

It's all connected

Our power analysis needs to include awareness of the dynamics of conflict, backlash and violence. Here, we explore how change creates conflict that can be either positive or negative, and we demystify structural and systemic violence so we can better anticipate risk, conflict, and threats, and, in turn, improve strategies and collective safety.

Before starting, check in with participants about the sensitivity of this topic. Many people have experienced violence in their private lives and political work. Discussing violence can trigger trauma or other unresolved feelings, which may be expressed in many ways. Give people the option of stepping out of the small-group discussions; it is important to acknowledge the real nature of that trauma and create space for the emotions this process can bring up.

Materials: Handout: *It's all connected*.

Plenary: In Activity 7, we looked at interlinked systems of domination. It's helpful to remember what these systems are and how they connect and overlap with each other. (Ask for a few examples.) We will now look at how violence and the threat of violence are essential features of these systems and play a critical role in maintaining unequal relations of power at all levels. We begin by reflecting on our own experiences of violence and backlash at the intersection of these systems.

Small groups: Distribute the handout: *It's all connected*. Review the diagram and identify two concrete examples that illustrate how each of these overlapping systems – patriarchy, structural racism, extractive capitalism, and colonialism–imperialism – rely on violence.

- Who are the players behind the systems, people, and institutions that perpetrate and orchestrate these forms of backlash and violence? What do they hope to achieve with their actions?
- How have you, your organisation, or groups you've worked with dealt with these forms of backlash and violence? Identify examples.

Plenary: Share examples and reflections from small groups. Ask:

- What insights did you gain about how violence and the threat of violence operate?
- Have you been involved in change efforts that generate backlash intended to reverse or resist change? Did you anticipate this?
- How does this exercise make you feel?
- How might you approach strategy in a different way, given what you've discussed and the emotions it generated?