

Fatima Ishaq 15.11.25

Interviewer 1: Hi, my name is Susanna Beaupre, it's the 15th of November and I'm interviewing Fatima Ishaq.

Interviewer 2: And I'm Laura Menendez and I am also interviewing the same person.

Interviewer 1: For the Young Women's Movement's Young Women Remember project. To begin, please can you tell me your full name, where you're from and your previous involvement with the organisation.

Interviewee: My name is Fatima Ishaq, I'm from Dundee and I've been involved with the movement in several different capacities but right now as an events volunteer.

Interviewer 1: Thank you, we'll ask some warm-up questions first. How old are you?

Interviewee: I am 21.

Interviewer: And where were you born?

Interviewee: In Dundee, I think I've lived here my whole life.

Interviewer: Excellent, what jobs have you had and what are you doing for a living now?

Interviewee: Right now, I am studying social work, so I'm in my third year of uni and I've worked in various different, like, youth work roles over the last couple of years. I've worked as a youth worker, I've worked in mental health and right now I'm working in social work, so I'm supporting people who have been exploited and trafficked and other forms of abuse and exploitation.

Interviewer 1: And when did you first get involved with the Young Women's Movement?

Interviewee: Um...I think it was 2020, so I think when I was around 15, 16.

Interviewer 1: How did you find out about the organisation?

Interviewee: I...I was thinking about this this morning [laughing] when I was reading the questions and I think I remember seeing a poster in school, so I first got involved from a project they were running in my school called Young Women Know and it was a project all about tackling peer sexual abuse and raising awareness of healthy relationships, so there was like a poster outside of my guidance class and a few of my friends and myself were approached to ask if we'd be interested and I remember just seeing the poster and thinking like I'm all over this like 100% and that's, yeah, that was my first sort of interaction with the movement.

Interviewer 1: So that was the first project you were involved in, is that the only one that you've been working with or can you tell me about some of the other ones that you've worked with?

Interviewee: Yeah, so I worked with Young Women Know in around 2020, so that campaign was launched over lockdown, it was called Our Fear Struggles. Um... from there I was involved with Young Women Lead, so they brought Young Women Lead to Dundee and I was involved with that for a wee while. I was involved in the advisory collective, so I joined that I think in 2022 and then I was involved in the like rebranding of the movement, I think it was 2022-2023 and I've been doing that for a couple of years and now as an events volunteer and I also am a delegate to the European Youth Forum, so I represent the movement and the European YWCA which the Young Women's Movement is a part of at that sort of European level.

Interviewer 1: Wow, can I ask you first about during lockdown how the interactions looked, did we ever meet up in person, was it all online?

Interviewee: I think the first, like... Must have been almost yeah between like eight months to a year it was all online and so we met, we used to do like some meetings, so we used to be whilst I was in school, we would get the time away from school and we would have these meetings. We used to like bond over like Taylor Swift, like I remember like the process of her releasing like Folklore, Evermore, Midnights, that used to be like our thing, that was the thing that sort of brought us all together, um, and then, when the campaign like officially launched in 2021, everyone met in person but I, myself and two of the other girls who I was really close friends with at school, we all got Covid [laughing], um, so yeah we ended up staying home and I think half the group met up in person and I think Elena and Patrycja, who was the CEO at the time, had that sort of in-person reunion. I don't think it was until later in 2021 that we all actually got to meet up face to face, yeah.

Interviewer 1: Was it quite a large group that was involved in this one?

Interviewee: I think there was, I think there was about eight of us, so there were three or four of us from my school in Dundee, there were a couple of other young women in other high schools and then there was someone from like university and college. We had two other sister campaigns, so I think there was one launched in Perth and Kinross and one launched in Angus as well, but the sort of original group in Dundee, there was about eight of us and there were people from, it was like a partnership project, so there were staff from NSP Scotland and from Dundee City Council supporting as well, so yeah it was quite, it was a small but it was a mighty team, we were all kind of a wee family, quite a community, it was really nice, yeah.

Interviewer 1: Can you tell me about how that community has kind of continued since the project?

Interviewee: Yeah, so our campaign launched in 2021 and I don't think any of us were expecting to get the response we did, like it was a super positive response from everyone. I think we were invited to speak on like TV, on the radio, on the news, to write in like newspaper articles, to speak at like Reclaim the Night, it's a sort of big feminist event up

here, and other like conferences and spaces and then the project was launched in Perth and Kinross and in Fife as well, um, and again, I think there was a really big and a really positive response from that so much, so I think the I sort of continued to be involved throughout the last five years or so and there were like national champions last year, so we brought the three campaigns together and sort of combined all the resources we'd made and so I was a sort of champion for that, like promoting that across the country, um... So, I think it's had a really positive impact, I think both locally and nationally, I think it really helped me personally, like building my own confidence, meeting other people, I think I felt, um, like I was part of a sort of community and I found the feminist community, I think that was something I was sort of longing for right through school and so it was really nice to have found that and I think it got a lot more people I think in the city talking about issues impacting women and talking about feminist issues which was really cool and in schools and we noticed a lot of changes but I think there was also the national part and there was that involvement in like shaping policy and speaking to decision makers and stuff, um, yeah.

Interviewer 1: Can you tell me a bit more about that second aspect in terms of the policy and your experiences there?

Interviewee: Yeah, it has been really positive, I think being able to, like we had like parliamentary receptions and stuff in parliament which was really interesting, I think getting to chat to decision makers, um, getting to present our work and sort of highlighting how important it was and we also did a lot of work with like the NSPCC and their policy team, um, which, yeah, has been really cool. I think it was either the Perth group or the Angus group, I think one of them did a lot of work in parliament, I can't remember the specific policy or something they'd worked towards but they did a lot of really cool work on that and I think locally as well it was something like in Dundee, um, decision makers and local councillors were sort of all over and the Young Women Lead report was all about like sex ed in the city and sort of improving that and I think both of them coming in around the same time was really important and I think it really got the attention of decision makers and of staff across the city, so I think there were some real changes made in terms of like education which was pretty cool to see.

Interviewer 2: What was the thing that like, I just would like to know from like the sort of things that you guys were talking about as a group, like what were the main issues that like you guys were facing at that point, you say there was quite a lot of change in for example like sex ed, were there other things that were like significant both to your cohort maybe locally and like across like all of the groups in other places?

Interviewee: Yeah... I think there was a big, there was a big thing we spoke about, about having safe spaces and because I think a lot of us felt like this sort of both education but also our experiences of women through the education system, most of us had experienced or knew someone who had experienced some form of like sexual harassment or assault or abuse or, you know, anything, even like online and we'd all either experienced or knew someone who had so it was a really big issue but I think it was something there was still so much stigma I felt like there was attached to it and it was one of those things where I think every time we tried to speak about these issues we were maybe shut down from those of us, from those around us and from like young men and boys around us but also from teachers or other sort of powerful, powerful adults in our life and there weren't any really

any services around the city, um, we felt like we could go to or we felt others could speak to and so I guess there was a really big emphasis on changing the narrative and sort of breaking the stigma a little bit and creating safe spaces and I think one thing we really pushed for was the fact that a safe space isn't necessarily like a physical space like and it could be a person or it could be an item or I mean it could be a physical space within a school or within like an employment or work setting or just the cultural and the ethos of a place and making it safe, making it inclusive, making it a space for young women and girls and boys and everyone for that matter where they can share what's going on, where they can be listened to, where they can be believed and I think that's something we found and the sort of spaces known to us already were kind of lacking almost so it was something we were able to push for, we were able to like, um, directly feed in and advise like what would that space look like or what would it feel like or you know how can we create that um and that was something say both for us like locally but I think as a whole I think from like young when I've spoken to all across the country and I think that's something we're all, we're all needing or we're all looking for, yeah.

Interviewer 2: Makes sense and what was the involvement with the project like on a day-to-day basis, so like was there meetings that happened weekly was there like any other sort of setup like you said the most of it was online because of covid but like how did the logistics of it work?

Interviewee: Yeah, um, we used to have meetings... I think it was every two weeks and it would be on zoom, so it used to be like a, um, usually during sort of school time, um, and yeah we used to I think we used to get a room within the school or we would just go home, um, and we would do the meetings together because there were a couple of the girls I was really close friends with in the school doing it with me we would we would do it all together, um, which was quite cool, um, and the meetings were quite... They were always like a really positive space, like, we would all check in with each other, we would do icebreakers, we would just spend time chatting and getting, getting to know each other, I think it's much harder to do online but I think when we were together it didn't feel like there was a barrier, um, because I think we still had the chance to build really, sort of, positive relationships and, and there was sort of work to do in between meetings so there would be reading or there would be little tasks we would take. Um...We used to have a lot of sessions if we if there was like an artist working with us um for when we were like designing the campaign and the logo of the campaign um or other folk like from the NSPCC team coming and speak to us about things or to give us training, um, so there was lots of like outside input, um, and then as the campaign had launched there were a lot of sort of opportunities to deliver training and to professionals to speak at conferences to, um, even deliver like workshops within schools or like youth groups, um, speaking to like young women directly and being able to like share our experiences with them and then we started meeting up in person quite frequently, um, that was quite, quite cool too.

Interviewer 1: Thinking about your involvement, uh, since that first project how has your relationship with the organisation, um, developed?

Interviewee: I think it just kind of grew arms and legs from there to be honest, um, yeah I think, so, whilst we were doing Young Women Know, um, they brought Young Women Lead to Dundee as well so myself and a friend who was also part of Young Women Know we both

thought we'd get involved with Young Women Lead and again that was a really positive experience and I still speak to most of the young women I'd worked with on that project um which is quite cool a lot of us actually quite work quite closely together now, um, in the sort of jobs we do and then yeah I think it was having a really positive relationship with the staff as well ,um, so Elena who still works with the organisation, um, was... I think she played a really key part in that for me, I think she was, you know, she'd always having send an email with different opportunities or asking if I wanted to be involved with different things. So, there was the Advisory Collective, and she'd emailed me and asked if I'd be interested in joining that on the back of my involvement with, um, like Young Women Know and Young Women Lead and I think that opened up so many other opportunities for me as well, um, and I think because I...It was sort of quite a strange time because I was going through that sort of transition of, of leaving school and I guess you sort of lose the support network with that and things change I think again I was I sort of found the community in Dundee but because I was moving on and going to uni and starting new things, um, I was looking for... Yeah I was still looking for that sort of feminist community and I think , um, being able to like join the Advisory Collective and to get more involved with the work across the country and meeting young women from all over really helped with that and I think it really helped that sort of transition for me and sort of moving off school and into uni.

Interviewer 2: Cool. Um, but you said that like you found it really like impactful, uh, let's say, to like be involved in something like the young women's movement in the transition from like school to uni uh like why, why do you think that was? Like yeah do you want to give us a little bit more on that?

Interviewee: Yeah, I think it was just having... I think it was just having a space. I think, like, I was so actively involved with school and with everything and I had really good relationships there I think it, it felt like a very sudden change from having such a good support network and such a good group of friends to suddenly leaving and me and all my friends, like, we'd all moved to different places, um, I had moved to St Andrews to study there, um, I absolutely hate it [laughing], so I was struggling with that ,um, with that sort of transition as it was I guess ,um, and I think I was just I was feeling quite stuck and quite alone and I think I was feeling quite disconnected, um, because I'd been so heavily involved with the movement and with work in school, it just kind of felt like, okay what now? Like, how, how can I still be involved? Um, and I think the movement really helped with that. I think meeting other people who were in the like exact same scenario as me, um, really helped... Being able to like support each other and just being able to put my passion to something and to be able to share that with other people and to be able to like talk to people who share similar issues with me, um, I think from my sort of family, and my home background, I think a lot of the issues we speak about when a lot of the work, um, I've been doing is quite heavily stigmatised, so having this space, having this sort of movement has always been really important to me, um, and I think it's something I've, yeah something I've definitely found from all the staff and all the volunteers and everyone like engaging with the movement.

Interviewer 2: And was there anything from your involvement with the Young Women's Movement that sort of like informed your decisions going into uni or was it just the safe space and the finding a place where to be yourself that was helpful?

Interviewee: I think it, I think it... So originally, when I went to uni I studied management and economics to begin with [laughing] um, and yeah I'm not I'm not sure what, what quite inspired that decision. I think when I was ...When I decided to leave, um, when I came back to Dundee I was feeling a bit stuck again but I think I was thinking about all the work I do like I remember speaking to staff and other friends I was involved with at the movement, um, and I'd always had an interest in social work, I'd always had an interest in more sort of systemic issues and being able to support and empower sort of communities, um, so I think it was a lot of the conversations, I think that, sort of same passion and interest I was trying to find a way like how can I do this or how can I like use this every day so I think it certainly I think it helped me find social work and it helped me, um, yeah I suppose it helped me understand and find a way where I could use this passion or where I can sort of have this every day if that makes sense?

Interviewer 2: Yeah it does make sense, um, and from like a perspective of your involvement in the projects and in the organisation now, uh, like what do you remember feeling about the project when you first joined?

Interviewee: Um... like way back?

Interviewer 2: Yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah, I, to be honest, I didn't know anything about it um I don't know anything about the organisation. I thought, I remember like the day I seen the poster I thought this is like amazing like we're, this is something we're really missing and it's not something I'd ever heard of and like being offered to like when I was in school or when I was involved in any other like project or organisation and there was no like space for young women and girls there are no sort of feminist, feminist organisations like close to me and I think at the time I got involved in the movement I also got involved quite a lot with like local like politics and things I was involved with my youth council and elected in the Scottish Youth Parliament so both things came, um, hand in hand, I think they both complemented each other really well but yeah I think I was quite excited by the opportunity um I was maybe a little bit confused to begin with because I think at the time it was still YWCA Scotland so there was still a sort of, although I think when I met people from the organisation I think I knew there was that separation between, I suppose the sort of religious roots and that sort of Christian aspect, um, I think I was still I was still questioning things in my head about whether it would be the appropriate space for me but I think when I, when I met staff and when I started to get involved, I realised that it was a space for everyone, I realised that it was quite, um, inclusive and intersectional.

Interviewer 2: And so you've gone through, like, you've experienced from inside the organisation the change from YWCA to the young women's movement, like, how was living through that transition?

Interviewee: It was really interesting, I think, do you know, I think it's something like that was really needed in the organisation and I think it's something they had maybe been wanting to do for a while, like I wasn't really aware of the ins and outs of it but I got the vibe it was something we were really striving to do, um, and I think it was really cool, I think it was, it, it made sense as the next step because I think, um, yeah, I think to be a truly sort of

inclusive organisation, I think it was important to recognise the sort of history of the organisation and where it's come from but to be able to move forward with that and I think, well, some people might say it's just a name, I think it sort of defines the whole place, you know, and it defines the culture and I think it's been really interesting especially over the last year because I've visited um a few of the other like, sort of, sister organisations if you will, across Europe, um, so I was in Antwerp at the sort of equivalent of the YWCA there and they've also rebranded, um, and changed their name too, so I think it's, I think it's something, um, other organisations across Europe are working towards, I think in Greece as well they've changed their name and they've rebranded, um, I think it's something people are recognising, I think in some countries it's maybe more difficult if that sort of religious aspect or that sort of Christianity, those sort of roots are important or if they're like more sort of culturally significant but I think in such a diverse multicultural country like Scotland I think it just absolutely makes sense, um.

Interviewer 2: Fair enough. Have you seen any change in, like, the people that have been involved in the movement since the branding, like since the rebranding or since the change or you've not really seen much difference in that regard?

Interviewee: Um... I think I've seen how rapidly the movement has grown over the last couple years, to be honest. I think I, like, yeah all the projects, I think even the staff team has maybe like tripled, quadrupled since like, um, yeah way back in 2020. It feels like it has really grown, I think having a new CEO as well um yeah I think this sort of it's almost like the direction of the organisation has changed quite a bit and I think there's lots of different and really new and really exciting projects and it's really cool that you know they've received the funding and that they have the capacity to be able to do all these things, um, because I think from what I remember, it was a small but quite a sort of heavily growing movement and I think certainly in the last couple of years I've really noticed just how like widely it's, it's expanded and, um yeah.

Interviewer 2: Fair enough.

Interviewer 1: Um, can I ask a bit more about the visit to Antwerp and uh, what in what capacity you were there and, and just yeah there's more you can tell me about that?

Interviewee: Yeah of course, um, so earlier this year actually myself and I think seven or eight other people um involved with the young women's movement we went to a study session in Budapest, um, it was run by like the European YWCA I think, they run it every two years and, and we met people from representing like YWCA's like all across Europe so I think there were people from like 13-14 different countries, um, and it was yeah it was pretty life-changing to be honest we spent a week together and um, we were like a total family, like, we spent the week speaking about feminist issues, we took part in workshops activities, we went out we explored the city, um we did like various things, um, and it was great. I think, I don't know if it was just the sort of group of us together, um, I think a lot of it was the sort of people facilitating the space, so there were, I think, four or five facilitators who were also involved with YWCA's, um, across the country there was one from Scotland, India um, but they just nurtured this like really safe and really welcoming, really wholesome space for the week, um, and I think ever since we've all, I've kept in touch with the vast majority of people um, I met on that trip so we met a group of people from, um, Antwerp from in Belgium, um,

and we went back to see them later in the year ,um, so we arranged to meet each other, um, we I think we've kept in touch very closely ever since and we were attending another feminist event in Brussels, um, in September and myself and a couple of friends who went to the study session then went to, um, Antwerp and met with the group of girls there and they took us to Lucy's which is their like equivalent YWCA space and we got a tour there, we met a lot of the women, got to know the work they do and they showed us around Antwerp for, for a couple of days, um, which was really cool.

Interviewer 1: Are there any learnings from that, that you've found with us applying day-to-day since or things that you're hoping to get involved with afterwards or?

Interviewee: I think just, I think it really highlighted the importance of having a space. I think they're doing a lot of really cool work in terms of like supporting people who are new to the city and supporting the refugees or others, um, who are sort of new to the space, um, I think they're doing a lot of work around like education and empowerment and advocacy but they're also doing a lot of stuff which is just like stuff they're doing for a good time to be honest. I think they, they have a full social calendar of things for women, just like nurturing a space with different groups, and activities for young women to get involved with and connect and I think that's something we fed back, um, to like the young women's movement about the need to have spaces where we could just do, where we could just connect as women where we don't necessarily have to be like fighting a cause or, um, doing something like that but just spaces where we can chill together or get to know each other in a more informal way, um, so I think one of the big things I think away from that was that to just to be able to connect with others but to not burn myself out and for all of us to know like the importance of looking after our sort of collective well-being, um, and that's something, yeah, I certainly took from that and I think that's something I, I seen was like a sort of core value of the work they do in Antwerp.

Interviewer 2: Cool and was there anything from the experience of the young women that you met in there that you recall that really resonates with what's happening in here or was there anything that was different that you were like oh this is what you're going through this is not really the same the way we experience it here?

Interviewee: I think there were so many parallels in terms of like the issues, the sort of common issues we experience, um, I think in terms of like I think health care was a big one and women's access to health care and experiences, things like education things like employment and access like employment opportunities and, and experiences of being in the workplace and I think every country specifically I think thinking of like countries like Armenia, um, there were sort of specific issues facing their communities and specific issues facing young women and girls. I maybe wasn't as aware, or different conflicts and things, um, I think I was maybe just so blindsided by like I had no idea um what was going on in some of these countries and I think it was really, it was really powerful for these women, um, to be able to share their stories and be able to sort of trust us and be vulnerable and yeah there was there was a lot of common themes but I think every country as well has had their sort of specific issues but I think it was it was nice to be in a room together where we could talk about it, where we could be vulnerable and where we could sort of brainstorm and share, you know, things that worked for us.

Interviewer 1: And on your role in the advisory committee, um, are there changes that you've seen happen from what you've been feeding back or things that you're hoping for going forward?

Interviewee: Um, yeah, I think a big part of being in the advisory collective was, I think, being involved with the rebrands I think, like, um, yeah, I think our decisions were very much like implemented in that like I think from even like the colours of the organisation now and the sort of branding toolkit and everything like we had a series of like um co-design sessions where we were able to like work with an artist and a designer, um... Yeah, I think they've always been very honest about how what our involvement would be like and what that would look like and what it would lead to, so I think in cases like that I could see how literally like exactly what we said would go into practise and I think that was really cool because I think a lot of the time like being in situations where organisations sort of people might gather your, your views or your, um, suggestions but nothing actually happens into practise whereas, I think here, it was quite... Especially with the rebranding, I thought it was really cool how, um, they've sort of gone for exactly what we've said, um, yeah I think... Other things, like, I remember attending like their away days and looking at, um, like the development of their strategy, um, I think seeing that and seeing the strategy being launched and things was quite cool and, and seeing how our views and, um, suggestions have been implemented there, um, like the involvement of co-designing campaigns and things um, having our views out there has been quite cool and I think even just the design of the advisory collective I think it was a quite new thing for them when I'd first joined and it's something we'd fed back like needing it to be more of a kind of formal structure, um, where we are involved with like the sort of governance of the organisation and this sort of strategic, strategic aspect, um, and that has happened, now I'm no longer on the advisory collective but I've seen that shift which has been yeah quite nice to see.

Interviewer 2: Was there anything in particular that made you not be part of the advisory collective anymore or did it just come to an end naturally?

Interviewee: I think it came to quite a natural end, so I'd been involved for about three years, um, I think originally it was supposed to be like a two-year term, um, and I think, so they were changing the structure of the advisory collective after our like feedback about it, um, and I think they were changing it to have a certain amount of women so they were sort of downsizing it and I just thought I think I've I'm super grateful for all the opportunities I've had but I think it's also knowing when to think to move on from an opportunity and make space for other young women, um, so I think I thought it was a, it's quite a good time and when they were looking for event volunteers at the time so Elena again had asked if I'd like to switch over and do that instead, um, so we're sort of moving on from one thing to another.

Interviewer 2: Nice, and what's your, what's, what's your experience been of the being an events volunteer?

Interviewee: It's quite cool it's, um, much more flexible I think. I think I'm at a stage in my life right now where I maybe don't have as much time for, um, like a programme or being involved and I think I've been involved so much I think again it's kind of making space for other, for other young women, um, but it's been really good meeting people on more of an

ad hoc basis or seeing like the end of a project and being involved as a volunteer um, in like a big event to mark that, um, yeah it's nice being able to sort of shout out about the organisation being kind of like an ambassador to it in that respect, um, and I think still having, a sort of loose involvement with the organisation is really cool and I've always loved events so um it felt like the perfect role for me.

Interviewer: Are there any events from the last year or so that you could tell us a bit more about?

Interviewee: Yeah, um, I was trying to think, I was involved with the 100th birthday party earlier this year, um, which was really fun, um, that was quite a big event so it was really nice to be involved with that, um, I can't remember the name of the series of events but there have been a series of events that have been more, like a space for young women to get to know each other and to do particular activities, so, we had one like at the Science Centre, um, we had one it was like, um, a terrarium making, I've actually got mine here [laughing], um, that we'd made, um, yeah there was like the Young Woman Lead, um, celebration and launch, um, there have been so many different events but it's kind of, it's I think it's nice that it's quite flexible that even you know, I can kind of come in when I can, um, I think there have been a few events at parliament ...Sort of events all over the place and I think from different projects and programmes ,um, so I guess it's been nice to dip in and out of those.

Interviewer 2: And do you feel like from any of the, any of, or all or one specific one, of your involvements within the movement, you've gained any transferable skills that you've taken to the rest of your life outside the organisation?

Interviewee: Gosh, yeah, so many [laughing] yeah, um, I think yeah certainly leadership stands out to me, I think I've been thinking about it a lot and like with my job currently, erm, just in social work as a whole, um, I think I've like, programmes like Young Women I think where we were like actively leading, um, campaigns and groups and projects, I think that has really helped me and it's really helped with my sort of independence my confidence in situations as well. Um, confidence is such a big one, I think when I first started in the movement, I like, I think I really struggled with it and although I really liked, like I've always really loved connecting with others and meeting new people but, um, I just always felt like my confidence was holding me back but I think having people who, have sort of supported me unconditionally and having people who've um, trusted me and kind of put their faith in me and supported me, it's been really cool. Um, I think things like communication, there's been a lot of like public speaking and things like that, again something I really struggled with to begin with ,um, just having opportunities to try things and yeah I think the process of any skill, I think doing over and over again, um, and I've had so many opportunities to do that so I think it's, it's helped me so much with my career right now and just gaining like deeper knowledge of feminist issues and issues impacting like young women and girls and it really helped me with my job as well and with future aspirations too.

Interviewer 2: And within that sort of like political thing we were talking about, has there been any like, not just issues that like young women face but societal issues that have impacted young women, like do you feel like there's any main ones that you say have sort of marked your time at the organisation?

Interviewee: Oh [laughing] um [pause] I don't know I think, um, I suppose like violence against women as a whole I think has been a really big one I think particularly um like around I think it's always been a really big issue I think it absolutely still is I remember like when I first joined the organisation there was quite a big push for that and I think that's where a lot of these campaigns and groups came in, um, I think right now I guess we're going through a period with the rise of the far right and I think I'm really seeing that in the response of the organisation and in the sort of projects and spaces they create, I think having that understanding of issues impacting women um, I think as well I really like the work that they did in the Glasgow centre and around supporting like refugees and youth scouts and things and yeah I think they've always played a big role I think in recognising sort of macro issues and being able to take an active stance , um, not only that as an organisation, but also being able to like centre the lived experience of young women and girls who are directly impacted by these issues and I really like the way they've always done that I think like whether it's through writing blogs or through like peer-led campaigns or like co-design work and I think, yeah, when big events or issues have, um, been in the spotlight I guess, for lack of a better term, I think they've always been proactive in ensuring that it is young women impacted by these issues that are involved or are sort of actively leading the conversation.

Interviewer 2: And in terms of the impact you think that you're like... Let me rephrase that question it was I did that terribly, um, how do you feel like your involvement in the organisation has impacted the movement?

Interviewee: Um... I don't know, I think it, yeah I think it's been such a journey for me, I, like I remember when I had first started, I think I was, kind of, I was welcomed by other women who had been involved in the movement for quite a while, so I suppose now that I've been involved for a while, I've been able to make space and to hold other young women and to welcome them and to be able to speak really positively and like promote the work of the organisation. Um, I can certainly see the impact like campaigns and things we've been involved with have had an impact on the organisation, I think in like raising more awareness of it I think and drawing more young women to the organisation and in um, like building better relationships between other like feminist organisations and between like statutory and other third sector organisations um, but I think it's something we've, it's something we've done together, I guess, as a collective, um , yeah.

Interviewer 1: Is there anything, uh, that you would think the movement would benefit from going forward, whether that's things that would facilitate their work or, or new angles for them to go through, or what would help them do the work that you've seen?

Interviewee: I think one thing, one thing I've been saying a lot, I think it's particularly after like visiting Antwerp is like a physical space or like a physical hub and I think it's something that comes with so many different issues like funding and I just think the climate we're in and it being I suppose a national organisation it's more difficult but I think, um, yeah, I think one thing I really liked about seeing the centre in Belgium was, um, the physical space and having this sort of community hub where people can come together, having spaces for like women-led businesses and different projects and charities, um, one sort of central space for everyone to come together was really cool, um, I think currently as well, I think I mentioned

like the rise of the far right um, and I think a particularly hostile environment for new Scots and for people of colour and just young women in general, I think it's really, yeah, I think that's maybe something to focus on going forward and I think it's something, I guess they already have quite an active role in doing and challenging but I think in, um, creating further spaces to, to explore that, um, I suppose with the election coming up as well I think, um, yeah, the organisation is in quite a unique space to be able to hold decision makers to account and to be able to bring young women to the table and amplify their voices and ensure the sort of new government takes on all the sort of priorities of young women and includes them um, at the table, I guess.

Interviewer 1: Do you feel quite optimistic about the organisation is doing?

Interviewee: Yeah definitely, it's such yeah such important work, um, yeah I think it's, it's been wonderful seeing it grow and I think like all the projects even like this one right now I think it's just incredible, they're so creative, um, and they're so topical and they're so important and yeah, I really like the way they bring young women together, um, yeah, absolutely I'm excited to see how it how it grows over the next couple years.

Interviewer 2: What in your opinion makes an organisation a feminist organisation?

Interviewee: Such a good question, um, yeah I don't know I think centring the voices of sort of women, um, I think being intersectional, I think, yeah I think recognising the sort of unique experiences of all women and not being exclusive, I think being inclusive, or as inclusive as you can, um, whether it be on the basis of like race or sex or identity or sexuality or religion or whatever I think being like a really open space for everyone to share their views, um, I think having a focus on like gender equality or inequity um, and being able to, yeah, being able to platform women, um, and I suppose creating spaces for them to, yeah, develop skills, to be able to challenge, create change, um, but yeah I think those sort of core values I guess for me would be being inclusive, being sort of empowering, having a commitment to like social justice, being anti-oppressive, like those are all really, really big things for me I'd want to see.

Interviewer 2: And have there been any challenges that either you have faced within the organisation or you think the organisation has faced in during your involvement in it?

Interviewee: Um... Oh I don't know. I think funding has been a big one, I think funding for services, um, and I think they do so many wonderful things, it's, it's, a really difficult balance of like, you know ,what, what do we keep in, what gets the most, what has the most impact or what, what gets the most people or what, what can we get rid of, like I remember attending, um, like an away day a couple years ago and there was a big discussion around all the projects and it was a conversation of, if it sort of came to it, what could we what could we lose and that was a really hard conversation to have and to, to even think about because I think we, we talk about impact so much in numbers a lot of the time but it's so much more than that and I think these are real people and real experience and I think the sort of thinking about the community I've had and um, the people that I've met, I think I couldn't even imagine like that suddenly being lost ,um, from funding or from other, from other activities, um, yeah I think that's been quite a big challenge I think it's something that's been with the organisation I think since yeah probably for four years and years I think even before

I'd gotten I'd gotten involved, um... Yeah, I think as well, I suppose receiving backlash from others and particularly in spaces like social media I think it's, it's hard to it's hard to keep a safe space online when you don't have that power and control over it so, um, I remember from experience but both from like when I was involved with Young Women Know but also other projects, um, if we posted anything or if we'd, we'd mentioned anything or even if our faces were on display I think for me as like a South Asian young woman, um, or for others or if we were speaking about issues, um, in relation to like trans women and the inclusion of trans women and in the space, um, we'd receive a lot of backlash and a lot of sort of hate online, um, from others and I suppose that's, that's quite difficult, how do you maintain a safe space for everyone when, you know, this sort of online world really isn't safe and really isn't inclusive for a lot of people, um, yeah.

Interviewer 1: What kind of support did the organisation offer, um, as you were going through that and the others you're working with in your community there?

Interviewee: Um... I think they were great in their response. I think they were really good for putting up statements and I think maintaining um like a strong stance against any forms of like discrimination or racism or homophobia or anything, um, I think support internally, like being checked in on, having the sort of offer of a one-to-one, um, yeah even when designing campaigns thinking about how to maintain safety and how to keep participants safe, I think safety has always been quite a core principle of everything we've been involved with, um, and I suppose it is hard but it's something you don't have control over and I think as well for me like, I would post about a lot of things on my personal account um or a lot of the work we were doing so it's how do you like safeguard yourself against that um, but I think because, and as unfortunate as it is, it's something we have all experienced and something we were all able to relate to each other to so I suppose we were supposed to like we were able to laugh over it together we were able to like cry, shout, and do whatever we needed to do there was a space there to process it all, um, I guess and I think, yeah I think I've noticed, especially in recent events I've been involved with, like earlier this year I was involved with um the Young Women and Democracy Summit in Scottish Parliament and organising that ,um, and we had really big and detailed conversations about how we'd keep the sort of young women involved in the project safe, particularly when Scottish Parliament would be reporting on it um, so yeah, it's been nice to see how that principle, I guess, has evolved.

Interviewer 1: Is there anything else, um, as we've been having this conversation that you've popped up and thought oh I want to mention that or I had a lot of feelings about, uh, how things went down on that on that day that I would like to explore more, and you don't have to have done.

Interviewee: I don't think so, I think, do you know what, I think it's, it's been really nice and really interesting just sitting here over the last couple of hours and reflecting on it all because I think you just get so caught up in everything you don't really get to think about how far or this sort of journey I guess and I think yeah I've been involved in so many different things and I'm just thinking about it all now it's been such a such an incredible journey um there's nothing I have so many thoughts on, on everything right now but nothing yeah nothing concrete [laughing].

Interviewer 2: I think I do have a last question, if, if a young woman was to come to you and ask you whether you think they should or not join the young women's movement what would you say to them?

Interviewee: Absolutely, I think I would like, yeah, I think I'd, I'd immediately pull them in I think I'd give them the whole pitch I think I'd see what events I could get them signed up to or how I could get them involved, um, yeah I think it's been a really like safe and inclusive and warm and empowering space for me and I think, um, that's how I, I really hope it continues and that's I really want it to be a space that young women and girls feel like they can really be a part of and they can really shape, um, and that's certainly been my experience and I just hope that's how it stays going forward I suppose.

Interviewer 1: In terms of following on slightly from that, your own future and continuing to have these spaces and be part of a feminist movement, do you see that as being something related to the young women's movement or, uh, are there other hopes for organisations for women as they, as they, as they grow?

Interviewee: Absolutely I suppose like with the young women it is there is that young [laughing] part and I think eventually I will, um, unfortunately age out um I know there was talk of like an alumni network and things I think something like that would be really cool , um, because it's such a large organisation such a such an old one as well, there there's something really important I find in intergenerational spaces and I think it would be really cool to see ,um, some more work and some more organisations out there that focus on that and that tailor... Yeah that sort of recognise, um, the importance of sharing like intergenerational experiences and connections, um, thinking about it it's not something I really see, it's not something I can really think of right now I think there are specific spaces for women and like interested in different issues like if you're quite politically engaged or motivated there are organisations out there but I don't think there's a specific one just for women, um, like the Young Women's Movement for example, so it would be really cool to see that I think there's definitely a gap. [laughing].