Spaces of Ecofeminism: Power, Organisation and Values in a Green Care Programme in Women's Refuges in London

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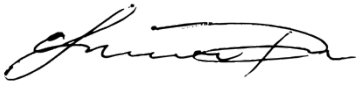
Abstract

This dissertation examines how values are expressed in practice in session of social and therapeutic horticulture in women's refuges, arguing that workers' enactment of ecofeminist values create processual spaces of empowerment. The empirical study is based on the Soil Sisters programme, which is led by the London-based charity Women's Environmental Network. The dissertation utilises environmental theories of nature connectivity and feminist theory of leadership and power to explore how processes of co-production and shared leadership are central aspects in session leaders' approach to their work. It is argued that these approaches as modes of organising are part of enabling the potential for empowerment in the sessions' participants through inclusion, flexibility and sharing, in practice sharing power with participants aiming to strengthen their sense of enjoyment, self-confidence, and control over their bodies. Session leaders are perceived to be practising leadership roles of planning session content in collaboration with participants, showing sensitivity and adaptability toward their emergent wishes and circumstances, which is seen to reflect their feminist values of inclusivity and shared power. The diverse practices are held to reflect and be informed by permeating and diverse dimensions of ecological and feminist values held and enacted by session leaders.

I certify that the work submitted herewith is my own and that I have duly acknowledged any quotation from the published or unpublished work of other persons.

Signature of Candidate:  Date 15/9/19

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Introduction

The political climate in the present age is filled with issues and discussions pertaining to our relationship, as humans, to the natural environment, most prominently exemplified in the contemporary environmental crisis, where people from individuals to corporations call for climate action or take local or global environments and sustainability into account in their enterprises (Carberry et al. 2019). People are finding new ways to approach these issues, and some of the advances that are being pursued are inspired or directly evolved from established frameworks, such as feminism. A connection between the cultural narratives and socio-economic structures that have historically left both in positions of exploitation gave birth to ecofeminism (Warren 1997; Plumwood 1993; Gaard 2004). Ecofeminism is an intersectional development, theory, and political approach, which is a type of critical thinking and activism that works in the intersection of issues related to gender or social equality and the environment, in short issues pertaining to our relationship with nature in a broad sense (Buckingham 2004; Merchant 1996; Mies & Shiva 2014).

Environmentalism and feminism intersect in a variety of ways, and an organisation that specialises in issues within this field is Women's Environmental Network (WEN), which is a London-based grassroots organisation working with political and social issues within the intersection of gender, environment, and health (Metcalf 2018; WEN 2019a). The non-governmental charity was founded in 1988 and has from the beginning and continues to work on different projects and campaigns on local, national, and global scales, focusing on issues such as air pollution, toxins in products, sustainability, food, waste, ethical consumerism, mental and physical health and green urban spaces (WEN 2018). One of the organisations' more recent programmes is called the Soil Sisters, which is the subject of this dissertation. The Soil Sisters was initiated in spring 2017 and is currently running a trial period of three years. It is an initiative that brings social and therapeutic horticulture to residents in five different women's refuges across East London (WEN 2019b). In WEN's own words, the aim of the programme is 'support[ing] recovery and development of vulnerable women in traumatic transitions within women's refuge settings' working through 'social and therapeutic horticulture […] or green care' (WEN 2019b). Therapeutic horticulture, or green care, is a type of intervention or alternative therapy which aims to promote mental health and wellbeing in its participants through engaging in nature-based activities (Horowitz 2012; Rothert 2007, Smith 1998). It is within this setting of the Soil Sisters that the present dissertation is set, begging the following questions:

What is the relation between values and the use of space in the Soil Sisters programme?

- What kind of space is created in the sessions?
- How are the sessions organized and structured?
- How do workers perceive these values?

In order to approach these questions, central analytic concepts include ecofeminism as well as aspects of space, power, leadership and human-nature connectivity, and data collection is empirical and based on qualitative methods from the social sciences, specifically participant observation and semi-structured interviewing (Mason 1996) conducted over a period of approximately six months through participation in sessions and interviews with session leaders.

The general understanding of and approach to space in this work is informed by Doreen Massey's 'Politics and Space/Time' from *Space, Place and Gender* (2003), in order to open up the material through a dynamic perception of space. More specifically, space will be approached as inherently political, including in relation to gender, as well as inseparable from time – from movement and the processual. A short overview will be given of the evolution of ecofeminism, considering Merchant's (1996) idea of partnership, as well as the two strands of postmodern and radical ecofeminism. Their differences and occasional antagonism in relation to gender perceptions will be questioned, especially through Chaone Mallory's article 'What's in a name? In defence of ecofeminism (not ecological feminisms, feminist ecology, or gender and the environment) - Or "Why ecofeminism need not be ecofeminine - but so what if it is?"' (2018). Her argument for an alliance between ecofeminist views is embraced in order to engage with an understanding of ecofeminist thought with an inclusive approach to gender. Furthermore, the structure, leadership and organising principles within the setting of the Soil Sisters will be analysed in relation to feminist principles, drawing heavily on Srilatha Batliwala's definitions of feminist leadership in *Feminist Leadership for Social Transformation: Clearing the Conceptual Cloud* (2010) which recognises feminist leadership as political in its aims and processes. Especially her framework of co-production, inclusivity and sensitivity are engaged in order to conceptualise the practices analysed in the Soil Sisters programme. Issues of power are also engaged in this regard, using Batliwala's notion of shared power and empowerment as well as VeneKlasen and Miller's (referenced in Batliwala 2010) concept of intimate power in relation to bodily autonomy and self-value, in the pursuit to understand how issues of power permeate Soil Sisters practice. A broad understanding of therapeutic horticulture provides a basis for positioning the programme's engagement with and perception of nature and natural elements. This is further considered through attention restoration theory's (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989) view of sensual

engagement with nature, while the relationship pursued with nature in the sessions are analysed and conceptualised using Ives et al.'s (2018) framework of different human-nature connections distinguished in material, experiential, cognitive, emotional and philosophical connections. These perspectives of relations to nature and modes of organising are put together in order to analyse the material in its complexity while trying to understand how these are practices of a distinct intersectional philosophy of the programme and session leaders. As such the dissertation aims to contribute with an empirical approach to the spatial expression of values, aspiring to understand the relation between values and practise in the Soil Sisters programme.

As qualitative methods are primarily used, my own role and biases as a participating researcher are also subjected to reflection, and my experiences are included and analysed in relation to emergent themes and practical engagement.

As a point of clarity, when using the term 'nature' it refers broadly to greenery, natural environments and elements, both on a physical as well as on an abstract level according to context. Social and therapeutic horticulture and green care are used interchangeably, as are therapeutic gardener, worker and session leader.

The main body of the dissertation is divided into three sections. Using the above mentioned frameworks, the first section examines the different aspects of creating and using spaces in the Soil Sisters, as well as different types of activities pursued with residents as either senses-based or physically activating engagements. This is considered as interpreted in terms of empowerment by session leaders. Further space use is examined as directed toward different outcomes in relation to human-nature connectivity and the creation of shared places of encouragement and potential empowerment of participants through little achievements or through challenging traditional gender stereotypes. The second section analyses how the sessions are organised in terms of leadership and organisation, including how session leaders perceive the structures they work through and help to sustain. Central terms in analysing this are planning, co-production, flexibility, adaptability and inclusivity, while these aspects are discussed in the different relations between session leaders, residents and refuge staff. Issues of power and empowerment, briefly touched upon in the first section, are analysed more thoroughly relative to these structures and relations. The last section further reflects upon workers experiences and perceptions of working on the Soil Sisters programme, especially through auto-reflection on my own role in relation to a particular occasion where my responsibility increased slightly, and how that reflects a permeating approach and fashion of the Soil Sisters.

Literature Review

Background and green care

A contemporary issue in the intersection of social and natural relations focuses on different groups of peoples' rights and access to green spaces, especially in urban settings where access to green spaces is lessened or different compared to the countryside (Wood et al. 2017). Lack of access to green recreational spaces is perceived as a social justice issue as green spaces and natural elements in a person's surroundings is held to be beneficial for mental health and wellbeing, with perceived mental health benefits of green spaces such as reduced levels of stress and anxiety and increased physical activity and cleaner levels of air quality (Maas et al. 2006; Wood et al. 2017; Houlden et al. 2017). Furthermore it is an issue of social inequality as marginalised and poorer communities tend to have less access to these, as green urban spaces are often less prevalent in local areas of such communities, as an aspect of a larger framework of social and economic inequality (Monroe 2015; Sugiyama et al. 2018). Yet there is still much discussion of what specific outcomes especially mental health benefits consists of, and some call for further research on the quality of green areas rather than primarily access or quantity (van den Berg et al. 2015). However measuring benefits and other aspects of evaluation is not a purpose of the present study, not does it claim capability to deal with this.

As green spaces in urban settings are perceived as beneficial for mental health and wellbeing, the negative side is that a lack of green spaces in the near vicinity can mean that urban dwellers do not obtain these beneficial effects (Wood et al. 2017). Women's refuges are a transitory and temporary accommodation that often takes women away from their usual neighbourhood or city, meaning they might not know the urban landscape of the place they have arrived at, nor do they necessarily feel comfortable going out alone to explore the new area having just fled trauma (Bowstead 2013). Bowstead (2019) has studied women's refuges in England as spaces enabling 'more-than-safety', by which she mean that refuges are spaces that offer more than just refuge, outlining three functions of women's refuges: asylum, balance, and transition. She underscores that refuges are both physical and emotional spaces, and goes on to elaborate how communal and shared spaces can be the setting for interaction between residing women, and that this interaction in extension can become collaboration and the first step toward recovery for the residing women, out of isolation of abuse (Bowstead 2019). One example she gives is communal cooking, yet apart from this she does not further explore the potential nor exactly what this more-than-safety can entail or look like in refuges. Renzetti & Follingstad (2015), however, has studied therapeutic horticulture in a women's refuge in the USA.

Through interviewing members of staff, they studied the implementation and perception of therapeutic horticulture as a way of intervention and its perceived benefits in relation to the ambitions of the refuge, yet their study does not engage with the practical enactment of the sessions. Women's Environmental Network's (WEN) is, as mentioned in the introduction, a London based charity working in the intersection of gender, environment and health (WEN 2018), and they use green care as an intervention in women's refuges in their Soil Sisters programme. In contrast to the above mentioned study, this dissertation is less concerned with the refuges and their motivation. Rather the attention is directed through participation and interviews at the relation between spatial realisation and values, exploring what and how values are reflected in the practices discerned in the sessions, within this particular intersection of green care by an ecofeminist organisation.

Green care, or therapeutic horticulture, as a practice incorporates natural environments and gardening in activities to improve the wellbeing of its participants, with social and therapeutic horticulture also centralising aspects of social contact (Harris 2017). The practise can be both physically activating, encouraging participants' engagement in gardening and nature-based activities, as well as encouraging the more senses-based aspects of nature appreciation (Bragg, Wood & Barton 2013; Buck 2016; Bratman et. al. 2015). Especially this latter aspect of nature appreciation aims to restore attention skills through attention restoration theory (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989), aiming to engender relaxation and reflexivity in participants through aiming the senses to natural elements or surroundings without further purpose. Horticultural therapy has predominantly been used as a way of intervention through alternative mental health improvement programmes within marginalised communities in urban settings (Monroe 2015), and Ives et al. (2018) also stresses social issues of urbanisation and health aspects of the lack of contact with nature. On a more conceptual level, and considering the contemporary environmental crisis, Ives et al. (2018) call for a fundamental reconnection with nature for us as humans in order to counter the crisis and reach a sustainable way of living. They provide a framework for such human-nature connection divided into five different aspects: material connections, experiential, cognitive, emotional and philosophical relations to the nature and the environment. Material connections engage with use and extraction, experiential connections with activities as well as attention restoration, cognitive relate to knowledge and attitudes, emotional to attachment and affection toward natural surroundings or the food harvested, and philosophical to reflection of the relationships we share with the natural world (Ives et a. 2018). Though it is primarily meant as a framework to deal with issues of the environmental crisis through reconnection, it is perceived as relevant in relation to understanding connection and engagement with

nature in relation to green care, and it is utilised as such in the present study in relation to conceptualising aspects and dimensions of engagement in the Soil Sisters programme.

Space

Concerning space, Doreen Massey (2003) ascertains that space and politics are inherently related, making politics, and in extension values, related to the perception and construction of space and places. The term and idea of 'space' has by some been perceived as unpolitical, but Massey (2003) claims the opposite to be true – that contrarily politics are inherent to space, to its production, use and to our lived experiences and practices in space. She explains how spatiality and temporality are connected rather than opposed, as has historically been construed, and that spacetime is both socially constructed as well as constructs sociality. Yet Massey (2003) goes further and explains how the concepts are built upon dichotomies of space and time as correlating with passive and active, and woman and man – correlating in the sets of space-passive-woman and time-active-man – with physicality attached to the former set and politics to the latter. Massey's final argument is that we need to conceptually move beyond this dichotomy, as she says has been argued in much feminist critique (Massey 2003). Thus utilising this perception, this dissertation aims to examine how the spatial-temporal and political relates within the spaces in question not as opposed or different sides but in a dynamic and interconnected way. Political and dynamic space use, creation and interaction will be further examined focusing on the expression of values and perspectives through looking at issues of power relations, structure, organisation and leadership, connections to environment, and perceptions of these.

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism as a term was coined in 1974 by a French feminist (Glazebrook 2002), yet the perceived connection between the oppression of women and nature can be traced further back in the history of feminism, from Simone de Beauvoir's questioning of both as 'othered' in feminism's second wave (Glazebrook 2002; de Beauvoir 1952), to anthropologist Sherry Ortner paralleling cultural devaluation of women and nature (Ortner 1972). At the base of ecofeminism is the critique that the categories of nature and women have been constructed and perceived through similar problematic aspects by culture and science, opposing the exploitation and abuse of either, and calling for a partnership between people and nature (Merchant 1996; Mies & Shiva 2014). Its main critiques

have targeted the rationalist and patriarchal socio-philosophical frameworks which are historically central to that oppression and devaluation of both nature and people associated with nature (women, people of colour and indigenous peoples) (Warren 1997; Buckingham 2004; Plumwood 1993; Gaard 2004). In extension this also begs the question of power, which will be expanded upon in the ensuing section. Furthermore, ecofeminist thought criticises the traditional environmental movement's lack of attention toward issues of gender (Buckingham 2004; Verchick 2004), which was what gave birth to Women's Environmental Network thirty years ago, claiming to be the only UK charity to work in the intersection of women, the environment and health (WEN 2018; WEN, 2019a). WEN, as other ecofeminists, perceived women as well as marginalised groups as often first to be affected by environmental issues or degradation (WEN 2018; Merchant 1996). Politically ecofeminism deals with aspects of social injustice such as land claim, toxic living and working conditions, and other inequality and health issues, recognising women, along with people of colour and working class, as most vulnerable to these issues, bringing their voices to the front, and perceiving the intersectional issues as in need of being solved jointly (Merchant 1989; Shiva 2018; Baird 2018).

Yet there have also been disagreements within ecofeminism, with the central dispute having been between radical and postmodern ecofeminism. Where radical ecofeminism claims an affinity between women and nature in an ahistorical way, postmodern ecofeminism claims the perceived connection between women and nature to be a strictly socio-cultural, historical construction (Merchant 1989; Plumwood 1993, Mann 2006). Radical ecofeminism, often termed essentialism, perceives women as closer to nature than men, yet sought to overturn the value hierarchy by re-appropriating corporality, the female body and emotion and softness as positive rather than oppressive feminine traits making women natural protectors of the environment (Mallory 2018). Postmodern ecofeminism on the other hand has aimed to break the dualistic system that would perceive women as more connected to nature and sensitivity as nurturing beings, and as limited to or by bodily functions, instead highlighting and valuing intellectual accomplishments in women as well as men (Mallory 2018). Both strands have criticised the other: essentialist or radical ecofeminism has been criticised for its generalisation of women and at times spirituality, as well as its failure to deconstruct the dualism that would present men and women as two separate and inherently different categories (Biehl 1991). Postmodern or socialist ecofeminism has been criticised for upholding traditional masculine values of rationality and logic while continuously devaluing traditionally feminine coded sensitivity and embodiment (Carlassare 1994; Salleh 2009). Yet many, among them Mallory (2018), see this disagreement as unnecessary and counterproductive, as the point should neither be to flip the gender-hierarchy nor

make it obligatory for women to embrace traditionally masculine norms or qualities in order to have value and assert themselves (Davion 1994; Mallory 2018; Merchant 1996). In the early 90s Victoria Davion (1994) suggested making the distinction between ecofeminism and ecofeminine to sort out the essentialist strands that were not progressive, while maintaining different ecofeminism(s) that supplied valuable theoretical and political critique, and many ecofeminists likewise recommend engaging critically with essentialism rather than rejecting it (Fuss 1989; Davion 1994; Buckingham 2004; Mann 2006). Though many still avoid the term 'ecofeminism' as associated with essentialism, Mallory (2018) ascertains, and she agrees with Davion and adds that a rejection of essentialist ecofeminism would amount to policing forms of knowing that differ from rationalist masculinist discourses. She is critical of abandoning the term ecofeminism in favour of newer terms such as environmental justice as a question of definition rather than of politics (Mallory 2018), and furthermore she sees positive aspects of diversity within ecofeminism, as well as ecofeminine strands, seeing positive aspects of radical ecofeminism in its inversion of the traditional gender hierarchy and recognition of human embodiment in nature (Mallory 2018; Buckingham 2004; Shiva 2014). Other strands of feminism have likewise shown increasing interest in embodied aspects of being and knowing, with discourse critic Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter* (2011) and Karen Barad's (2007) mixture of feminism and quantum physics as examples. Embodied aspects and lived experiences of women have been and continues to be central to the ecofeminist movement (Warren 1997; Baird 2018). Women's perspectives, knowledge and experiences are appreciated as often more intimate with the natural environment, albeit for socio-historical reasons, and as crucial in the struggle to change dominant structures (Merchant 1996; Mies & Shiva 2014), with the recent anthology *Why Women Will Save the Planet* (Baird 2018) as an example, with contributions by academics, politicians and activists alike.

These ecofeminist issues are very well traversed within the spheres of academia, theory and philosophy, as well as in relation to activism and politics. Though much ecofeminist work and thinking deal with practical issues (Mies & Shiva 2014; Warren 1997; Baird 2018), the aim of this dissertation is to contribute with an empirical study of the enactment on the ground of an outwardly ecofeminist setting of green care in women's refuges.

Feminist leadership and power

Approaching this, the concepts of leadership and power are equally central in order to analyse relations and processual structures in the setting, discerning and analysing grounded aims and values.

Foucault (1990) proclaimed power to be everywhere in society, and relations between power and gender is fundamental to the feminist movement and contemporary issues of gender and sexuality (Connell 1987). In addition to the descriptions of ecofeminism as above, power is also a central aspect in analysing and critiquing the social and historical power relations inherent in the matters of exploitation and abuse, that leave women and nature both stripped of power in positions of being controlled or repressed by the powerful (Merchant 1996; Mies & Shiva 2014). Rejecting such vertical power relations of superiority and extraction, ecofeminism encourages horizontal relations between people as well as toward the natural world – through a relationship of partnership in Merchant's (1996) words, and co-operation (Mies & Shiva 2014) between all of nature, which humans are a part of. Yet feminism engages critically with many different types of power and power relations, and a particularly relevant framework that has undergone feminist critique is leadership and organisation. Power relations are inherent to modes of leading and organising, as such structural formations and approaches depend on how relations are defined or ascribed between different participating roles; regarding who has power to act and in what way, and do they have more or less power over others (Connell 1987). At the core, feminist leadership is critical of traditional hierarchical and patriarchal forms of power where a single or the few has authority over the majority who remain powerless to a larger or lesser extent, and instead encourages participation and collaboration (Clover et. al. 2017; Rao & Kelleher 2000; Mitchem 2009). Furthermore, within the theory and practice of feminist leadership the aims of leading or leadership is not only relevant but central, in the sense that leadership for the sake of leadership is devalued. Seeking power for the sake of power is discouraged, rather the purpose of the leadership should be the main reason, such as fighting injustices and reaching for higher degrees of social equality; discouraging (Clover et. al. 2017; Rao & Kelleher 2000; Mitchem 2009).

In this research, I will draw mainly on Srilatha Batliwala's (2010) definitions of feminist leadership and organisation in collaboration with the organisation CREA[1], which works amongst other things with developing leadership capabilities in women so that they can employ these concerning issues in their own communities as well as globally. Batliwala (2010) agrees with the above definitions of feminist leadership as seeking social change and transformation through participation, and she elaborates further. She ascertains how feminist leadership challenges traditional gendered structures of leadership, while also challenging gendered qualities traditionally associated with leadership such as aggression and competition, which she rather criticises as authoritarian and masculinist qualities.

[1] CREA: Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action.

She rejects these as necessary or natural qualities of leadership, especially in the fight for social change inherent in feminist leadership. She adds the importance of separating and questioning the terms feminist and feminine and being critical of essentialising women and women's leadership as particularly feminine or soft, as well as not equating having a female leader with feminist leadership. CREA, she explains, as an organisation generates knowledge through practice, from the ground and up (rather than the other way around), as a core principal underlining its feminist values, along with focusing on the processes and aims of leadership rather than perceiving leadership as a goal in itself. These represent three of the core aspects of feminine leadership which Batliwala (2010) puts forward: practice, politics and purpose, and principals and values. These are three of the four essential components of feminist leadership, and the fourth component is power. Feminist leadership, she ascertains, should operate through a concept of shared power, working to distribute power between different positions and participants. As such, inclusivity is essential to feminist organisation, underscoring the importance of working through a horizontal power structure that brings the margin to the centre and allows everyone's voice to be heard and to participate in leadership and develop leadership skills. Finally, she states how along with aims of social justice according to circumstances, feminist leadership should be built and focus on collaboration, wellbeing and sensitivity toward others in the process of achieving those goals (Batliwala 2010).

Further elaborating how power works in different ways and on different levels, and particularly helpful to feminist critique, VeneKlasen and Miller (2002, referenced in Batliwala 2010), has made a framework dividing power into three dimensions through a feminist perspective: public, private and intimate power. Public power refers to larger structural bodies of power such as governments and states, private power refers to interpersonal power relations such as found within for example family and marriage, and intimate power is described as 'the power – or powerlessness – that we feel within ourselves' (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002, referenced in Batliwala 2010). This division is helpful in focusing attention and analysis, and in the present study it is specifically the last category of intimate power which will be in focus, with this dimension being comprised of feelings of control or lack of the same over one's own body, as well as feelings of self-confidence and self-esteem (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002, referenced in Batliwala 2010). In other words, feelings of security, empowerment, and bodily autonomy, which is relevant concerning women in refuges, having fled abusive conditions or relationships. However, presently it will rather be engaged in relation to discernible practices in the Soil Sisters sessions, as well in relation to practices and perceptions of empowerment.

It is within this setting of the Soil Sisters programme and the above mentioned feminist theoretical frameworks that the question of what values are expressed on the ground is asked; what kind of space is created and how the sessions are structured and organised, how are the underlying values interpreted and what challenges or opportunities occur in the shared space between the different groups inhabiting it?

Methodology

Epistemology

Qualitative methods are employed in order to examine the above research questions, and I take a partially phenomenological stance in order to understand interlocutors' interpretations and values, appreciating their own perceptions of their experiences (Jackson 1996). However, this is primarily a 'single-author experience' (Sharp 2005) as the research is ultimately not co-produced. Studying the spaces in which these sessions take place is achieved by participating at the site, in order to share in the lived experiences and interactions within those spaces, as well as build rapport with key interlocutors (Ocejo 2013). This is time consuming as requiring a continued presence, but yields comprehensive data for analysing sites, activities and interlocutors – compared to more quantitative approaches, which, as removed in time and space, have lessened access to dynamics and complexities in situ (Ocejo 2013). In addition, semi-structured interviews with session leaders provides access to the experiences and reflections of these participants, enabling the pursuit of what they bring to the conversations (DeWalt & DeWalt 2002) which a survey with quantifiable questions would not.

Methods

The study works through an empirical approach, and the primary methods used are participant observation and semi-structured interviewing (Mason 1996). I have conducted five interviews of session leaders (see Appendix A) and attended 36 sessions (see Appendix B) over a course of several months, primarily in two different refuges run by different state-funded organisations (see Appendix A).

Access

Access to the sites and sessions was initially negotiated with one of the co-directors at WEN, and subsequently through WEN and the Soil Sisters in relation to the administration at the refuges. I was initiated as a volunteer in the sessions, being transparent with all parties and accepted in my joint role as researcher and volunteer. Additional access to other session leaders and their processes has been provided through my inclusion in Soil Sisters digital correspondences and through participating at events, providing me with the means of reaching out to session leaders I did not volunteer with – approved by the co-director. Simultaneously to volunteering in the refuges, I have volunteered with WEN at non-Soil Sisters events, providing me with insight into their structure, agendas and concerns, however those experiences will not be directly included within this dissertation.

Power relations

My position in the refuge has generally been distinct by easy access, casual relations and transparency between session leaders and myself. My position is very different from that of the resident women, as I enter the refuges as a privileged outsider, white middle-class academic woman without serious physical or mental health issues. The garden therapists are in positions of relative authority, and as a volunteer I have been structurally closer to them, assisting, while also engaging with residents on a casual level, albeit somewhat distanced in the beginning. I have aimed at minimising any projection of authority onto me by the residents, by displayed my lack of gardening knowledge and avoiding decision-making. However, I have experienced being in between a position of relative authority and non-authority, as well as being both insider and outsider as researcher and participant (Sluka & Robben 2007). In relation to the session leaders, though taking on a role of helper and following their lead, my relationships with them have from the beginning been very relaxed and friendly, perhaps enhanced by their (expressed) appreciation of having a volunteer to help. I have been treated as a co-worker with whom they could share concerns and reflections, which could not be shared with the other parties. Overall I have been successfully integrated on the terms of the site.

Ethical considerations

Before commencing the research, the project underwent ethical approval by Birkbeck University's ethical board and by WEN. Due to the vulnerable circumstances of the women in the refuges, as well as the direction of the dissertation, interviews have been limited to session leaders. Furthermore,

engaging with vulnerable women has required constant caution and ethical reflexions on my part as I have no previous experience of working with such groups, and I have aimed to avoid sensitive topics as potential trigger-points. Consideration of residents has been prioritised over considerations for the research when necessary, however it is not my experience that this has caused noteworthy limitations to the research. Contrarily these considerations have aided casual interaction and rapport in sessions. All names have been anonymised, and pictures have been included with consent, yet no pictures have been taken of residents' faces following Soil Sisters guidelines.

Reflections

When the researcher is the primary means for data collection, it is important to note that no one can be objective or cast off their own biases and experiences, and as such it is important to be aware of these, as well as being aware that a researcher will inevitably influence the process and in extension the result (Atkinson 2007). Agreeing with the notion that academia as any field is inherently political, feminist theory purposefully and admittedly so (Register 1975), I have tried to be persistently aware of my bias as favourable toward the studied organisation as a whole due to political preferences. I have aimed at being self-reflexive regarding my own position (Davies 2008), and tried not to project my expectations and prejudices onto interlocutors. Keeping the phenomenological approach in mind has served as additional guidance in this process following the lead of interlocutors and interviewees as often as possible. For example, as someone who cherishes ecofeminist values, I have tried to be aware of this and not romanticise or privilege parts of the project because they agreed with my personal beliefs. Due to the sensitivity of the space I have been accepted into, I have tried to be as fully present as a volunteer as possible, and I have not written notes during sessions to stay focused and avoid conveying a potentially uncomfortable feeling of being watched onto other participants.

Data collection and analysis

Fieldnotes were dated and written down in a notebook after each session and interviews were recorded with consent and subsequently transcribed. Notes and transcriptions were categorised throughout according to emergent themes. Analysis has been ongoing, pursuing consistent themes as well as singular and spontaneous episodes. Though I have been open about my research with especially the two gardeners I volunteered with, it has not been co-produced and as such is a 'single-author experience' (Sharp 2005) based on my own data collection and analysis. I have aimed at

drawing an honest picture of the therapeutic gardening sessions taking place through the Soil Sisters programme. Issues of race and ethnicity has not been pursued in the analysis due to the scope of the study. It is in no way exhausting of all the different aspects of the sessions, central or peripheral, but is focused on the themes put forth in the following chapter.

Analysis

Green spaces

Following Massey (2003) and perceiving space as political, the following section focuses especially on how particular spaces at the refuges are created, used and perceived, for which reasons and to which effects. The spaces presently in question are primarily the outdoor spaces as well as kitchens and communal areas in the refuges, spaces that are exclusively for residing women and their children (in effect meaning no men and no guests), and in which the sessions of the Soil Sisters programme takes place. Different aspects of the creation, use, and pursuit of spaces are analysed. First, how the programme physically creates the spaces aiming to make more natural and welcoming gardens that invite the residents into them and offers greenery within the safety of the refuges, while including the residents themselves in creating the spaces to give them a sense of ownership or affinity. Second, the more inactive aspects of space appreciation, sensing and being together in the gardens are analysed, especially in light of attention restoration theory. Thirdly, the more physically activating aspects of space use are examined. Engagements such as plant growing, garden design, as well as other activities of the creation and construction of spaces that engage participants and their continued use and care, considering what it means that residents can partake in more advanced or physically challenging tasks.

The first time I went to one of the refuges participating in the Soil Sisters programme was during what the Soil Sisters (abbreviated the Sisters) call a workday. It was in a different refuge to the ones I was going to volunteer in, and the occasion was that we were going to do some of the more demanding work such as building sheds and plant beds, getting the garden set up quickly through a joint effort across the Sister (gardeners, volunteers and administration officers) rather than having the residents do this heavier work over a longer course of time. Residents who wanted to help were invited to join. We were working in the garden from 10 am until 4 pm, six Sisters and one resident. On another day, after I had volunteered regularly for a few months, we had a similar workday in Vera,

the smaller refuge. After having removed weeds in the wildly overgrown garden (image 1) we dug and fitted wood, nailing pieces together into plant beds and filled them with fresh soil. Several Sisters from different parts of the programme joined, and several of the residents were out in the garden – weeding, digging, sawing and nailing. After both workdays, but especially in Vera, the change to the garden was highly noticeable. Images 1 and 2 below show pictures before and after this workday.

Image 1.

Image 2.

Another session leader, Carmen, told me of their only outdoor space in her refuge being a concrete courtyard, with both stone floor and walls. It did not have any greenery in it when the sessions first began, but the Sisters designed and built growing beds and pots within the limited space, turning a pure concrete space into a space of greenery and vegetation (Image 3).

Image 3

The two houses I volunteered in are very different from each other, Selina consists of large, institutional buildings and Vera is an old terrace house with several floors. Another gardener, Sasha, described her refuge to me as 'like a university dorms kind of environment'. She contrasted the other rooms in the house to the kitchen which she thought was 'quite friendly' as it had flowers - a suitable metaphor to what the outdoor spaces can offer, and Eliza said during our interview that what is most important to her is 'to make the space feel more like home' and 'make it a friendly space'. Turning the outdoor spaces into usable gardens with breathing vegetation, growing beds, flowers and seating areas through practical design, offers a more homely and lush contrast to the institutionalised setting, without requiring residents to leave the safety of the refuges or create such spaces themselves, but bringing that green 'friendly space' to them. The programme also

occasionally brings the women out of the refuges. On one occasion, led by Inga, we brought the residents from Selina on a walk in the local area, reaching a nearby park with a playground. The women had not previously visited the park though it was nearby, one woman telling me how she had been planning to go with her children for a while but had never got around to it. Remembering the principles of environmental justice and considering that the residents are recovering from trauma, it cannot be assumed that they will have the mental or physical capacity to go in search of recreational green spaces themselves. As such, offering them the opportunity to get to know and enjoy such places in their neighbourhood through being guided in the sessions, and the creation of accessible green spaces within the safety of the refuges can be central in trying to avoid further loss of an already deprived category of women enabling the opportunity of benefitting from these spaces (Maas et al. 2006; Wood et al. 2017; Houlden et al. 2017). Apart from being friendly green spaces, however, the gardens also offer the possibility of interaction.

A place sensed, a space shared

One aspect of therapeutic horticulture is as mentioned attention restoration (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989), and the green gardens offer is senses-based interaction and enjoyment, for residents to experience the green, living garden. Inga was happy one day when a butterfly fluttered through the refuge garden during a session. She explained during our interview:

> "Just getting people to stop and enjoy something like a butterfly flicking past, it's something that gives you joy that you just can't get in another way, and sometimes when people are experiencing crisis as they arrive, I think that whole thing of just, you know, looking at a meadow, sitting in the wind and the sun and the space, and the butterfly flying past just lifts your soul, just even for a second it takes you out of yourself, doesn't it?"

In Inga's view, these are experiences that offer a momentary relief from one's own troubles, by distracting or engaging one or more senses, watching a landscape, feeling the touch of the wind or warmth of the sun. These experiences of the rather inactive or senses-based side of the garden therapy seem to be central throughout the programme, continuously aiming to motivate the women to watch a butterfly, feel the skin of a freshly harvested potato or enjoy a cup of tea together in the sun, perhaps with fresh mint harvested from the garden (things I have experienced in the sessions), enhancing the calm or undemanding experiences that can be gained from engaging with and in the garden or other

places of nature. Yet sometimes nature and plants can also be used more as the backdrop or inspiration for getting together. Sasha told me of her first session, where she had brought a badge maker and asked everyone to choose one from a bunch of images that displayed either a flower, vegetable, plant or animal to make their badge, and she invited them to share their choice with the group:

> "Everybody told us a story of the image they chose and why, […] you were so engrossed, listening to people's stories."

Through this activity, different elements of nature were represented as people were drawn to an image through positive or meaningful associations that they had of that element, creating a communal space of sharing that had nothing to do with their circumstances, but was based on sharing emotional or cognitive associations or connections (Ives et al. 2018) that the residents already had of these natural elements. The programme also, as mentioned, brings the residents out of the refuges, and one such time Samira brought the residents (three showed up) on a trip to Kew Gardens along with me and another volunteer. There was nothing in particular planned; we walked around the garden and later had a shared picnic on a bench. Apart from giving them free access to a park which can otherwise be expensive to enter (16.50 pounds per ticket[2]), it was a trip prioritising the type of experience that Inga talked about – *looking at a meadow, sitting in the wind and the sun and the space* – like attention restoration theory also emphasises, being away in a restorative place, allowing room for fascination and exploring sensual impressions (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989), experiencing nature (Ives et al. 2018).

Through such outings and activities, the programme offers alternative and calm distractions and safe places for residents to direct their attention, encouraging and enabling them to open their senses to parts of the natural environment, as well as the encouraging and enabling shared emotional spaces through human-nature connections.

Growing and daring

Along with the more attention and senses based aspects of the sessions, another equally important part is the physically activating or engaging aspect of gardening. Activities include seed sowing, transplanting, watering, weeding, building, harvesting, cooking and drinking tea, to mention the most frequent ones, along with creative activities such as making skin moisturisers from natural ingredients

[2] According to their website: https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens (accessed 31/7/19.)

to drawing and embroidery. These activities can be demanding on different levels, and from my experience people react differently depending on their mood that day (as can be said of more inactive engagements too), as well as their general interests. When I first started in Selina, we nurtured seedlings in pots inside the house. The chilli plants (contrary to others) were alive and happy as one of the residents loved chillies and was watering them outside of sessions too. We started referring to the chillies as 'hers', not because of ownership as such, but because of the care she had put into them. Most tasks in the sessions demand a similar or low level of physical activity, being simple, easy tasks not requiring experience or training. As Carmen told me about the approach: "it's always person centred, the garden is just sort of backdrop". As such the more physically activating and senses-based activities are not strictly different, in the sense that many of the more physical activities, particularly the slow paced ones such as weeding, sowing, watering etcetera also stimulate the senses, and likewise have the potential of attention restoration. At one occasion in Vera, me and one of the residents sat on the edges of the new plant beds, weeding and chatting unhurriedly for a while. Another day, at Selina, I sat weeding with a resident's daughter, who was eagerly chatting all the while her hands where engaged. In both situations, the weeding was a shared job, providing the hands with something to do while our attention could wander casually between the weeds and the conversation, creating a somewhat stimulating yet undemanding shared space, neither the conversation nor the weeding requiring our full attention but creating a comfortable and undemanding atmosphere of slow progress, as Inga said 'making little jobs out of the least little things' to enable experiences of engagement and achievement whether big or small.

Regarding attention and achievements, during the workdays, some residents were keen on trying out the power tools. When building the beds at Vera (Image 2), all of the residents who had joined took turns using the power tools, guided by a gardener (Image 4). They were not complicated tools to use, but many of the women had never used such instruments before. Two were rather shy, but, encouraged by the others, they tried anyway and were smiling and laughing afterwards at having successfully used the tools. Another woman was so excited she kept volunteering to use the tools, becoming more attuned to them each time and beginning to direct other residents on their use and how to position their hands. Carmen commented on a similar

Image 4

experience she had had in her refuge, when she had brought a drill to the session and her volunteer used it supported by one of the residents:

> ”The volunteer we’ve got is such a DIY [do-it-yourself], she’s a younger woman, very strong, very practical, and I think she’s an amazing role model for the other women. So […] while she’s up there drilling to try and get the climbers up, she got one of the women to support her, and that’s quite empowering, because they’re seeing sort of different role models as well, and she’s young which I think really helps.”

Carmen sees this experience as potentially empowering for the women, witnessing a young woman like themselves being practical and handling tools rather than not engaging in that activity or having a professional – or a man – do it. This is similar to the workday at Vera when we were only women working, all participating and many of them handling tools for the first time. Samira commented on our workday and the picture (Image 4):

> ”That was quite special, with the power drill […] That picture says it all, you know, you can reach those heights that you want to reach. Asian women who wouldn’t have been exposed to something like that, we don’t grow up with that.”

Many of the women at Vera are, like Samira, of Asian heritage and Samira had, like them, not used power tools before. Both Samira and Carmen perceive of these tools as representing something that the women would not necessarily have had engaged with because of their gender (or culture, or age). Being given the opportunity in the safe and guided setting of Soil Sisters provided these women with an experience of being able, of doing something traditionally perceived as masculine that they had maybe not thought themselves capable of. For the woman who wanted to try repeatedly, and for those who had not thought they would want or be able to handle such tools and then successfully doing so, that can feel, as Carmen said, *quite empowering* giving them a new experience of their own capabilities through being encouraged, supported and applauded by other women.

The spaces created in the Soil Sisters session offer the residents a green space that is exclusive to them, available and safe, as well as occasionally providing healthy, organic vegetables or herbs with minimal effort from their side, to some extent alleviating further deprivation. The sessions also offer the potential of momentary relief for the women through channelling their attention and movements, providing little projects or tasks for them to take on without forcing anything upon them, as well as

creating safe spaces of connectivity, through sharing affection or knowledge relating to nature. Furthermore, such tasks have the potential of challenging – in a positive and supportive way – gender norms or the women's perceptions of their own abilities and limitations, creating shared spaces of encouragement and trust, where it is safe to try out new things, enabling potential empowerment through reaching new achievements. However, already in this paragraph the words 'occasionally' and 'potential' appear; an indication of the fact that no one fixed outcome can be promised due to the complexity of the different factors. No two women, gardens, sessions or garden therapists are the same, which, I would argue, is also intrinsic to the presence of potential, as the potential is intrinsic to each participating person in their meeting with what the sessions offer. Exactly how dynamic the sessions can be is the subject of the ensuing chapter, which focuses on planning, adapting and co-production within the programme.

Feminist approaches to planning and leadership

The following section will deal with another aspect of the dynamics that are part of shaping the sessions; those of planning, organisation and leadership. Batliwala (2010) described feminist leadership as breaking with traditional hierarchies and instead creating a horizontal structure, heightening different people's level of influence as well as explicitly aiming to bring marginalised people to the centre of decision making. The first part of the section will examine how the sessions are planned correlating to principles of feminist leadership, especially distinguishable in the centrality afforded to co-producing the spaces, activities and plans for the sessions along with the residents, carrying out their ideas and wishes. It is examined how session leaders interpret these principles that they work through – particularly in collaborating with institutions that do not necessarily work and perceive things in the same way as they do, and how this reflects the priorities of the Soil Sisters programme. It is examined how adaptability contributes to shaping sessions, prompted by the intersection of working in the particular settings of the programme, and by extension it is considered how this type of structuring and leadership is connected to power, delving more deeply into what kind of power relations and empowerment are in play.

One day at Selina we went for a walk around the neighbourhood with a large group of women, most of whom had one or two children with them. We ended up by the Themes, which several of the women and children had never seen before (though they now lived within walking distance from it). Someone pointed to the pier and Inga explained that it was a stop for the waterbus. One woman, with two kids, immediately started asking 'Can we go?' and Inga asked around if the other women were

keen on going too, which they were. It was agreed then and there that we would go on a trip down the Themes the next time the children would be off school and able to come. The trip took place with a large group of women and their children getting on the waterbus, which took us down the Themes to a previously agreed stop where we disembarked and found a park to sit down and share snacks. The trip was planned collectively in the sense that the idea had sprung from a resident, was backed by other residents and planned together; when to go and whereabouts to get off, and the rest we decided as we went along depending on what people felt like, where to sit, where to walk around and when to start heading back. In a usual session decisions are also made by the women along with the session leader, for example growing particular vegetables and herbs that residents enjoy. We also went on a smaller trip together with the residents in Vera to buy flowers, so that the residents could pick out flowers they would like for the garden, Samira only rejecting a flower if it was too expensive or would likely not survive in the spot planned for it due to the particular flower's needs.

Having residents take part in decision making processes and planning, pursuing what they have expressed pleasure in or suggested resonates with the principles of feminist leadership which underscores collaboration and inclusivity (Batliwala 2010), co-producing the content of the sessions, co-designing the space and having a relatively flat structure that allows the women to participate in decisions and influence in which direction they want the sessions to go. This shows a high degree of sensitivity towards the wishes of the participating women, with continued attention towards their enjoyment and preferences, similar to Batliwala's (2010) prescription of feminist leadership as something which should aim for the wellbeing of and sensitivity towards others, as well as providing the setting for empowerment – affording the women agency, trust, and a chance of being valued for their own input and creativity. Concerning the workdays mentioned earlier, it is also evident how collaboration is key in a very practical way. Sisters from different areas and refuges in the programme, as well as residents, working together on workdays to clear the garden and build beds, each person contributing at whichever level they are at, or sharing their skills or learning from others. The project manager, one of the co-directors at WEN, is also a central figure in organising the workdays and is physically involved. This, in my experience, is characteristic of WEN with people participating across areas and tasks, and shared responsibilities is a central aspect of their structure; they have three co-directors as opposed to one single director (WEN 2019c).

Power relations

In spite of the flat and inclusive structures of WEN and the Soil Sisters, there are still visible power relations in the sessions. Batliwala (2010) explains how a feminist approach to power in leadership is to distribute power, to aim for power to be shared with rather than had over others, and as such feminist leadership should aim to empower others. As I have attempted to express above, these types of relations are manifest in practice when decision are reached in collaboration with residents in the programme in little acts such as co-planning a trip and letting residents lead the way or choose which flowers to buy or plant. The session leaders engage their positions of relative power and privilege to extend and share that power with residents, empowering them. Through ultimately being the source of and orchestrating the sessions' content and proceedings, session leaders bring 'high energy to that space' as Eliza put it, their experience and skills allowing them to 'allow' the residents to actively partake in decision-making, in attempts to transfer and share power. Carmen said, 'they give me orders, I allow that'. Sasha described to me how they sometimes pursue ideas that residents have suggested as activities in the sessions:

> 'With the Soil Sisters it's a massive two-way thing, the people get to co-produce what their sessions will look like. […] When we're taking their [residents'] ideas forward and sharing them with the other women in the sessions, there's some sort of fulfilment, you can really see that person shine and come alive.'

Sasha describes how the women react positively to having their idea come to pass in a session in the shape of an activity to do or a skill they have and would like to share with the other women, as Sasha had experienced a few times.

VeneKlasen and Miller divided power into three dimensions; public, private and intimate, describing the intimate as 'the power – or powerlessness – the we feel within ourselves, expressed usually in terms of self-confidence, self-esteem, control over our bodies' (Batliwala 2010: 16). Whereas the residents are in refuges due to abusive power relation(ships) in the private category, that is inevitably linked with intimate power; lacking basic control over one's own body and experiencing powerlessness in those oppressive relations. When session leaders encourage residents to try and use power tools, or when they pursue residents' ideas and co-produce sessions with them, it is such intimate power that is engaged, trying to foster and (re-)build the women's feeling of self-confidence and self-worth. Once I met a newly arrived and seemingly shy resident, and when walking alone with

her I asked her name and how old she was. She became very talkative and said that she liked having her name and age asked, because in her 'culture' (her words) no one asked her that, she was always introduced or referred to as just 'the wife' (again her words). She said that 'no one cared' enough to ask. This is connected to such private and intimate power, being afforded no worth by family and community to such an extent that she feels acknowledged simply by having her name and age asked, to have someone direct genuine attention towards her. Simple as this is, it is at the base of what the Soil Sisters programme works towards, nurturing the women's sense of intimate power on any level, self-worth being another such level of empowerment alongside building trust in their own abilities.

Returning to the relationships between residents and session leaders, the latter ultimately have the power to agree to plans and so on, but do not force residents to join the sessions. However, Eliza and Samira both told me how the staff at their refuges made it compulsory for residents to join the sessions. Neither of them wanted or were comfortable with this requirement being put on the residents in relation to their work:

> 'I don't feel great about that, I feel like they've [residents] had enough coercion in their lives.' – Eliza.

> 'I don't want to put policies on anyone, I just want them to feel if you want to join in, join in, if you don't want to join in, don't, and just let me know and that's okay. It's supposed to be zero pressure, it's supposed to be therapy, not rules and regulations, no obligations.' – Samira.

They both perceive putting obligations on the residents as counterintuitive and counterproductive to the work they are trying to carry out in the refuges, and this is closely connected to the intimate power, that they are trying to (re)build in women in the sessions, enhancing their feelings of ownership and control over their own bodies and choices – hence perceiving it as counterproductive for the sessions to be compulsory. Twice I experienced Samira sending an emotional or tearful resident back to their room after they had arrived at the session in spite of not being in the mood – because it was mandatory – and Samira reassuring them, and later sharing her frustration with me concerning this obligation. The negative side of this is that some sessions leaders have experienced that a session will have no residents show up, yet Eliza expressed she still would not want the sessions to be mandatory, in spite of the benefits she had experienced regular attendants gaining. Eliza and Samira both perceive the voluntary aspect of participation as fundamental, which in extension

underscores the value given to making the garden spaces and the sessions primarily spaces of intimate empowerment, starting with the choice to show up.

Apart from making sessions mandatory, there are other ways in which the session leader's approach have been different from that of the refuge staff. At one point we had a tonne of soil delivered and agreed with staff on where the soil was allowed to be stored until needed, but the following session they wanted it moved from the agreed spot. We tried, with their help, to move it together but failed as there was still half a tonne left, and we ended up spending much time trying to move bits at a time, which was rather disruptive to the flow of the session, which again was frustrating to Inga as she wanted to focus on the attending women and children. This issue could have several explanations, such as the refuge having difficult access to the garden or circumstances changing the staff's agreement to leaving the soil there, but the conflict also displayed diverging priorities; Inga prioritising her immediate engagement with the residents, while the refuge staff prioritised Inga's engagement in the immediate displacement of the soil over her sustained attention toward the residents throughout the session.

'Play it by ear'

Concerning the practice of co-planning is another aspect I have experienced much when volunteering in sessions, which is the aspects of flexibility, adaptability and spontaneity. Adapting to the pace of nature, what plants need and when vegetables are ready to be harvested and cooked, is a basic part of planning sessions. Yet flexibility, adaptability and spontaneity are inherently relevant terms concerning planning in general, as modes of planning, not planning or changing plans, and are central to how the sessions often evolve. To return to the previously mentioned tour of the Themes, a staff member from the refuge asked us where we would be at particular times and where we would end up, so she could send a resident after us who was unable to leave with the group. Inga explained how we had only planned it roughly by this point, and that we were going to 'play it by ear', as she repeatedly said, and that we would proceed according to what the women preferred once we get of the boat. The member of staff kept saying how she would like to be able to tell the woman exactly where to go, and Inga kept saying the idea of the tour was for everyone to enjoy themselves and not rush, and that we would keep the woman in question updated on our proceedings over the phone. The staff member agreed yet kept asking for further details. In this situation, what to us, Inga, the other volunteer, myself (along with the joining residents) was an appropriate plan to 'play it by ear', and decide collectively along the way, was an inconvenient plan for the staff member, who preferred

knowing specific places and times to pass on. Eventually the member of staff was satisfied. Though other factors may also be at play, this was a smaller discrepancy due to the permeating approach to planning at Soil Sisters that does not prioritise punctual scheduling in the way the staff member might have appreciated, but rather prioritises spontaneity and flexibility, and collaboration in reacting to emerging circumstances and desires.

When asked about how she planned sessions Samira said: 'I do and I don't.' She continued:

> 'I'm learning to adapt to people in the house. […] I plan a little bit and I have options, so I think what could we do, you've got to plan for rainy days, emotional days, for what you might feel when you get there […] going on how everyone is feeling.'

Planning for her means having different ideas ready, so she can adapt to whatever the situation when she arrives at the refuge, the weather, what people feel like and so forth – being able to adjust on the spot, being flexible. Carmen, relaying a similar message, explained:

> 'You have to be very flexible, […] if you over-plan in this work, it doesn't work. You have a rough outline, but it could all go, as they say, tits up.'

Carmen expressed concern for the same type of flexibility as Samira did, the need to be able to change plans or improvise, with a 'rough outline' or repertoire of possibilities to pursue, being able to act according to the situation. The high degree of flexibility can, however, also be perceived as, to some extent, a type of *laissez faire*, in a sense leaving different parts of the programme without clear guidelines to follow – even when these might have been appreciated. One of the gardeners said during the interview how she could sometimes wish for more structure and more days together with the other gardeners, sharing experiences. She continued:

> '[…] you're just going with the flow, and that's also nice, but sometimes maybe the freedom to do that is overwhelming, you sometimes get lost, you know, what can you do? Because you can do so much.'

An aspect of this flexibility, in her view, is that it can be overwhelming, making a potential infinity of possibilities that may be difficult to navigate. This is however part of 'learning on the job', as she said, and as other session leaders have expressed, that despite their training and background within

these fields, they are continuously learning through experience, learning 'hands on' as another expressed it. Though this may create challenges, it is also inherently a way of generating knowledge and understanding of that particular, intersectional space they are working in through practical experiences, rather than (only) taking theoretical knowledge and applying in their practical work; an approach that resonates with feminist organisation, in the sense that it focuses on enabling, on practice and process and the continuation of learning (Batliwala 2010).

The session leaders enter the refuges in positions of relative power. It is through this position that they try to extend that power to the residents; aiming to create physical and emotional spaces latent with potential empowerment, by sharing power through engaging residents in co-planning and decision making. Activities with the potential of increasing residents' intimate power, self-esteem and -confidence are centralised, whether directly related to gardening or something simple like showing interest and adapting to residents' wishes or emerging situations. This reflects the principles and organisational structure of WEN as a whole, employing flexibility and adaptability, where session leaders react to challenges and circumstances, while also being an approach in order to engage and meet the residents on their terms. The structure however also begs the question of which challenges this level of flexibility entails, whether there can be too much flexibility in structuring the sessions. Though even if this can at times be challenging for session leaders or in their relations with hosting institutions, the high level of flexibility is central in their engagement of the residents, adapting to residents' positions and affording them agency along with it the potentially enabling intimate empowerment through sharing power and leadership. Furthermore, the principal of co-planning with residents, as in the case of the Themes trip and the collective buying of flowers, reflect a foregrounding of the processual as well as the spatial, centralising or including residents in these processes.

Working as Soil Sisters: The Experience

Awareness and reflection on both the content and the mode of organising are inherent to the Soil Sisters programme. Both are central aspects of how they work to create a restorative and empowering space for residents that is dynamic and react to particular circumstances rather than follow a universal standard. The previous section engaged with the organisation and structuring of and in the Soil Sisters, based activities and engagements in sessions as well as how such aspects were revealed in smaller confrontations with the institutions which the programme collaborates with and wherein the sessions take place. This section continues to examine how session leaders reflected upon these

principles of feminist leadership and organisation as permeating the structure of the Soil Sisters and WEN in relation to themselves and their roles, and how they see the programme affecting themselves in turn, through the freedom and trust afforded them. These aspects are also reflected upon regarding my own experience as a Soil Sisters volunteer, particularly focusing on one experience where I was given a larger responsibility than usual.

In our interview, without me having asked directly about it, Sasha told me how she felt when she first joined WEN as a Soil Sister:

> 'As an organization their structure was really interesting as well, a sort of non-hierarchy, flat structure, three people having shared responsibilities […] I was able to come in and work on a project that I wanted to work on, and having that sort of freedom to explore which role I wanted to take felt really good, like I was able to join the table at the same level as everyone else. It sounds a bit weird, these are sort of normal things, but I haven't felt like that anywhere else.'

Sasha expresses how the internal organisation at WEN was appealing to her, that the flat hierarchy made her feel like she was 'able to join the table at the same level as everyone else', feeling that her perspective and involvement was being welcomed, and that she was given the 'freedom to explore which role [she] wanted to take', being afforded the flexibility and trust to choose, create or influence how she wanted to work – and expressing that this was not something she had previously experienced at a work place. She continued:

> 'WEN was a space to sort of reflect, talk about these things, normalize them, and in a way highlight these challenges that people face every day, but is not talked about. Racism, living wage, being inclusive in the workplace. But I hadn't realized all those factors together, there had not been a place where these things were really talked about. I know how these things affect me and they're not really talked about, and WEN really talk about them and foreground them in everything they do, it was just a really fresh perspective in line with all the work they do.'

As a charity working with issues of social injustice, as described earlier when introducing WEN, such issues as Sasha describes are the main focus of their work. However what Sasha describes is the experience that these issues were also reflected upon internally in regard to themselves as an organisation with a structure and employees of different backgrounds. However as my work outside of the Soil Sisters with other parts of the organisation has been limited to mainly helping out at events,

I will not linger further on this except to underscore that Sasha's sentiment was reiterated when talking with other Sisters and WEN employees. Batliwala (2010) stresses how feminist leadership and organisation should both have social aims externally, in what an organisation works for, as well as internally in structure and awareness; in terms of who works, doing what, how and why. From Sasha's point of view, it would seem that this type of social awareness and reflection of feminist leadership permeates the structure of WEN, being inclusive and showing trust through inclusiovity and flexibility being afforded people, both between co-directors and other employees – and in relation to the women in the refuges whose wishes and choices are valued and centralised by co-deciding how sessions should proceed. This seem to reflect the same principles internally as perceived externally in their work.

As a volunteer, I have also experienced this type of inclusion and trust being afforded me, being given responsibility and included in decision making and carrying out smaller tasks as I thought appropriate. Once I was given the task of gathering the women from Selina alone and accompanying them to a nearby garden to which we had been before. When I went to collect and accompany the women on my own, this was both the result of the structure of the Soil Sister, as well as flexibility and adaptability to what the situation required, with the session leader on leave, and no one else being able to step in that day. Though having had time to mentally prepare (as the session leader had asked me about it several weeks in advance), I was still nervous on the day, having only helped rounding up the women once before and not alone. I was bringing them to an external community garden where there was more experienced WEN staff, but I had still been somewhat nervous, especially since I learned that the other volunteer would not be joining. In practice however it went well and was enjoyable, which made me consider why that was the case. In the days preceding I had had many thoughts on what it meant being the person responsible and representing Soil Sisters at the refuge, and how even though the situation was not practically demanding, I would officially be the representative in the eyes of the refuge, and furthermore I would be the one who intruded into the women's privacy by knocking on the doors to their rooms, and be the one to suggest when and which way to go. On one level, I felt urged on in a positive way by the trust afforded me, wanting to live up to it and telling myself that it was like Inga or Samira asking me to do something, only without them being nearby while I was doing it. It turned out to be a positive experience for me, with a feeling of accomplishment. The few residents who came (two women and two children) were excited to go, and as they were few I got a chance to talk to them more intimately. When we arrived, it also made me glad to see the women being able to participate in the cooking, and I was relaxed in the setting of that

garden and WEN staff that I knew. Being a small group from the refuge also created an affinity between us in relation to the larger group (made up of local residents to that garden), as these two women and their children knew me and so would approach me to have a break or ask something rather than the other staff, and I would be attentive and checking in with them. For me, what made it a good experience was that it was an agreeable level of responsibility for me mixed with an affinity or friendly intimacy between me and the women from the refuge as we sought toward each other in a larger group and seeing them happily engaged. This was empowering for me in the sense that I succeeded in managing the task and extra responsibility that I had taken on, as I felt able to adjust to the situation to how the women acted and helping them engage in activities, as well as feeling them become comfortable with and seeking toward me, which made me want to live up to their trust.[3]

Concerning this session, I cannot be assured that everyone would have had the same positive experience as I did. However, it felt comparable to when Sasha expressed how she felt like being 'able to join the table'; being afforded support and trust and encouraged on whichever level a person is at, as with the power tools, where everyone was encouraged to try whether once or repeatedly according to their own wishes, growing with the job. Concerning that workday with the power tools, Samira had not previously used power tools either, like most of the women, and so was learning with them. Samira said, early on in our interview about working as a Soil Sister: 'It makes you feel kind of empowered, that you're in this position, to be able to connect'; being empowered by working with the participating women, feeling them as well as yourself as able and connected - reflecting both Sasha's experience of joining the table, Samira's own experience of using a power tool for the first time and my experience just described. Eliza said about working as a garden therapist that it 'feels restorative and healing for me as well'. She expresses feeling the work affecting herself positively in return, underscoring how the work of different groups in the programme, including session leaders, is participatory – as Samira's and my experience also were – rather than simply executive, affecting, and potentially empowering, workers themselves.

These experiences have in common that they are little moments of empowerment, where the women working in the Soil Sisters programme experience empowerment themselves through their work, while in in the process of empowering others through mutual trust, feelings of connection and support in line with feminist principles. This structural approach permeating WEN shows how the process is central not only when working with the residents in the refuges, but for the women working in the

[3] It should be mentioned that apart from this experience I did not feel comfortable with or seek to take on more responsibility, as I lack basic training and experience in these fields of therapeutic horticulture and trauma.

programme as well who expresses this process and approach as central and affecting them on a personal level. This reflects the processes prioritised with regards to the residents; allowing all parties to engage at whichever level they are at or according to their preferences, and thus enabling connection and empowerment adding to the layers of meaning which the session leaders find in the work that they do.

Conclusion

Ecofeminist spaces of growth and connectivity

Space is created and used in the Soil Sisters programme through practices of collaboration, co-creating green spaces of inclusivity and a 'more-than-safety' (Bowstead 2019) that allows for the pursuit of challenges and achievements. Approaching spaces as political (Massey 2003) allows discerning the relation between how practices in the Soil Sisters programme emerge as connected to the values and principles of the people orchestrating the sessions. Women's Environmental Network defines the programme as working towards 'recovery and development' (WEN 2019b) through green care, yet the spaces are in practice shaped by several different aspects and practices going beyond the direct engagements of social and therapeutic horticulture. Employing green care as main content, such as attention restoration (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989), the participants are encouraged to partake in senses-based engagements, appreciate different places or aspects of greenery in contrast to the refuges or urban setting, aiming to alleviate urgent worries and replace it with momentary relaxation. Other spatial engagements focus on physically activating gardening activities, and residents' ideas or wishes are centralised in this process. Furthermore, residents are supported to reach little achievements or challenges such as building and handling power tools. As such, spaces of human-nature connection are created by making spaces of engagement with nature and gardening that employ as well as go beyond levels of extraction or the direct material engagement, to potentially engage deeper connections with nature, based on experiential, emotional and cognitive connections (Ives et al. 2018). Such connections are also engaged through enacting inclusion and co-creation of spaces of sharing, revealing principles of sensitivity and connectivity between not just human-nature relations but between humans, in effect the participating women, in practice echoing ecofeminist principles of partnership (Merchant 1996; Mies & Shiva 2004), both between people and natural elements. Through different activities both session leaders and residents share their knowledge or attachments

to nature, or they are encouraged to develop new skills or co-create a garden, or simply share moments of enjoyment. External spaces are also engaged whether for nature exploration, the sensation of sailing down the Themes, or to discover recreational green spaces in the vicinity. Recalling Massey's (2003) critique that space is associated with femininity and passivity, the space use and activities in the sessions are pursued across traditional gender associations, which session leaders are aware of. They perceive the pursuit of stereotypically masculine qualities as empowering the residents through breaking potential gender stereotypes of women and their abilities, yet without devaluing traditionally feminine values of nurture and sensitivity, which are pursued throughout both in more physically activating as well as senses-based engagements, through gardening content as well as the approach of the session leaders. Though the intersectional space of women's refuges and green care are categorically ecofeminist, supporting inclusive gender expressions while prioritizing a partnership approach to nature are central values in much ecofeminist thought (Mallory 2018), and these practices and space-use in the sessions reflect an inherent connection or dedication to such values. By providing the basics in the form of green spaces, tools, seeds, soil and time, the groundwork is laid out for providing participating women with a base from which to engage in whichever way they comfortably can and will, being supported, encouraged and shown trust by session leaders. In deciding their own level and way of engagement, the women get to experience their bodily integrity and autonomy as being absolute in exercising control over their own bodies, expressed in session leaders' values of non-coercion, sensitivity and encouragement. In this way, the spaces become spaces of more-than-safety (Bowstead 2019), where the Soil Sisters programme creates this 'more' through green care and sensitivity toward the participating women through enacting ecofeminist spaces of potential. Practices are engaged in such a way as to stimulate the sense of intimate power (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002, referenced in Batliwala 2010) in the participating women through creating spaces with activities and moments of potential relief, connection and achievement.

Feminist leadership as founding pillars

Even though each refuge in the Soil Sisters programme has a trained leader, the sessions are organized around an idea of collaboration and shared power. Session leaders bring a repertoire of activities with them to sessions where some will be carried out, yet sessions are also highly influenced and defined by residents' ideas and impulses, and this influence is encouraged by session leaders enacting principles recognized as corresponding with feminist leadership (Batliwala 2010). In practice this is manifest in the way session leaders seek to include the residents by extending or

sharing leadership agency such as decision making and collaborative planning, displaying a type of leadership which aims to create a horizontal structure and encourages everyone to participate and have influence. Thus session leaders create inclusive processes of decision making with residents, encouraging their development or enactment of leadership skills, with the structure aiming to enable women and support them by showing trust and valuing their contributions. This approach engages with the dimension of intimate power (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002, referenced in Batliwala 2010), making a structure of processes latent with the possibility of strengthening residents' sense of agency and belief in their own skills and ability to partake and having their voices centralised rather than repressed or ignored. In practice this is also manifest in the degree of flexibility, adaptability and improvisation that direct the sessions, shaped especially in the junction of feminist leadership in relation to vulnerable women in difficult circumstances. This dynamic structure, though aiming to give space, react to circumstances and share power with residents, can engender challenges in relation to the host institutions, when they do not necessarily work through the same levels of flexibility or improvisation and have diverging priorities. Challenges can occur when host institutions deploy regulations onto the women in relation to the programme, that to the session leaders feel counterintuitive to the principles and structure that they operate through, which are based on voluntary and encouraged participation. However, this relation between the organisational principles of the refuges compared to that of the Soil Sisters programme has not been examined further due to access and length, but could be pursued in a differently focused further study. To return to the structuring of the programme, it reflects the principle represented in Women's Environmental Network's flat leadership hierarchy of distributing and sharing leadership. Yet the way these principles are carried out in the sessions show them to be dynamic processes that seem to correlate with or be actively part of reaching for the aims of the programme, thus conflating or connecting the core aspects of feminist leadership of practice, purpose, values and power (Batliwala 2010) – underscoring the holistically feminist approach to leadership employed in the sessions. This suggest not only compatibility of content and structuring, but co-operation and mutually influencing aspects of the spatial and temporal engagement in the sessions. The organic content of green care and human-nature connectivity intersect with the 'organic', as in dynamic, shared and adaptable, structure of feminist organisation and leadership, creating a processual space latent with empowerment through accumulative practices - in a sense manifesting not just what a small-scale ecofeminist enterprise of empowerment could consist of, but how it might play out in practice. I would argue that it is at the intersection of nature connectivity and feminist modes of organisation but particularly through its

insistence on the spatial and processual enactment of these principles that enables this potential for empowerment.

However this study is not generalisable, and it is not claimed that ecofeminism grounded would play out similarly in other cases. Furthermore, the present study has a limited scope in relation to residents' experiences, as it is based primarily on session leaders' perceptions and only casual conversations have been engaged with residents rather than interviews, and so the study does not claim to understand how they necessarily experience or perceive these aspects. A further study with due ethical considerations could aim to engage residents' point of view.

Identifying with a combined politics and practice

This structural approach seems to be expressive of the values of the session leaders. Values appear central in the Soil Sisters, not only as abstraction or prescription but as permeating practices and purposes from a very basic level of approaching the steps of any activity, from conception and content to process and enactment. The workers or session leaders identify strongly with the values they perceive WEN and the Soil Sisters programme to represent, appreciating the charity's approach to them as workers which makes them feel included, which I also experienced strongly myself. Session leaders also expressed feeling appreciative of their work as allowing them to work through principles they hold or identify with, especially the principles of co-planning and enabling little achievements which they perceive as empowering. As well as consciously employing this in their work, they expressed experiencing empowerment themselves, both through specific activities as well as the permeating approaches, as I also experienced myself, through trust and collaboration. Sensitivity of approach is a factor they likewise consciously work by and value in its different forms, whether the sensitivity afforded by WEN or the sensitivity they enact when reacting to emotions and wishes in sessions, or the sensitivity of attention restoration, appreciating the human-nature connections, or enacting spaces of sharing. Session leaders themselves have a high level of flexibility, and they engage this flexible space in correlation with their values, pursuing what could, simplistically, be summarised to a type of a dynamic partnership (Merchant 1996; Mies & Shiva 2004) between residents, themselves, their employment, and nature as well as their values.

The Soil Sisters juxtaposes versatile approaches to engagement, connectivity and empowerment, in centralising collaboration and flexibility; across aspects of process, movement, activities, elements of nature and gender codes. The values revered in the program are comprehensively ecofeminist, being at the intersection of human-nature connectivity and leading and structuring through feminist

principles. Furthermore, I would argue that this position which the Soil Sisters engage through could be identified as the intersection between, or beyond the conflict of radical and postmodernist ecofeminism (Mallory 2018), embracing a more versatile approach through valuing and utilising gendered qualities or content inclusively. In the style of postmodern ecofeminism, the programme aims at empowering the participating women to engage with traditionally masculine qualities such as leadership and taking part in decision making, albeit importantly in an inclusive and feminist way, and other traditionally masculine abilities such as building and using tools, including power tools, conveying the message that women can do or aspire to achieve capabilities that are not traditionally feminine. Yet they centralise and appreciate traditionally (eco)feminine values of sharing and caring, nurture and sensitivity; engaging a dynamic space of activities, abilities and values as positive and achievable across rather than defined by traditional gender codes, and perceiving empowerment as inherent as well as an aim in their ecofeminist approaches.

During our interview, Inga reflected on the Soil Sisters programme: 'Sometimes I wonder, is it like sticking a plaster over a big, gaping wound?' This thesis has not aimed at answering her question, but has rather tried to ask what kind of plaster is it, what is it made of and why, how it operates and how workers perceive of it; overall exploring the relationship between practice and value. As such the findings in this dissertation are not generalisable, but are local and confined to the present case. What the Soil Sisters programme is argued to create are ecofeminist spaces of sensitivity and inclusivity with the potential for empowerment and versatile connections. This is expressed in a partnership approach, through co-producing processual, shared spaces of nature, in effect enacting a politics of ecofeminist values, which is engendered by and simultaneously affecting the people who work in the programme, including yours truly.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Table of interviewees

Interviewee (anonymised)	**Date interviewed**	**Role**	**Refuge (described if I attended sessions)**
Inga	27/06/2019	Soil Sisters session leader / therapeutic gardener	Referred to as 'Selina'. East London, large refuge. Two buildings, two outdoor areas. One building housing women with children, the other housing women without children. Offices in both buildings, several members of staff. Common room, playroom. Capacity for 19 women, 6 of whom without children. Maximum stay of three months. Another volunteer joined shortly after me.
Samira	01/07/2019	Soil Sisters session leader / therapeutic gardener	Referred to as 'Vera'. East London, smaller refuge. Townhouse. One office, one member of staff. No children. Garden. Kitchen including seating area. Capacity for 8 women. Maximum stay of two years. Another volunteer joined shortly after me.
Carmen	02/07/2019	Soil Sisters session leader / therapeutic gardener	East London.
Sasha	09/07/2019	Soil Sisters session leader / therapeutic gardener	East London.
Eliza	06/08/2019	Soil Sisters session leader / therapeutic gardener	East London.

Appendix B – Table of Soil Sisters sessions and events

Date	**Refuge**	**Participants**	**Activity**
20/3/19	Eliza's refuge	Eliza, WEN co-director, several volunteers, one resident.	Workday. Building beds, sheds, digging, fitting.
21/03/19	Selina	Inga, many residents and children.	Went to city farm. Weeding, planting, looking at animals. Break in café on the way back.
25/03/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, three residents.	Trip to Kew Gardens. Walked around, exploring, shared picnic.

28/02/19	Selina	Inga, residents and children.	Tea in playroom, tea outside, planting and transplanting, watering. Sharing ideas for future plans
30/03/19	None	All gardeners, volunteers, associates and co-director.	Away Day. Shared lunch. Exercises and activities evolving around meditation, nature. Session leaders presenting their refuge gardens, projects, progress.
04/04/19	Selina	Inga, other volunteer, residents and children.	Went to city farm. Weeding, watering, walking around with children. Watched new born lamb. Cafe on the way back (women with children went straight home).
11/04/19	Selina	Inga, other volunteer, residents and children.	Arts and crafts in playroom, gardening outside.
12/04/19	None	Gardeners and volunteers.	Honour based violence training. Shared lunch.
18/04/19	Selina	Co-director (stand-in for Inga), two residents and one child, other WEN staff and locals.	Went to community garden with kitchen. WEN organised cooking and gardening workshop.
25/04/19	Selina	Inga, residents and children.	Gardening (mainly children gardening). Tea outside.
02/05/19	Selina	Inga, four residents and children.	Went to city farm, weeding, walk around farm.
08/05/19	Vera	Samira, many residents.	I measured garden for plant beds (alone due to bad weather). Cooking inside. Tea.
09/05/19	Selina	Inga, two residents and children.	One resident came and went. After a while she and another resident came. Made fruity beauty (homemade moisturiser).
13/05/19	Vera	Samira, many residents.	Watering, cooking. Tea.
16/05/19	Selina	Inga, other volunteer, residents and children.	Walk in area. Went to playground, went to Themes. Went to new garden café.
20/05/19	Vera	Carmen (stand-in for Samira), other volunteer, many residents.	Received wood delivery. Carried through house to garden. Tea.
23/05/19	Selina	Inga, other volunteer, residents and children.	Gardening, children did watering, transplanting and weeding, adults sitting with tea.
30/05/19	Selina	Inga, other volunteer, many residents and children.	Trip on Themes, boat down the river, disembarking and went to park, shared picnic, walk along the river.
03/06/19	Vera	Samira, co-director, other volunteer, many residents.	Workday. Dug, measured wood, built and secured beds, filled soil. Tea.
06/06/19	Selina	Inga, other volunteer, few residents and children.	Gardening outside w. children, transplanting into new beds (built by outsiders contracted by WEN), women inside in common room, unengaged, some came out to have a look. Attempts at moving leftover soil.

10/06/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, residents.	Me and other volunteer weeded and sowed grass (alone due to rainy weather). Tea and snacks.
17/06/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, residents.	Sowing and transplanting into beds, watering. Tea and snacks.
20/06/19	Selina	Inga, one resident and children.	Went to city farm. Weeded, walking around the farm, playing with children.
27/06/19	Selina	Inga, few residents and children.	Gardening, weeding, watering, harvesting. Some arriving as the session finished.
01/07/19	Vera	Samira, four residents.	Weeding, transplanting, watering. Tea.
04/07/19	Selina	Inga, no residents.	Tended to plants in the city farm, only me and Inga. Shift in residents, many having left. Communication issue with refuge staff.
15/07/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, residents.	Pruning, weeding, watering, harvesting. Tea and snacks. Board game.
18/07/19	Selina	Inga, five residents and children. Other WEN staff and locals.	Went to community garden with kitchen. Gardening and cooking.
22/07/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, many residents.	Walk to gardening centre to buy pre-grown flowers.
29/07/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, four residents.	Weeding, watering. Tea and birthday cake (baked by Samira to celebrate my birthday during the weekend).
01/08/19	Selina	Co-director, residents and children. Other WEN staff and locals.	Went to community garden. Gardening and cooking.
05/08/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, residents.	Pruning, weeding, adding soil, watering, harvesting. Tea and snacks.
08/08/19	Selina	Two residents and children. Other WEN staff and locals.	Went to community garden. Cooking and gardening.
12/08/19	Vera	Samira, three residents.	Watering. Henna. Tea.
15/08/19	Selina	Inga, three residents and children.	Walk in the area. Went to playground, went to Themes. Went to garden Café.
19/08/19	Vera	Samira, other volunteer, many residents.	Harvesting. Cooking.