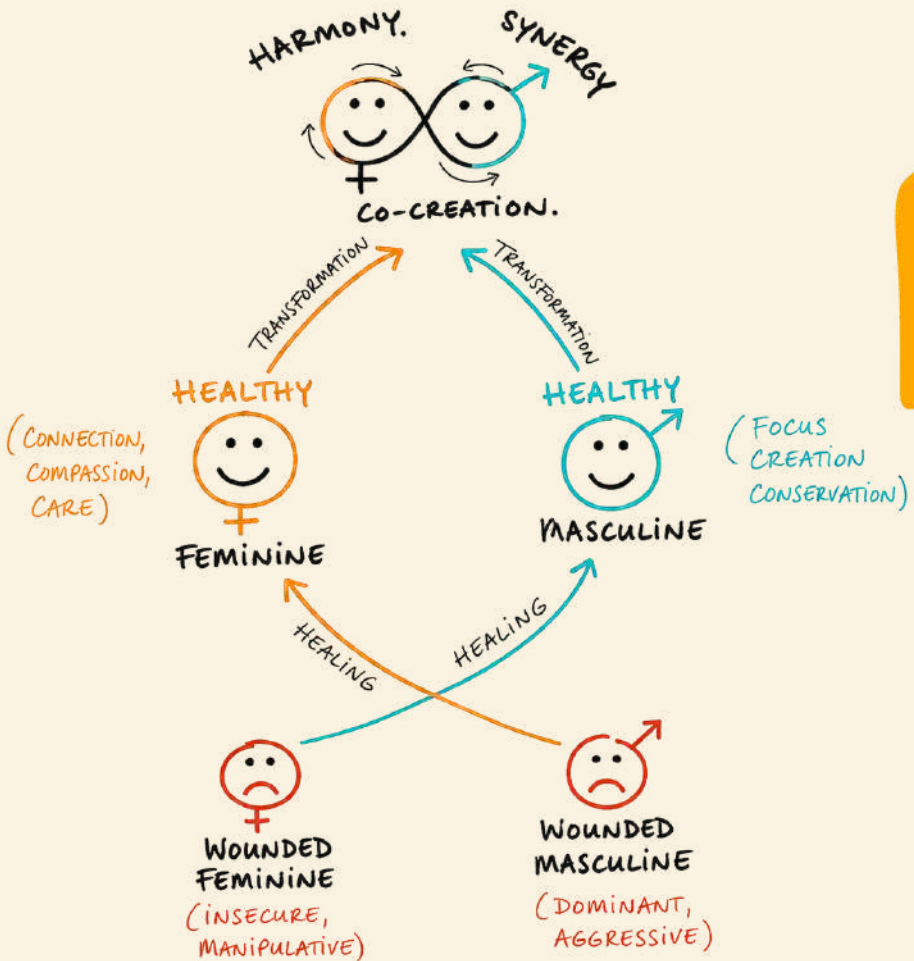
“*Liberating the feminine is not a battle against the masculine.*”

Liberating the feminine is not a battle against the masculine. Ultimately, our vision and dream is to go beyond the gender dimension (and tension of ‘male versus female’) and move into what we can coin as ‘gender synergy’ or even better: balance and harmony between feminine and masculine energies & qualities in individuals and societies.

When we reconnect (in ourselves and our communities) healthy feminine energy (care, compassion and connection) and healthy masculine energy (creation, conservation and focus), a new path for humanity will unfold. A pathway which will no longer be rooted in fear, competition and division, but that will be grounded in harmony, love and creativity. A third way that will transcend duality and traditional polarities and leads to a new dimension of living in harmony with all living beings.

LIBERATION

DAVE'S THEORY ON HEALING
THE FEMININE & MASCULINE





NON-ATTACHMENT

While working with passion on our mission it is crucial that we always understand our role. We are not owners, women are. We are not helpers, women help themselves. We are not our impact, it is caused by women.

As much as building a movement, mobilizing women, conducting training and repairing flat tires, the Buzz Women journey is a spiritual journey. A journey of letting go of our egos, the tendency to control or identify ourselves with impact, scale or recognition.

Non-attachment teaches us to act wholeheartedly and release the results. As Ousman Cham always reminds us: 'the women are not who they are because of us'. It also teaches us to let go of the idea that 'we know best how this works'. It teaches us to stay humble and open to other ways and other ideas.

“ It teaches us to let go of the idea that we know best how this works ”

“

*Don't look at women
as numbers, as impact
figures or results of
our interventions*”

Non-attachment invites us to not look at women as numbers, as impact figures or results of our interventions. It reminds us to see women as individuals, as human beings fully capable of making their own decisions. Non-attachment dismisses the idea of ‘I empower you’. Rather it says ‘we walk with you, we accompany you on your journey until it no longer serves any value’.

Non-attachment has implications in everything we do and say. The way we act (as enablers rather than helpers), see ourselves (as stewards rather than owners), the way we interact with local partners (as collaborators and shapers rather than implementers), and how we deal with funders (as aligned supporters rather than drivers of agendas).

It allows us to act with commitment without clinging to control, to measure impact without becoming defined by metrics, and to remain open to learning, change, and letting go. In this way, non-attachment keeps our focus on what truly matters: enabling women to grow into their own power, in their own time and on their own terms.

LANGUAGE MATTERS



At Buzz Women, we believe that language is a reflection of our values – and a **powerful tool** for change.

THE WAY WE ACT IS:



ROOTED IN RESPECT

We see every woman as equal, capable and wise.

We listen. We learn. We walk alongside.



FOCUSED ON STRENGTHS

We don't fix women – we fuel their inner strength and support their dreams.



DRIVEN BY PARTNERSHIP

We work with communities, not for them.

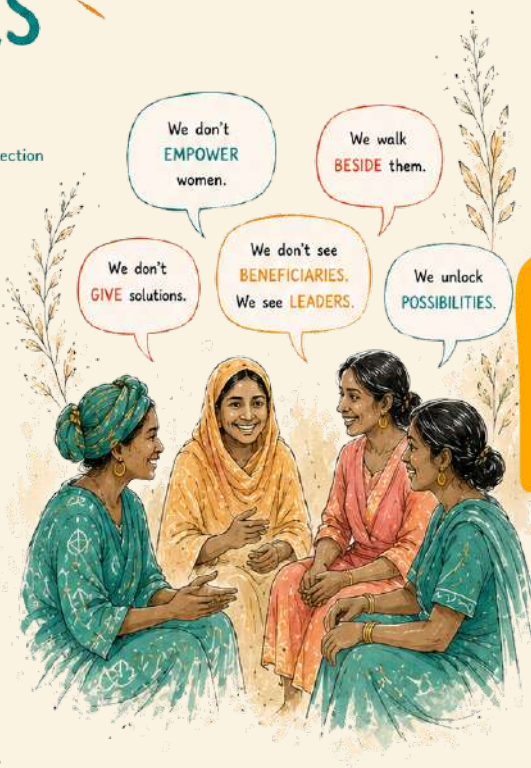
We grow local leaders and trust local wisdom.



COMMITTED TO DIGNITY

We create safe spaces. We protect rights.

We celebrate every voice.



Philosophy



THEREFORE, WE CHOOSE OUR WORDS CAREFULLY.



INSTEAD OF...

WE SAY...

Empower	→	Fuel inner strength
Help	→	Walk alongside
Fix	→	Support growth
Poor women	→	Stand for rights & dignity
They	→	We, together
Beneficiary	→	Community leader
Project	→	Journey together
Opportunity	→	Opportunity to grow

INSTEAD OF...

WE SAY...

Teach	→	Share & learn together
Educate	→	Inspire & awaken
Tell	→	Ask & explore
Our program	→	Our shared journey
Target group	→	Community partners
Impact on them	→	Change for all, by all
Change them	→	Support their dreams

INSTEAD OF...

WE SAY...

Develop	→	Grow together
Women's issues	→	Opportunities for all
Gender gap	→	Balance & fairness
Vulnerable	→	Resilient & powerful
Charity	→	Solidarity in action
Compliance	→	Integrity & values

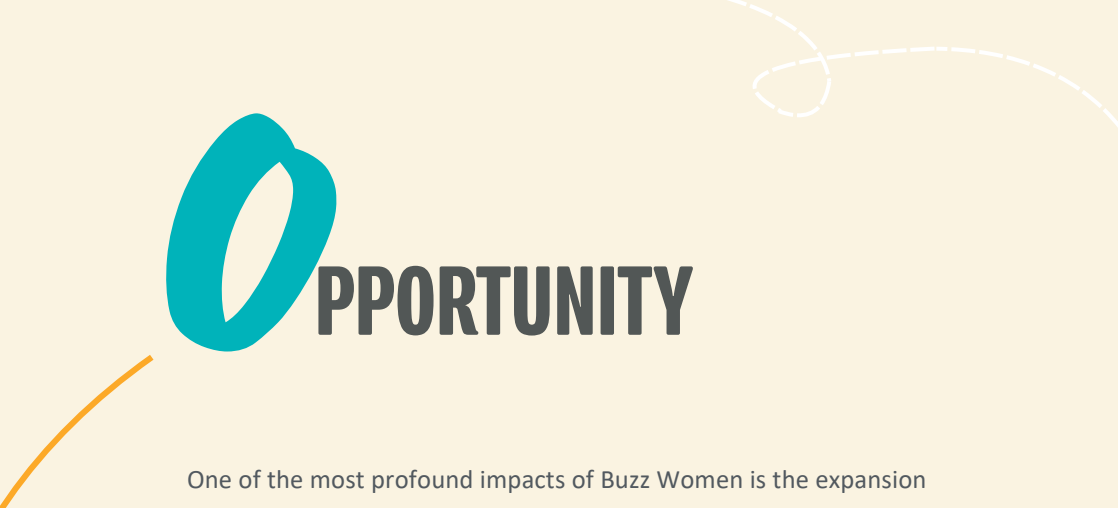
The background is a solid teal color. In the center, there are two concentric circles. The inner circle is a lighter shade of teal, and the outer circle is a slightly darker shade. The text is centered within the inner circle.

*“The most
essential is in
the invisible”*

IV.

BUZZ

Impact

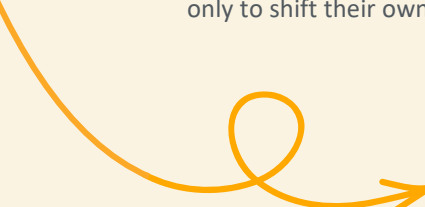


PPORTUNITY

One of the most profound impacts of Buzz Women is the expansion of opportunity. As Uthara always reminds us: 'The biggest injustice in the world is not the lack of wealth, but the lack of opportunity'. At Buzz Women, we bring opportunities to learn and share to the doorstep of women. These include opportunities to be heard and listened to, to take initiative, to set up businesses, voice opinions and chase your dreams.

Even more important than these visible opportunities is enabling women to transform their mindset into an Opportunity Mindset. As a logical result of generations of poverty, patriarchy, and oppression, many women have grown accustomed to seeing themselves as followers in a society that has long prescribed servant and submissive roles for women as daughters, partners, and mothers.

The Buzz Women movement reminds women that they are shapers, not followers. As their confidence grows, they begin not only to shift their own thinking, but also to question the

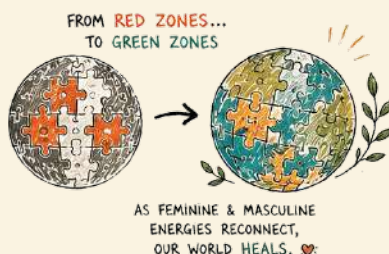


The biggest injustice in the world is not the lack of wealth, but the lack of opportunity

expectations, habits and structures that have limited participation, opportunity and democratic voice. As this “Buzz” of opportunity spreads from woman to woman, village to village, and region to region, the underlying energy in these places begins to shift. Perhaps this is the most essential impact of all: a shift that cannot always be seen, but can be deeply felt.

It is as if the frequency or background music begins to change: from a stubborn humming noise repeating the message “you cannot do it,” to cheerful, light music that lifts the spirit. In agricultural terms, we would speak of regeneration of the soil. The “social soil” in each community gains air and nutrients and becomes fertile ground. In business terms, we might describe the creation of a vast start-up ecosystem or incubation valley. In spiritual traditions, it would be called awakening, a profound shift in individual and collective consciousness.

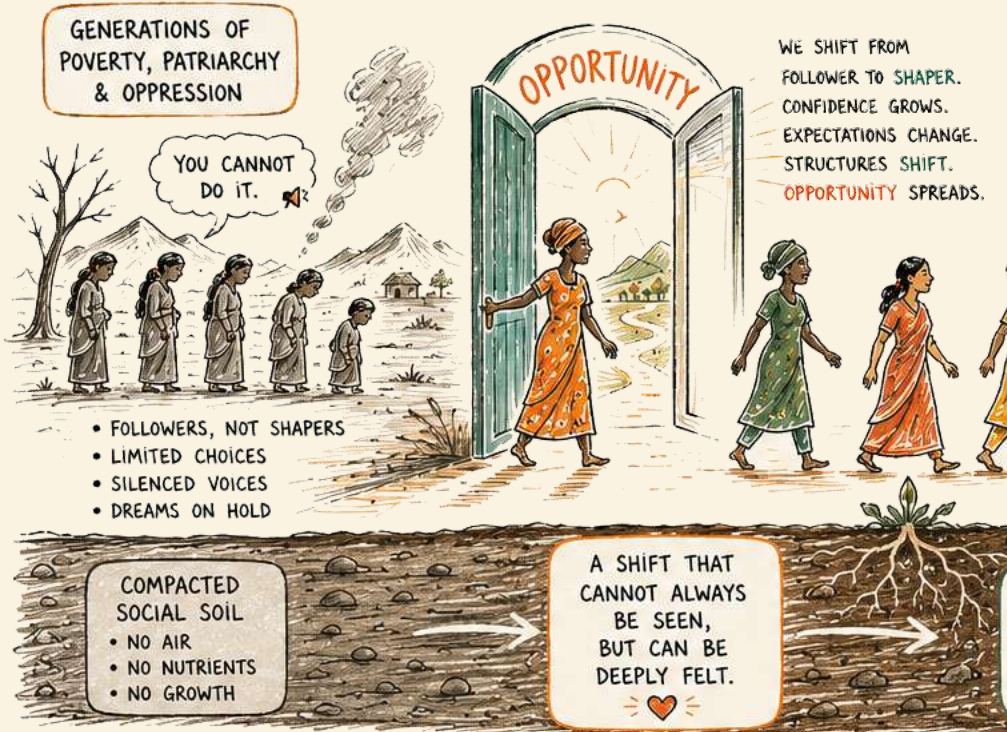
If we were to look at the earth as a puzzle, it might feel as though the feminine pieces are being lifted up and reconnected with the masculine pieces. From space, ‘red zones’ of patriarchy, poverty, and oppression would gradually turn into ‘green zones’ filled with harmony, possibility, and opportunity. A poet might call them ‘fields of dreams’, where thousands of flowers bloom and surviving becomes thriving.



≡ OPPORTUNITY ≡

THE BIGGEST INJUSTICE IS NOT
THE LACK OF WEALTH,
BUT THE LACK OF OPPORTUNITY.

— UTHARA —



AT BUZZ WOMEN, WE BRING OPPORTUNITIES
TO LEARN, SHARE AND GROW –
TO THE DOORSTEP OF WOMEN.



BE HEARD &
LISTENED TO



TAKE
INITIATIVE



SET UP
BUSINESSES



VOICE
OPINIONS



CHASE YOUR
DREAMS.

THE BUZZ OF OPPORTUNITY
SPREADS FROM WOMAN TO WOMAN,
VILLAGE TO VILLAGE, REGION TO REGION.



REGENERATED SOCIAL SOIL

- FULL OF AIR & NUTRIENTS
- FERTILE GROUND
- READY TO GROW



AGRICULTURALLY: REGENERATION OF SOIL



IN BUSINESS: A VAST START-UP ECOSYSTEM



IN SPIRITUALITY: AWAKENING



THE MUSIC CHANGES: FROM "YOU CANNOT DO IT"
TO "YOU CAN, AND YOU WILL."





Food for thought...

Speaking of mindsets, here is a final thought. The question that nearly every funder asks first, in 99% of proposal formats is: 'What is the biggest problem you are addressing?' Honestly, we think this question itself might be the problem. It locks you into problem-mode: scanning for what's broken, then trying to think your way out of it. As Einstein pointed out long ago, problems are never solved by the same thinking that created them.

At Buzz Women, we've learned something just as fundamental: the energy of the solution is never the energy of the problem. If we keep viewing women as 'poor', 'vulnerable', or in need of being 'empowered' by someone else, we don't solve anything. In fact, we quietly reinforce the very story we are trying to change. So, dear future funders: next time please ask us 'What is the opportunity you are creating?' Just a thought. (A rather good one, we'd say.)

“ *The energy of the
solution is never the
energy of the problem* ”



Impact

PRACTICAL

The impact of Buzz Women is practical, immediate, and deeply rooted in real life. Change is only meaningful if it shows up in daily decisions, reduced stress, and greater control over one's life. If learning does not translate into action, it does not create impact.

We are dreamers, but above all, we are doers. Over the years, we learned the hard way that impact only happens when training is immediately relevant and directly applicable to women's daily lives. What a woman learns in the morning must work for her in the afternoon. When it does not, she will not return for follow-up training and for beehive meetings. Real impact begins in the first five minutes of any session, when a woman feels: 'This is about me and my life.' Not something abstract or generic, but something that speaks directly to her reality.

This practical focus is at the heart of all our training programs and it is what turns learning into action. By using tools that respond to real, everyday challenges, women are able to make decisions that immediately improve their lives: ease the constant stress caused by chronic money shortages, paying school fees for children, buying the big bag of rice needed to feed the family, repairing a roof that has been leaking for months, or covering medical bills when a family member falls ill.



Impact



*“ If learning does not
translate into
action, it does not
create impact ”*

Because we care deeply about real-world impact, we have always been committed to tracking and understanding the practical changes in women's lives. We look at tangible outcomes such as income earned, profit generated, and savings over time. At the same time, we pay attention to less visible but equally important shifts: the confidence women feel inside and their belief in their own ability to shape the future.

This is not about theory. Women apply what they learn to make real choices that shape their futures and create lasting change for their families. Creating this kind of impact requires a practical mindset throughout our organization. That is why Buzz works with people who are deeply grounded in the communities we serve. Our team members have lived experience; they grew up and live in the same villages where we work. They understand the realities of local women because they share them.

The goal is never to teach, preach, or impress, but to work alongside women with humility and respect. A hands-on mentality, flexibility in changing circumstances, and the ability to work with limited resources and in remote areas are essential. This grounded, practical approach ensures that our work remains relevant and that our impact is real and tangible.

“ The goal is never to
teach, preach, or
impress, but to work
alongside women with
humility and respect ”

Impact



QUESTIONS

The impact of Buzz Women lives in the questions we ask, and in the questions women begin to ask themselves. By infusing questions into everything we do, we open up the status quo and create space for change.

For many women, the stories they have heard since childhood have kept them silent and feeling powerless: stories about what they are allowed to want, say, earn, or decide. These stories shape daily choices and quietly reinforce systems of inequality. Through questions, these narratives begin to loosen their grip. Women start to question assumptions that once felt fixed and inevitable. This moment, when a woman realizes ‘this does not have to be the way it is’, is where real impact begins.

Systems change begins with story change. A system only holds as long as people believe in the stories that sustain it, stories about who has power, whose voice matters, and what is possible. When women begin to question these stories, the system itself starts to shift. By refinding their voice, power, and agency, women move from adapting to the system to actively reshaping it.

Questions build agency and create safety. They turn training and beehive meetings into spaces of dialogue rather than instruction. Instead of being told what to do, women are invited to reflect,

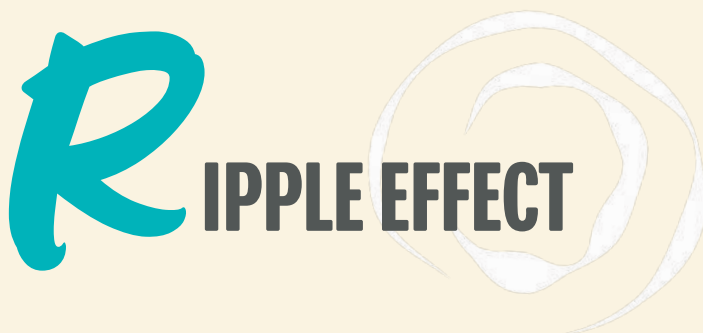
speak, and decide for themselves. Questions make every voice matter and help women recognize that they already carry knowledge, strength, and solutions within them. With each question asked, confidence grows and leadership emerges.

This culture of questioning also shapes Buzz Women as an organization. We continuously ask ourselves critical questions about our role, our intentions and the intended and unintended impact of our work. By welcoming reflection and difficult conversations, we remain responsive, accountable and ready to adapt.

Finally, we are willing to question the systems we are part of. Just as we encourage women to question the stories that limit them, Buzz Women questions the rules and structures we are expected to follow. Rather than automatically accepting the so-called rules of the game, we choose to find our own path.

“*Systems change
begins with
story change*”





Our logo reflects it all: we see each individual woman as the starting point of a ripple of changes around her. We call it the 'Triple Ripple Effect': personal transformation of women leads to community transformation which leads to Systems transformation.

Personal transformation is about inner transformation and the life-transforming boost in self-confidence and self-awareness. This enables women to break the cycle of poverty and dependency, using their own power, talent and voice.

Community transformation is about building local economies and restoring local ecologies. Women become confident entrepreneurs, starting and expanding their businesses and growing a thriving local economy. Women also become active climate agents, taking climate action in their homes, businesses and communities.

Systems transformation is about changing the social, political and entrepreneurial fabric of society: how decisions are made, whose voices are heard, how value is created, and how responsibility for people, communities and nature is shared.

What we see happening is that women become change-makers and decision-makers in society, transforming patriarchy and poverty from within. In addition, women become inspiring role models for future generations. As confident and courageous mothers they have a strong influence on the mindset and values of children.

We see women as natural multipliers of impact. When women have access to education and income, they tend to reinvest in their children's education and health, support other women and share knowledge and opportunities. Buzz Women is organized to stimulate this natural multiplier effect even more: the beehives and the peer-to-peer learning model, anchor women, community trainers, new countries learning from others, etc. In this way local ripples become global waves of transformation, transcending borders and cultures.



TRIPPLE RIPPLE EFFECT

*We see each individual woman
as the starting point of a
ripple of changes around her*



Impact



Let's zoom in on the systemic change that was mentioned in the Ripple Effect. At Buzz Women we are working on what we call 'The mother of all root causes'. We believe that the greatest challenges of our time (climate collapse, inequality, poverty, war and conflict) do not stem only from broken systems, but from a deeper (and often overlooked) imbalance at the heart of humanity: the imbalance between feminine and masculine energy & values.

For centuries, the world has undervalued and suppressed feminine energy: the forces of compassion, connection, intuition, and care. These are not 'soft' values. They are the fundamental capacities that allow societies to thrive, economies to regenerate, and human beings to live in balance with one another and the planet. The consequence of this suppression of feminine energy and values has been that masculine energy has become disconnected, unbalanced and out of control. This has resulted in dominance, aggression and a focus on short term gains.

Buzz Women exists to liberate feminine potential at scale. We bring education, awareness, and transformation to the doorsteps of women, awakening a force that has been dormant, hidden, and too often forbidden. This liberation of feminine energy within women also serves as an invitation for men to feel, value and

A large, light-colored swirl graphic is located in the top right corner of the page, partially overlapping the text area.

“ Buzz Women exists
to liberate feminine
potential at scale ”

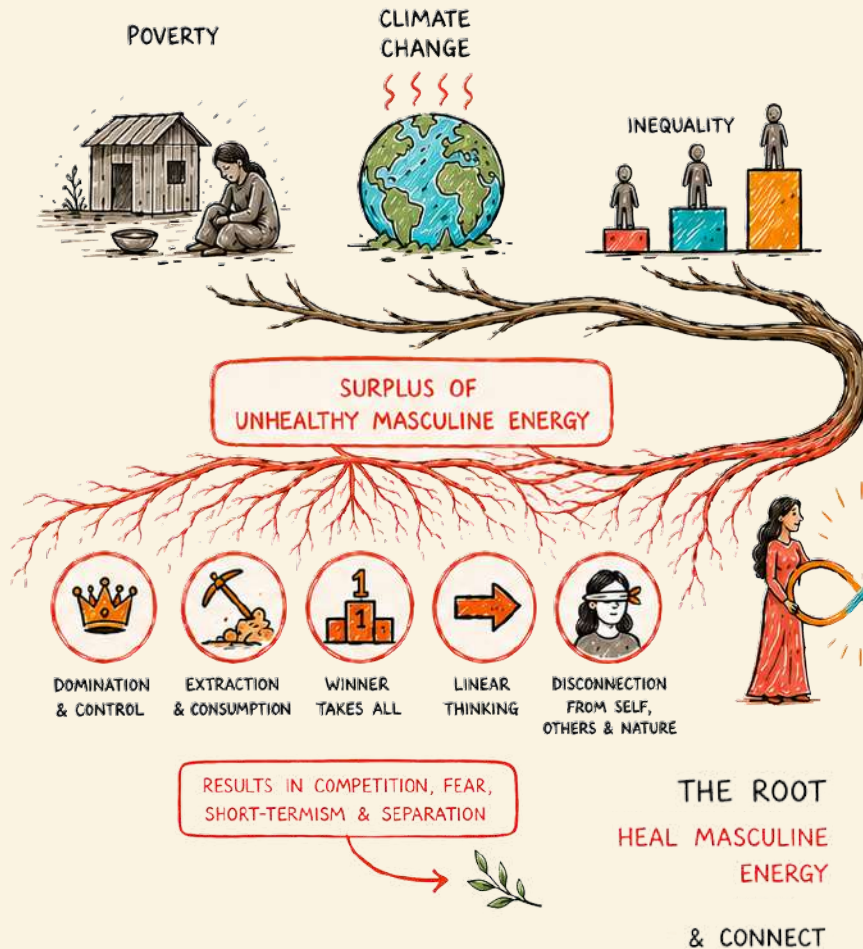
express the feminine energy within themselves and rebalance (or heal) the masculine energy within them.

Liberating, healing and connecting healthy feminine energy and healthy masculine energy will rebalance our world in many ways. Actions will be guided by wisdom and empathy, sustainability will replace extraction, and responsibility will increasingly extend beyond human interests alone, towards care for communities, ecosystems and other living beings

A balanced world will be far from a passive world, it will be an attentive world, where people are listening more to each other, emotions can be shared openly and collaboration replaces constant competition. In other words, in a balanced world, the constant ‘background hum’ of anxiety, pressure and the sense of inadequacy would be largely gone.

Of course, we cannot predict the future. However, in our work we are seeing many glimpses of an emerging different future. In communities where feminine energy is liberated at scale, we already witness a shift in relationships, decision-making, care for each other and love for nature. We believe this is the preview of a balanced world in which people, communities, animals and ecosystems can flourish in greater harmony.

THE MOTHER OF ALL ROOT CAUSES

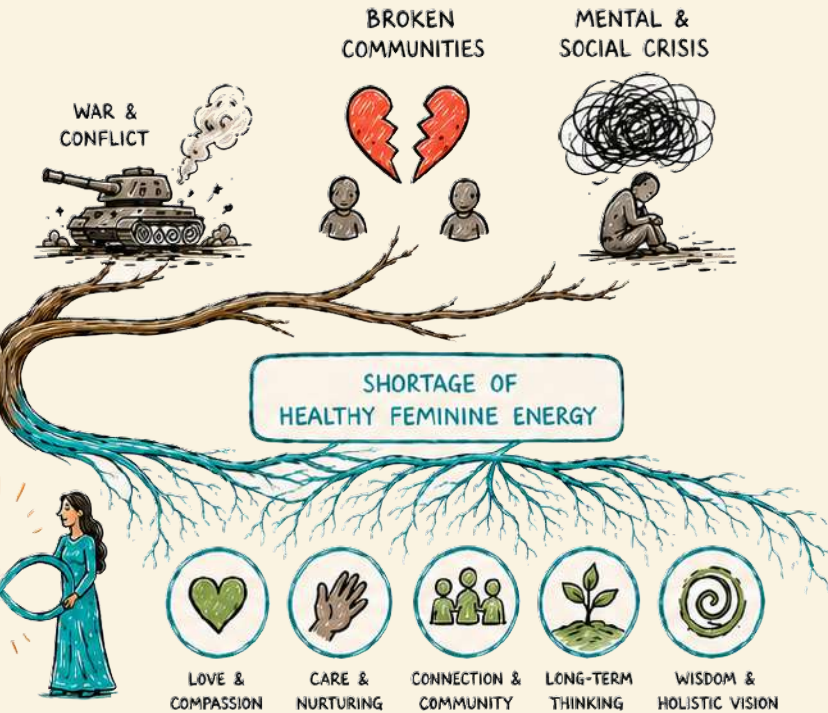


PS.

FEMININE AND MASCULINE ENERGY ARE IN EVERY PERSON, REGARDLESS OF GENDER. BUZZ WOMEN LIBERATES FEMININE ENERGY AND HEALS MASCULINE ENERGY IN WOMEN AND INVITES MEN TO FOLLOW SUIT.

WHEN FEMININE ENERGY FLOWS
WE HEAL THE

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST PROBLEMS STEM FROM A DEEPER ROOT.



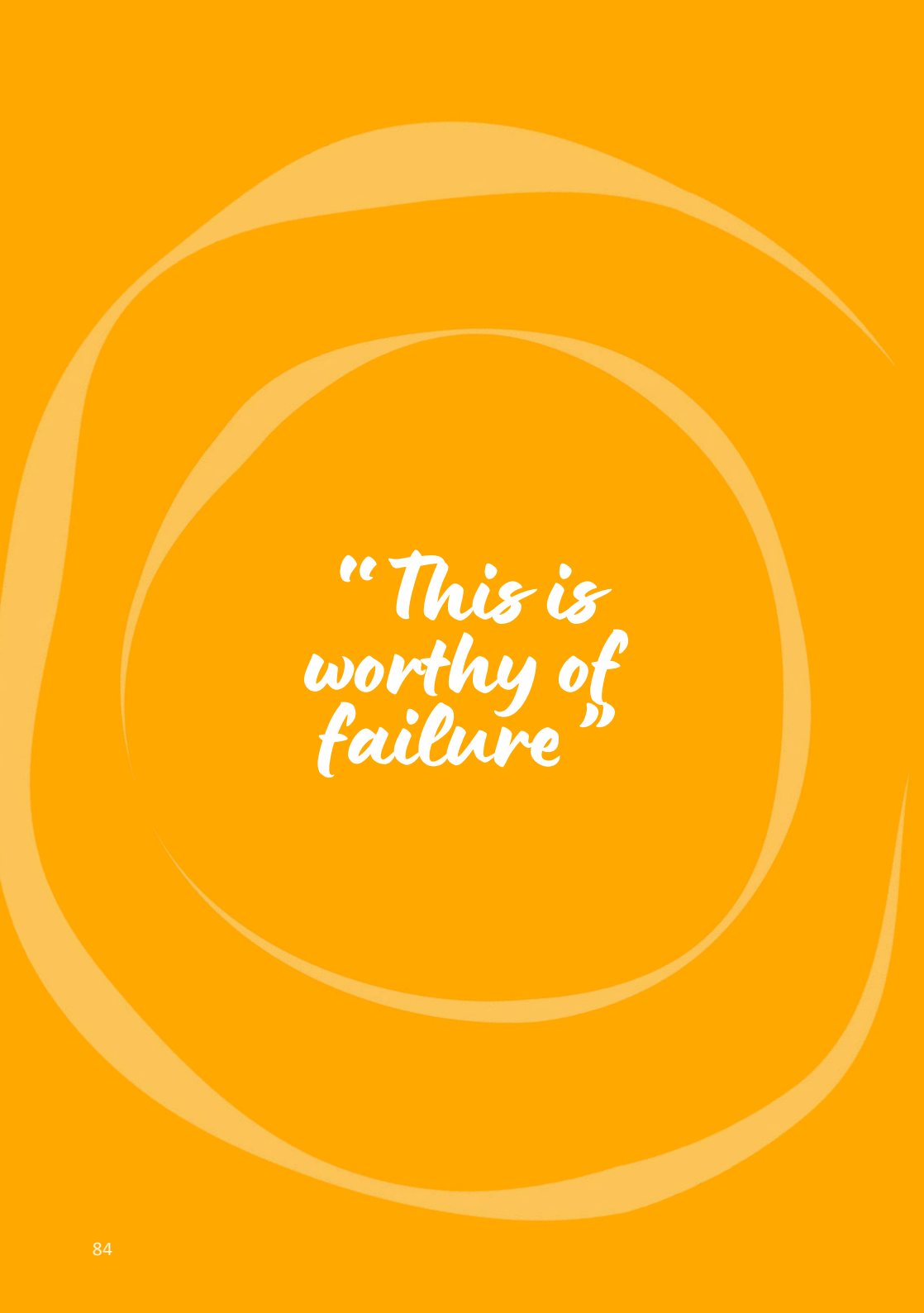
SOLUTION:

LIBERATE HEALTHY
FEMININE ENERGY

CREATES COLLABORATION, TRUST,
REGENERATION & THRIVING FOR ALL

THEM

& MASCULINE ENERGY SERVES,
WORLD TOGETHER. ❤️

The background is a solid orange color. Overlaid on this are several concentric, hand-drawn style circles in a lighter shade of orange. The circles are centered on the page and vary in size, creating a layered effect.

*“This is
worthy of
failure”*

V.

BUZZ

Learnings



When people ask us about the greatest asset of Buzz Women, the answer is clear and simple: trust. We discovered that in a highly transactional world it is possible to build a global movement based on trust.

Buzz Women is built on trust in multiple, deeply interconnected ways. It all begins with our unwavering trust in the inner strength and unlimited potential of women. At the heart of Buzz Women lies the belief that every woman already carries unlimited power within her. Our role is not to 'give' women power, but to accompany them in self-remembering: to reconnect with the strength, wisdom, and confidence that have always been theirs.

Our starting point is the conviction that every woman is already whole and complete. Yet this innate wholeness is often covered by a 'veil' that prevents women from fully shining their inner light into the world. This veil is frequently shaped by upbringing and by growing up in environments marked by poverty, inequality, and patriarchy. Over time, these external forces can obscure self-belief, limit aspirations, and silence inner voices.

Buzz Women exists to gently lift this veil. Through safe spaces, peer support and shared learning, we create environments where trust can grow: trust in oneself, trust in one another, and trust in the possibility of change. When women are trusted and trust themselves, transformation starts happening.

Trust does not stop at the level of the women we serve; it is embedded in every aspect of how Buzz Women works. It shapes the way we connect with communities and all our partners, by listening deeply, acting with integrity, and keeping our promises. It guides how we collaborate with our coworkers, grounded in mutual respect, openness, and shared responsibility. It informs how we engage with funders, through transparency, honesty, and long-term partnerships built on trust rather than control.

“
*When women are trusted
and trust themselves,
transformation starts
happening*
”



At the core of our work is a profound trust in women's capacity to change their own lives and the lives of their families and communities. We trust the impact of our work even beyond what can be measured. In fact, we believe the most essential impact is often invisible: the inner shifts in confidence, agency, and self-worth that ripple outward into families, communities, and ultimately societies. In this, we trust that what we are building is not just for today, but for generations to come, like building cathedrals whose full beauty may only be seen long after we are gone.

"At the core of our work is a profound trust in women's capacity"

Learnings



What we learned over time is that the big, universal challenges of our times need local solutions. MIT-Professor Otto Scharmer states it clearly: ‘While many problems are global, most solutions are hyperlocal, place-based, and regionally replicable’. Scharmer argues that while challenges like climate change or social inequality are global in scope, effective action must be rooted in specific places and communities (hyperlocal) to be meaningful and actionable. This perspective emphasizes that instead of a single, top-down ‘global solution’, a movement of connected, locally-driven initiatives is needed to foster the profound societal changes required to address today's challenges.

This is exactly what we are trying to build with the Buzz Women movement: while the problem we address is global and universal in nature, we know that the solutions need to be hyperlocal and place-based. Owned and operated by local women. This is why local adaptation of our model, curriculum and approach is of critical importance. Our solutions are not ‘one-size fits all’ but need to be tailored to local needs, circumstances and cultural practices.

UNIVERSAL

BIG, UNIVERSAL CHALLENGES.
LOCAL SOLUTIONS.



↓
THE SOLUTIONS ARE HYPERLOCAL,
PLACE-BASED, ROOTED IN COMMUNITY.



OWNED AND LED
BY LOCAL WOMEN



ADAPTED TO LOCAL NEEDS,
CULTURE AND CONTEXT



PRACTICAL. RELEVANT.
TRANSFORMATIVE.

Learnings



This means that the Buzz Women Movement is not something that is controlled from a center, but it is something we share. Through our shared movement approach, we invite mission-aligned grassroots organizations across the world to ‘Start Their Own Buzz’ by embracing and adapting the Buzz spirit, values, and methodology in ways that make sense locally. They are independent creators, stewards, and local leaders, building their own national or regional movements rooted in their communities. They design what Buzz Women looks like in their context, with full local governance and leadership.



START YOUR OWN BUZZ

THE BUZZ WOMEN MOVEMENT
IS NOT CONTROLLED FROM A CENTER.
IT IS SHARED.



VOLUNTEERS

One of the frequently asked questions about Buzz Women is how it is possible that tens of thousands of volunteers (anchor women, green mobilizers, community trainers) lead the movement on the ground? Are they paid? How do they stay motivated? Why do they commit their time and energy?

We believe the answer lies in the combination of intrinsic motivation and solidarity. Intrinsic motivation to develop yourself and solidarity in the sense of a natural readiness to support and uplift fellow women. Intrinsic motivation and solidarity are like the double-stranded DNA of Buzz Women. This DNA also explains the transformational nature of Buzz Women. Women don't join or commit to Buzz Women on a transactional basis ('I do this so I will get that') but as they transform themselves they are intrinsically motivated to enable others to do the same. This is also what led to our 'Pay-it-forward' funds within Buzz Women (like Shakti fund in India and Jambarr fund in The Gambia). Women can voluntarily make a donation so that fellow women get access to the same transformation process as they went through.

When COVID hit we really became aware of the power of deeply committed volunteers. Whereas we couldn't move to villages because of lockdown restrictions, the actual learning process in the communities continued. Anchor women continued to lead sessions

“

*It was the moment we realized
that Buzz Women is an
unstoppable movement*

”



and took initiative to signal and address specific challenges related to COVID. It was the moment we realized that Buzz Women is an unstoppable movement and that we couldn't stop even if we wanted to...

Safeguarding our transformational nature is a key concern, now that the Buzz Women movement has started to spread itself around the world. There is always a risk that transactionality enters the system. So far we have always chosen to stick to our volunteering model (while covering expenses for volunteers) and also in our interactions with funders we try to guard ourselves against 'transactionalizing' our model, reminding ourselves that women are humans rather than outcomes, impact, cost/benefit ratios etc.

What we love about Buzz Women is that women don't just generate measurable financial capital through the process; our volunteer-driven model ensures that social and ecological capital grow alongside it. In fact, if we were to account for the hours, skills, and energy contributed by our volunteers, their collective contribution would far exceed even the largest financial investment from our biggest funders.



*Green motivators
(volunteers leading
climate action in their
villages) being trained*



Over the years we have seen Buzz Women developing. From an initial idea into a prototype, a program, a not for profit, hundreds of village development initiatives led by local anchor women to a growing international network of likeminded partners. As we see women ‘buzzing with energy and confidence’ we also witness the international pollination leading to a global ‘buzz’.

Today we look at Buzz Women as a continuously expanding movement, carried by many. All the women that are educated and part of their beehives, the anchor women, green mobilizers, community trainers, Buzz trainers, drivers, field facilitators, managers, experts, funders, communicators. Everybody is part of the same movement, each playing their own unique role. With the women leading and owning it in their village, local grassroots organizations facilitate the delivery of the training programs and the formation and support of beehives. Funders fuel the movement by making the training possible.

Seeing Buzz Women as a movement helps us to move away from traditional NGO frameworks, where ‘professionals’ were helping ‘the people’. Instead, Buzz Women exists as a living, collective

organism in which knowledge, leadership and power are shared and constantly circulating. Change does not come from the top down, but from within communities themselves, carried by relationships, mutual trust and collective responsibility. Each woman strengthens the whole, and the whole in turn strengthens each woman. This collective nature allows the movement to grow organically, adapt locally and remain deeply rooted in the lived realities of women.

Buzz Women is about togetherness. Together we move the world, woman by woman, village by village, country by country. With the Buzz Women movement liberating feminine power on a large scale, we hope to contribute to a world moving into a different direction. A direction in which compassion, care and love are the foundation of society. A direction where trust, participation and collaboration begin to reshape systems that are now too often driven by pressure, exclusion, short-term gain and competition. A future that we might not be able to envisage yet, but one our hearts already know is possible.

“ Buzz Women exists
as a living, collective
organism ”

BUZZ WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

Senegal



The Gambia



Tanzania



Ukraine



Kenya



Georgia



India



Côte D'Ivoire



The Netherlands



Learnings



1. All the women should
be aware of the
importance of
the health of their
family members.
2. The health of the family
members is the health of the
community.
3. The health of the community
is the health of the nation.
4. The health of the nation
is the health of the world.
5. The health of the world
is the health of the universe.



XPONENTIAL

When we started back in 2012 we were never focused on growth. The first three years of Buzz Women were purely focused on seeing if we could make our approach work. What would it take to enable women to escape from poverty using their own strength? This three year starting period gave Uthara in India all the space and resources to find out what the needs of women were, how to approach them and test many ways. It was a long time of trial and error, starting with a bus that was way too big and clumsy which got stuck in the mud in villages many times.

Also our ideas on training design were outright rejected by women. The clear message was that women were not interested in 'fluffy' subjects like leadership or personal development and also rejected the idea of a lengthy 'curriculum'. What they told us was that they wanted their core problem solved: a lack of money and the stress related to that. One challenge at a time and not a fancy curriculum.

Looking back now, we strongly believe that the exponential growth that we are now experiencing is not in spite of a lack of focus on growth in the early days, but rather because of this. The logic is very simple: once you find out something that works, it starts to

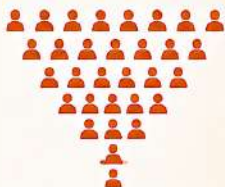
THREE WAYS OF EXPONENTIAL GROWTH



Three forms of growth. One movement. Exponential impact.

SUSTAIN

Embed locally.
More leaders.
More trainers.



Anchor women become community trainers, turning a handful of trainers into a force of thousands.

SHARE

Expanding outward.
More partners.
More places.



Other organizations adopt the Buzz approach and create their own version, multiplying our reach across countries.

THE
BUZZ
WAY

SCALE

Going deep.
Changing systems.
Transforming communities.



From scattered groups of women to entire villages, and regions, creating lasting, system-level change.

move forward. At first very slowly but gradually picking up speed. What has always helped us is a 'fail fast' attitude, we have always been ready to try out new things and abandon ways that were not working. Very much in the spirit of 'Jugaad innovation' - the Indian notion of frugal and resilient innovation.

Exponential growth in Buzz Women emerged rather than it was planned. Focusing on what worked and what was needed continuously leads to new ideas and innovations. This is how the idea came up to work with anchor women, we discovered that community trainers could train fellow women on their own, Buzz Green was developed, and so on. A meeting in the ladies room after a keynote speech by Uthara in The Netherlands even led to the start of Buzz Georgia in 2020. Even today, with the expansion to new countries and regions, we always stress the importance of taking time in new geographies to test, refine and build the model, before even thinking about scaling.

Exponential growth in Buzz Women takes shape along three lines. **Sustain** is growth within communities, as anchor women become community trainers themselves, turning a handful of trainers into a force of thousands. **Share** is growth beyond communities, as other organizations pick up the Buzz approach and start their own version of it, as we see with grassroots partners in new countries. And **Scale** is growth across whole regions, as we move from training scattered groups of women to covering entire villages and eventually entire states or countries, transforming the social fabric of these places and embedding women's voices in governance and decision-making. Together, these three forms of growth reinforce each other.

After our slow start (31 women trained in year one) we discovered that what we did worked and more importantly that there was an incredible demand for it. This was the moment we started to think about how to reach more women, without losing the depth of impact and ownership of the women. Step by step we raised our ambitions, from 20,000 women in 2020 (which we reached years before in 2016) to 1 million women and eventually 10 million women by 2032.

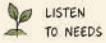
It is interesting to reflect on these bold ambitions. In hindsight we feel that raising the bar and going for a bold ambition has ‘opened the field’ for us, it helped to dream up something that was far bigger than our own imagination. We remember Uthara saying ‘now my knees really start shaking’ when we announced our ambition to educate 10 million women. On the other hand we’ve always felt that numbers in itself are meaningless in the sense that they do not say anything about the kind of transformation each woman realizes. As our mentor Ousman Cham always says: ‘We are only counting the number of women to make sure that they can count on themselves’. When we reached 500,000 women his first remark was: ‘Fine, so what?’.

“
*We are only counting the
number of women to make
sure that they can count
on themselves*
”

THE DANCE



ORGANIC GROWTH



LISTEN
TO NEEDS



TRUST
PEOPLE



EMBRACE
EXPERIMENTS



ADAPT
& EVOLVE



COMMUNITY
OWNERSHIP



BALANCE
CREATES
SUSTAINABLE
IMPACT

NEEDED STRUCTURE



CLARITY
OF PURPOSE



STRONG
PROCESSES



QUALITY
EDUCATION



MEASURE
& LEARN



SHARED
LEADERSHIP

A final reflection on exponential growth. Our steep growth and learning path taught us that exponential growth is an ongoing dance between what appear to be opposites. On the one hand the ability to let go and allow organic processes to unfold. On the other hand the art of streamlining operations, standardizing operating procedures, making curricula transferable and replicable. We found out that these seemingly opposites are in reality reinforcing each other. Our intention to exponentially scale Buzz Women as a movement illustrates this, as it is a combination of 'guided' and 'unguided' expansion, allowing grassroots partners to get 'open source' access to our curricula and way of working.

Learnings



When we came across the Sanskrit word Yatra, it really spoke to us. It means journey, pilgrimage, but it is more than just moving from one place to another. It's about walking a path with intention, noticing each step, and staying open to where it leads. For us as founders, building Buzz Women has been exactly that kind of journey: taking a road less traveled. There have been twists we did not expect, moments of doubt, and times when it felt heavier than we imagined.

We sometimes wonder how the universe has brought together a brown woman from India and a white man from the Netherlands to embark on this journey. Over the years countless instances of synchronicity have illuminated our path. The right conversation at the right time, a casual remark that showed us the way, events that didn't happen for a reason. Every step in the journey, no matter how challenging, has brought us to moments we could never have planned. Over and over we have watched women discover their strength, connect deeply, and lift each other up in ways that keep surprising and inspiring us.

Through it all, we have come to see that Yatra is just as much an inner journey as it is an outer one: learning to trust ourselves, facing fears we didn't know were there, and discovering resilience we did not know we had. The work has stretched us, shaped us,



“ Yatra means journey,
but it is more than just
moving from one place
to another ”

Learnings



“*The work has stretched us, shaped us, and asked us to surrender in ways we never expected*”

and asked us to surrender in ways we never expected. To all our fellow travelers we can only advise you to move forward while staying aware of the inner terrain: the thoughts, doubts, and discoveries that shape who you are and how you show up. It is messy, sometimes uncertain, and occasionally exhausting. But it's also deeply rewarding. And it's in that balance of inner and outer journey that the growth, connection, and impact we've seen at Buzz Women really comes alive.



Zeal is the passionate commitment to a cause. It is the invisible glue that binds together everyone within the Buzz Women movement, beyond cultures, nationalities and generations. It is the shared soul of this movement. It is what drives anchor women to guide fellow women and what makes trainers drive for hours over dusty roads to communities.

Zeal takes us beyond shape. As much as we may be tempted to think that 'this is the way Buzz works', it always pushes us beyond these limited views. It allows for new ways, unexpected shapes and names to emerge, rather than sticking to what was already there. Zeal leads, guides and protects us along the journey. Zeal also invites our brains to follow our hearts.

We also believe that it is our collective zeal that helps us to face our fears in this journey. As Nelson Mandela said: 'courage is not the absence of fear'. It is our zeal that helps us see our dark sides, admit our failures and accept our shortcomings, without losing the courage to move forward.

The notion of courage and fear brings us to a final note in this A-Z. Many years ago we organized a session in which we shared our dreams with a group of incredibly experienced Indian business leaders and academics. As we explained our ambition and ideas

one of them, a highly respected professor at one of India's leading business schools exclaimed: 'This is so important that it is worthy of failure'. We both laughed out loud when hearing this 'Worthy of Failure' expression and it has always stayed with us. We hope that everyone in the Buzz Women movement has zeal, dreams and ambition to overcome their fears and do what is worthy of failure.

“ *It is the invisible glue that binds together everyone within the Buzz Women movement, beyond cultures, nationalities and generations.* ”





Learnings



*"Our cathedral
is a pathway"*

VI.

BUZZ

Destinations

WHAT'S NEXT?

No one knows what the future holds. In the spirit of non-attachment, we do believe that the future of the women in the Buzz Women movement is in their own hands. It is not ours to write, only to walk alongside. No one also knows if Buzz Women as a movement will continue to grow or - at some point in time - will stop, when its mission has been accomplished.

When the two of us started, we could not have imagined how big this movement would become. And still, today, we cannot predict what the future holds. We can only talk about our intentions. About who we would like to be in this world. As mentioned in this book, it is our intention and hope that we make a meaningful contribution for current and future generations. We intend to build a "cathedral" instead of running a "project". Much like the beehives we spoke of earlier are not built by any single bee, a cathedral is not finished by any single generation.

Our dream is to liberate feminine potential at scale, in order to rebalance our world. We believe that the liberation of feminine energy is the root solution for human advancement and survival. If we don't restore our capacity to connect, love and care for each other, our planet and all living beings, true change will not happen.

Our "cathedral" is not a building. It is a pathway, walked by millions of women finding their inner strength, voice and agency. The path illuminates lives, reduces suffering, creates opportunities and brings smiles to the faces of people. It reaches the most remote places in the world and enables women to start walking their own path, paving the way for future generations to follow. Moving towards a world where gender will no longer define opportunity. That pathway is already extending every single day. To new communities, countries and new generations of women.

“ Our cathedral
is a pathway ”



The magic of the pathway is that it transforms the energy or frequency of those who walk it. The initial frequency of fear and powerlessness transforms over time into a frequency of trust and joy: a deep sense of being worthy, of dignity, curiosity and positivity. This frequency is contagious. It affects those around the women who walk the path: their partners, children, relatives and neighbours. This new frequency doesn't make life's challenges disappear, but it gives women and their communities the resilience, clarity and support to meet those challenges and grow from them.

On this path, something else happens that has not happened enough in human history: the feminine and the masculine stop walking on separate roads, competing for the same ground. They join. Not one leading and one following, but two forces walking together - care and courage, connection and clarity - building something neither could build alone. Where they meet, the path doesn't just illuminate. It becomes fertile. Things grow there: prosperity, harmony, a kind of peace that isn't the absence of conflict but the presence of balance.

This is the cathedral we are building. A living, self-lighting pathway, reaching every woman, everywhere. And through her, reaching everyone. Laying this path has not been easy, and it will not become easy. There have been setbacks along the way, and there will be more. But we know that with the trust and togetherness of thousands and thousands of anchor women, coworkers and partners, we can make this happen.

We don't claim to know the full shape of where this leads. But we see it already in glimpses: women who once spoke last in the room now speaking first. Women running thriving businesses that revitalize their

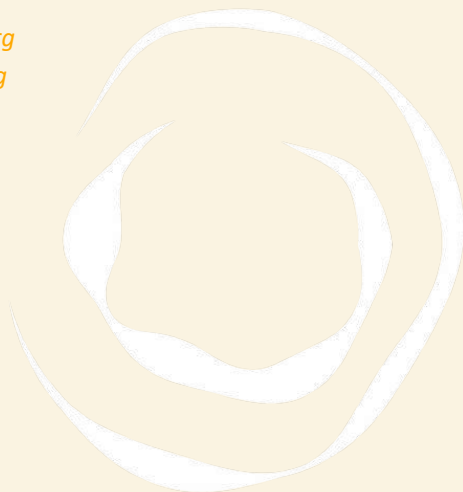
local economies. Men standing beside them, as partners, rather than apart from them. Households where a daughter's choices are no longer decided before she's old enough to make them.

The Buzz Way is, in essence, a pathway. We're not interested in owning it. It is our intention to share what we've learned - the philosophy, the methodology, the practical how-to - freely, in the open, to anyone anywhere who wants to walk it with their own community. We hope you will be one of them.

*Uthara Narayanan
& Dave Jongeneelen*

Uthara.Narayanan@buzzwomen.org

Dave.Jongeneelen@buzzwomen.org







*The Buzz Way
is a pathway*



Become part of the story

This book is a gift. We are not selling it. We are giving it, the same way as Buzz Women gives women the opportunity to dream and remember their strength.

If this book has been of value to you and you want to become part of the Buzz Women movement, we invite you to make a voluntary donation and become a ripple maker.

Your contribution will enable us to reach more women and start more ripples.

Thank you for becoming part of the story.



THE BUZZ WAY

It started under a mango tree in The Gambia. It came to life in India. From that spark, Buzz Women grew into a movement, owned and led by more than one million women across India, Africa and Europe. Every day, more women join this movement, buzzing with energy and the determination to drive change in their communities.

The Buzz Way is the soul book of this movement. Part field guide, part philosophy, part love letter to a different way of doing things.

Told with honesty, this book gives you the inside story of how a global movement came alive and is now transforming the lives of countless families and communities.

*"Everybody deserves
a dream"*

Uthara Narayanan and Dave Jongeneelen are the co-founders of Buzz Women, a grassroots movement that has trained, mobilized and inspired over one million women since 2012. Together, they have been questioning everything development is supposed to look like, following a pathway that has proven to work differently.

www.buzzwomen.org