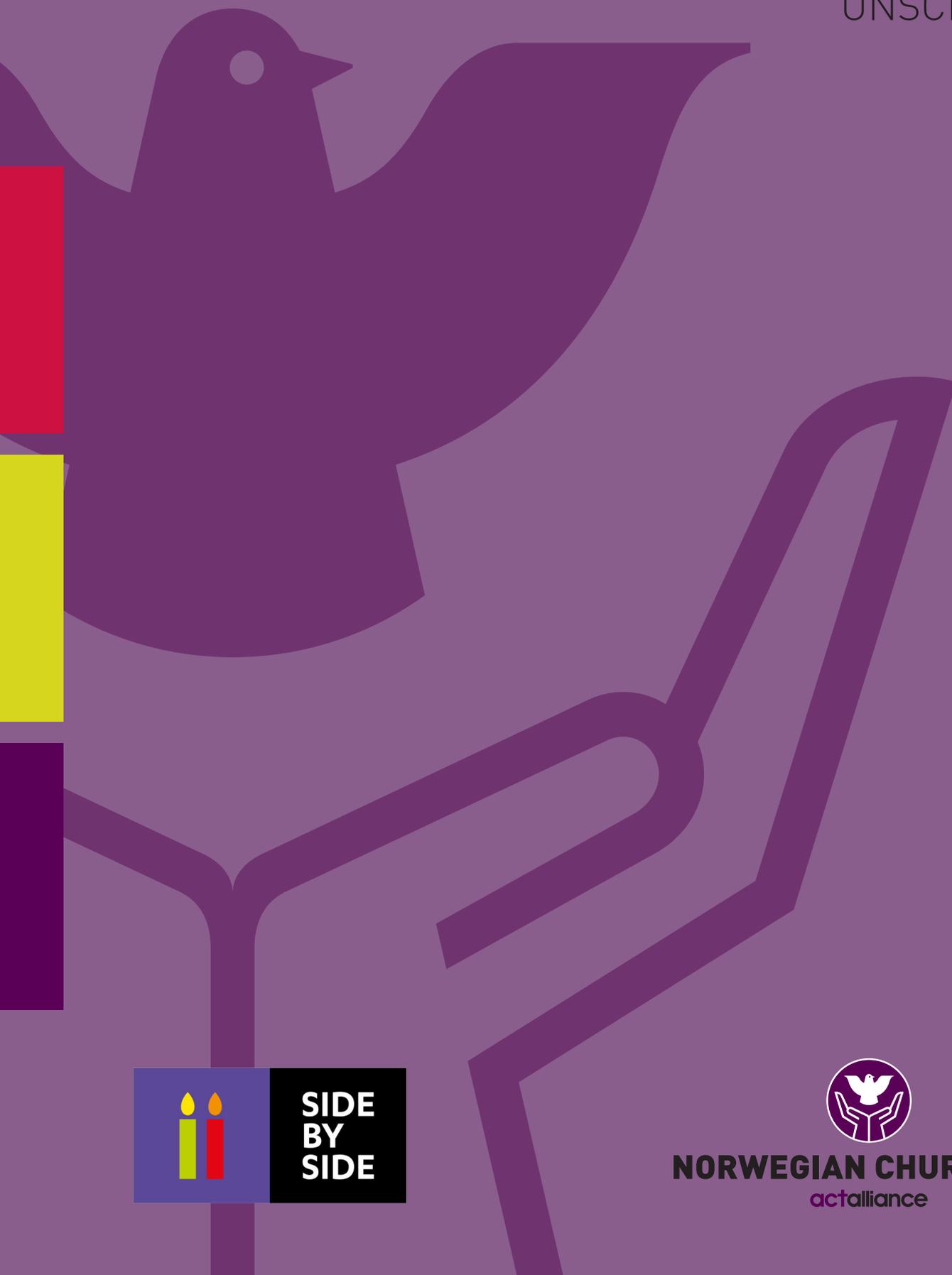


2016-2020

Regional Advocacy Strategy

UNSCR 1325



NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID
actalliance

ACRONYMS

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
ACRL- <i>RfP</i>	African Council of Religious Leaders – <i>Religion for Peace</i>
ACT Alliance	Action of the Churches Together Alliance
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EW	Early Warning
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FECCLAHA	Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in The Great Lakes and Horn of Africa
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GBV CPC	Thematic Programme on the Reduction of Gender Based Violence in Conflict and Post-conflict Settings
HO	Head Office
ICGLR	International Conference of the Great Lakes Region
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
RAS	Regional Advocacy Strategy
RPP	Regional Peace Program
SbS	Side by Side
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

1. Executive Summary

This document provides guidance and defines the outcomes and outputs of a Regional Advocacy Strategy on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The strategy was initiated jointly by two programmes of Norwegian Church Aid, the Regional Peace Programme and the Thematic Programme on the Reduction of Gender-Based Violence in Conflict and Post-conflict Settings. The development of the strategy was done jointly with some of the implementing partners, All Africa Conference of Churches, African Council of Religious Leaders-*Religion for Peace*, Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa, ARIGATOU International, Norwegian Church Aid's country offices covered by the two programmes¹ and NCA Head Office. Finalized in August 2016, this strategy covers the period 2016-2020.

AACC, FECCLAHA and NCA are members of the Side by Side movement. Side by Side is a global faith movement on Gender Justice that has global reach and seeks to strengthen the quest for gender justice through action by regional and national coalitions. Side by Side East Africa coalition gathers like-minded faith-based organisations (FBOs) to advocate for justice and equality for all people, irrespective of gender. The coalition has endorsed this Regional Advocacy Strategy.

The strategy highlights the gaps in the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Africa, and the need for advocacy for policy changes *and* implementation to ensure women's protection from gender-based violence and their increased participation in peace process in particular but also in general leadership and decision making structures. Norwegian Church Aid and partners and the Side by Side therefore through this strategy aim to synergise their advocacy initiatives towards these goals.

The strategy includes an implementation framework which is articulated around three outcomes: the first two outcomes focus on prevention and protection from gender-based violence, while the third outcome focuses on enhancing women's participation. The whole strategy targets both public authorities and religious leaders as the main duty bearers /decision makers, and therefore the main targets of the advocacy activities.

Through the strategy, Norwegian Church Aid and partners and Side by Side recognise the importance of joint efforts by different actors working at different levels for their advocacy efforts to bear fruits and hence the proposed joint efforts towards the identified common goal. The mandates and outreach of all the partners involved gives the strategy the reach and depth necessary for the anticipated changes.

Norwegian Church Aid will continue to play the coordination role while the partners are the main actors when it comes to the implementation of the strategy. All parties

¹ Included 8 NCA Country Offices in the Eastern Africa Region and Mali

concerned will contribute both financial and other resources towards the attainment of the strategy's aims and objectives.

2. Introduction

The joint Regional Advocacy Strategy (RAS) on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325² was initiated by Norwegian Church Aid's (NCA) Thematic Programme on the Reduction of Gender-Based Violence in Conflict and Post-conflict Settings (GBV CPC) and Regional Peace Programme (RPP) to ensure cross-fertilization of efforts related to UNSCR 1325. The strategy was developed through a participatory process together with All African Conference of Churches (AACC), the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religion for Peace (ACRL-RfP)*, ARIGATOU International, the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA), NCA Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania country offices and NCA head office (HO).

This strategy covers the period from 2016 to 2020 and is based on the three pillars of the UNSCR 1325 namely prevention, protection and participation, and addresses gender-based violence (GBV) and women's participation. This strategy has since been endorsed by the Side by Side East Africa coalition.

The NCA Regional Peace Programme encompasses 12 countries³ in the greater Eastern Africa covering the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions. The programme seeks to respond to latent, intermittent, perennial and protracted conflicts which continue to make the region one of the most conflicted in Africa. With an overall goal of '*Communities and social groups experience collaborative relations that enhance dialogue, harmonious co-existence and good governance*', the NCA Eastern African Regional Peacebuilding Programme aims for the following four outcomes:

- Inter and intra groups relations have improved;
- Inclusive peacebuilding structures and mechanisms prevent and transform conflicts;
- Increased participation of women in peacebuilding processes;
- Actors improve status of laws, agreements, policies, budgets or institutions addressing key driving factors of conflicts.

The programme is implemented through partnership with 4 regional actors namely; AACC, ACRL-*RfP*, ARIGATOU International and FECCLAHA.

² For more information on the UNSCR 1325, see POTI course "Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda" <http://www.peaceopstraining.org/courses/un-scrs-women-peace-and-security-africa/>

³ The countries include; Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti

The Thematic Programme on the Reduction of GBV in Conflict and Post-conflict Settings (GBV CPC) is supported by a Framework Agreement between NCA and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It covers the period 2015 – 2017 focusing on Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mali, South Sudan and Somalia, and since April 2016 Burundi. The GBV CPC has four objectives, covering direct service delivery to GBV survivors, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), peacebuilding and an organizational development objective. The organizational development objective focuses on ensuring that NCA delivers high quality GBV programmes, improves gender mainstreaming and works better on advocacy. The advocacy component of the organizational objective focuses on establishing a faith based alliance advocating on the UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions.⁴ The Regional Advocacy Strategy brings NCA and partners together to advocate on the UNSCR 1325 and represents concrete collaborative step towards the establishment of the alliance.

The Regional Advocacy Strategy, in line with NCA Global Advocacy Strategy, seeks to reduce inequality and achieve gender justice through the enactment of gender progressive policies and the enhancement of female representation in strategic decision-making positions. Meanwhile, it participates in preventing crisis by enhancing women and youth's voices in peace processes and by promoting their inclusion in the planning and implementation of peacebuilding policies and activities. To do so, advocacy is understood as "a strategic approach or set of activities designed to influence decision-makers, laws and regulations, structures and practices to address the root causes of injustice."⁵

3. Process

The Regional Advocacy Strategy on UNSCR 1325 was jointly developed by NCA Country Offices and partners through a participatory process.

An initial workshop was held in Nairobi in April 2016 bringing together representatives of regional partners, the two NCA programmes and representatives of NCA from the head office (HO), Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Tanzania. During the workshop, the participants developed the vision, and drafted outcomes and outputs for the 2016 to 2020 strategy. Further consultations took place at NCA HO in June 2016 and with country office partners and NCA country offices (CO) in July and August. A validation workshop gathering stakeholders of the advocacy strategy took place in Nairobi in August 2016 and issued a final version of the RAS. The strategy was endorsed by Side by Side East Africa coalition in December 2016.

⁴ For more information on UNSCR 1325: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml>

⁵ NCA Global Advocacy Strategy 2016-2020. This is the same as ACT's definition.

4. Background

Gender based violence continues to be a leading cause of death and disability of women of all ages as well as a leading cause of sexual and reproductive health problems. 35% of women worldwide (in some countries up to 70%) have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence. Armed conflict exacerbates the problem: GBV tends to increase during and after armed conflict, while prevention and response mechanisms weaken. Women and girls remain disproportionately affected by GBV in conflict settings, but men and boys are also at risk of GBV in these contexts. As a breach with the right to a life free from violence, GBV constrains women, men, girls' and boys' life choices, their agency and their ability to participate as citizens at different levels of society. GBV is widely recognized as a barrier to gender equality, to eradicating poverty and building sustainable peace.

Globally, women's participation in peace related processes and particularly in decision-making is still largely unachieved. In Africa, though remarkable progress has been seen in certain areas, women continue to be underrepresented in most governing structures. The regional average of 21.1 per cent women in parliaments in Sub-Saharan Africa is just slightly below the world average of 21.3 per cent, but far below the recommended 30 per cent needed to begin moving towards improving gender equality, and even further from the Africa-wide goal of 50/50 gender parity meant to have been achieved by 2015.⁶

While African governments have committed to gender equality in existing regional and international instruments and development frameworks including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), International Conference on Population and Development Program of Action, Beijing Platform for Action, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, African Union (AU) Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Africa Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and also through the development and adoption of National Action Plans, there is a critical lack of implementation and accountability. National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 have been developed in various countries. However the resourcing and implementation of these plans while varying from country to country still remain a challenge. In addition, some countries rely more on other national strategies, such as gender strategies, than their NAP. The RAS therefore seeks to promote adequate implementation of developed and most relevant strategies/plans to the country to advance the protection of women from GBV and their participation in peace processes.

A lot is and has been done when it comes to social mobilization on the local and national levels but these activities are rarely linked to the change and the implementation of policies which is the final goal of advocacy. Hence the need to better understand the linkages between social mobilization and change of policies and

⁶ The African Union 50/50 Gender Parity Principle, adopted at the Inaugural Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union held in Durban, South Africa in 2002.

to develop policy influencing activities. The Regional Advocacy Strategy will emphasize the necessity to link up social mobilization activities towards change in and implementation of policies at local, national, international and regional levels.

Numerous local and national advocacy activities around UNSCR 1325 and GBV are being implemented throughout Africa, some of them by NCA programmes and partners, but there is very little regional cohesion. By developing a Regional Advocacy Strategy, we will be able to coordinate efforts, amplify NCA and partners' voices and to facilitate joint activities for a broader regional impact. It is also important to speak up with one voice so as to counter existing conservative lobbies slowing down or countering the adoption and the implementation of progressive texts and/or policies towards women.

Religious leaders and faith-based organizations as moral authorities in society have an important role to play, as religious constituencies are in an extremely strategic position to bring about change. NCA and partners will therefore work with and through religious leaders and their institutions to advance the aims and objectives of this strategy as outlined here below.

5. Content of the strategy

The strategy covers the period 2016 to 2020. It seeks to influence public authorities and religious institutions to create an enabling policy environment that ensures effective participation of women in peace processes and that their protection from violence is realized and implemented. The RAS has three outcomes, the first two outcomes focus on prevention and protection from GBV while the third outcome focuses on women and girls' participation. Outcome 1 focuses on prevention of violence ensured through enforcement of policies and practices, targeting public authorities such as regional institutions (AU, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)) and governments. Outcome 2 targets religious leaders and institutions to affirm or re-affirm their position and commitments to protect communities from GBV. Last, outcome 3 focuses on women and youth's participation in peacebuilding processes ranging from conflict preventive measures, initiatives taken during and after violent conflicts.

Additionally to the sample activities below, all participants to the RAS will contextualize the strategy at the institutional level by creating awareness on the strategy among staff and members. An implementation action plan for 2017 will be developed and available by the end of 2016.

Regional Advocacy Strategy on UNSCR 1325 (2016-2020)

Vision: By 2020, an enabling policy environment that ensures effective participation of women in peace processes and protection from violence is realized and implemented.

	Descriptive	Actors / stakeholders
Outcome 1	Prevention of violence against women, girls and boys ensured through enforcement of policies.	Target: public authorities
Output 1.1	GBV concerns integrated in early warning (EW) mechanisms at regional, national and provincial levels.	Regional target: IGAD National targets: national institutions and/or Civil Society Organisations (CSO) which developed EW mechanisms

Effective, appropriate and functional early warning mechanism is a useful element of prevention of GBV, and furthermore can have real potential for influencing positive change in different policy contexts. In order to realise this, an important milestone will be a regional working group of advocacy partners to work together to educate themselves on existing relevant mechanisms, including their merits and shortcomings both as strategies and at the level of implementation. These findings and recommendations should then be published and disseminated, and can function as the basis for developing specific advocacy strategies for regional and national policy contexts. In order to reach the output goal, different stepping stones can include, depending on the policy context, the initiation of EW review by relevant policy makers, getting politicians or other key people involved in GBV prevention to bring up the need for GBV concerns in EW mechanisms, getting key people with strong legitimacy in the security sector to speak out in favour of this argument.

Sample activities	Establish regional working group to review relevant EW mechanisms for GBV integration and make recommendations, develop and disseminate report on available EW Mechanisms at national level, review IGAD EW mechanism, review national EW mechanisms, consult with EW experts, develop indicators related to GBV, issue joint communiqué asking for GBV integration in EW, lobby IGAD key people, lobby key people in focus countries.	
Output 1.2	Improved GBV modules in peace and security training packages for security forces in project area at regional and national levels.	Regional target: to be defined National targets: focus countries' governments and relevant ministries

According to the UN Women review of UNSCR 1325, one of the shortcomings of the implementation of the resolution is that GBV committed by security forces, including UN and AU peacekeeping forces, remains a significant problem. Advocacy actors can contribute to changing this situation through influencing the content and quality of GBV awareness training for security forces, including advocating towards key decision makers for elevating the relative importance of GBV issues within peace and security training. Potential stepping stones towards this output goal may include the issuing of

<p>communiqués on the issue, getting key decision makers to meet and discuss the issue, and so on. An essential element will be to carry on quality research to map and evaluate existing training practices, highlight best practices and gaps, and formulate clear recommendations on specific ways to improve the impact of this training on the way security forces interact with the communities. Depending on the context, the publication of reports and dissemination among key decision makers, holding workshops with decision makers and key persons within the security sector to create ownership of the issue, getting key security sector people to speak out on how and why the training on GBV issues within their sector could be improved.</p>		
Sample activities	<p>Develop report on existing/available GBV, peace and security training packages and their implementation, deliver joint communiqué on GBV training in peace and security training packages, review GBV modules, consult with GBV & security forces experts, issue joint communiqué on GBV training in peace and security training packages, lobby AU Peace and Security Council.</p>	
Output 1.3	<p>Maputo Protocol ratified by Burundi, Somalia and South Sudan, and implementation initiated in DRC and Mali.</p>	<p>Targets: focus countries governments, AU</p>
<p>The Maputo Protocol addresses many of the concerns related to prevention of and protection from GBV as contained in this outcome goal. Therefore, a key objective is to ensure that the programme countries that have not ratified this protocol do so. Those that have ratified have failed to make real progress in its implementation, and working to hold decision makers accountable for the implementation will therefore be important in those contexts. It is also likely to be useful to include advocacy for real implementation in the advocacy strategies for ratification in the countries that have not yet done so from the start, depending on the policy context. Relevant stepping stones may be getting other key people such as respected national legal experts to support the issue, having key politicians supporting ratification, getting key national experts to challenge the relevant decision makers on the non-implementation of the protocol through relevant canals (newspaper article, statement in parliament or similar).</p>		
Sample activities	<p>Develop joint communiqué to demand ratification and implementation of policies, conferences at national level and issue of joint communiqué, conference at regional level and issue of joint communiqué, strategy to disseminate the communiqué, AU side event (January 2017).</p>	
Output 1.4	<p>African (continental and/or sub-regional) policies regarding the protection of children from GBV ratified and implemented.</p>	<p>Targets: focus countries governments, AU</p>
<p>Youth network strengthened throughout participating countries to engage youth to develop an advocacy campaign for youth by youth, to advocate for the prevention and protection of youth and children from GBV. The youth advocacy campaign may focus on other African policies that contributes towards the realisation of UNSCR 1325.</p>		
Sample activities	<p>Establishment of a child and youth advocacy network on GBV (children and youth advocating for their rights), capacity building on youth advocacy, youth advocacy campaign developed and implemented, child and youth network deliver joint demand for ratification and implementation of African policies related to the protection of children from GBV, AU Summit side event (January 2017), engage social and traditional media outlets, exchange programmes through Changemaker's SommerSNU or HøstSNU, engage with the Global Network for Religions for Children, End VAC Platform and COP, engage the UN Youth Peace and Security Agenda through UN Youth Advisory Board.</p>	

Output 1.5	ICGLR policies and commitments on GBV are implemented by member states	Targets: ICGLR, Burundi & DRC governments
<p>The ICGLR policies addresses many of the concerns related to prevention of and protection from GBV as contained in this outcome goal. Therefore, a key objective is to monitor programme countries implementation of ICGLR policies. Those that have ratified have failed to make real progress in its implementation, and working to hold decision makers accountable for the implementation will therefore be important in those contexts. It is also likely to be useful to include advocacy for real implementation in the advocacy strategies for ratification in the countries that have not yet done so from the start, depending on the policy context. Relevant stepping stones may be getting other key people such as respected national legal experts to support the issue, having key politicians supporting ratification, getting key national experts to challenge the relevant decision makers on the non-implementation of the protocol through relevant canals (newspaper article, statement in parliament or similar).</p>		
Sample activities	ICGLR policies implementation is monitored and reported to ICGLR and governments, capacity building on policy implementation monitoring, network of monitors, strategy to communicate monitoring reports to ICGLR and governments.	
Outcome 2	Religious actors publicly (re)affirm their position and commitment on protection of women, girls and children from violence	Decision makers: religious leaders and religious institutions Other stakeholders: CSOs, women networks, youth networks
<p>This outcome is based on the understanding of the strong symbolic as well as sometimes direct formal and informal power that religious leaders often have in addressing contentious issues of gender, including GBV, and therefore the strong potential for change that lies in their engagement against GBV. The outputs that can realise this potential through religious leaders both as individual leaders and as institutional representatives. Possible stepping stones to aim for may be positive changes in how religious leaders address GBV in sermons, teachings etc, the establishment of networks of religious leaders working against GBV either at community or policy level, religious leaders supporting statements from women's organisations on GBV issues, GBV to be put on the agenda in intra- or inter-religious conferences etc.</p>		
Output 2.1	Religious leaders (as individuals) have internalized the commitment and incorporated GBV in religious teachings	Targets: religious leaders
Sample activities	Religious leaders awareness and capacity building on GBV, information collection of existing religious teachings on GBV resources , production of practical tools on how to incorporate GBV issues, production of theological reflections literature on GBV, production of practical tools on how incorporating GBV issues in sermons.	
Output 2.2	Religious leaders (as religious institutions representatives) publicly commit to take action to protect women, girls and children from GBV	Targets: religious leaders, religious institutions
Sample activities	Development of GBV strategy within religious institutions, mapping of communiqués/statements/declarations by faith actors on GBV, signing and dissemination of communiqué stating commitment to take action against GBV, development of activities tackling GBV through places of worship, development of practical tools for clergy on how to take action against GBV, lobbying and ecumenical diplomacy, participation in disseminating HR/GBV reporting to congregations for awareness on the scale of the problem,	

	religious leaders contribute and partake in public forms (such as CEDAW, Universal Periodic Review, Commission on Status of Women), experience sharing.	
Outcome 3	Women and youth representation and participation level in peace building processes increased in the Eastern Africa region by 2020	Decision makers: public authorities, religious leaders, women and youth with a particular focus on religious institutions
Output 3.1	Women and youth voices are heard and considered in peace processes (South Sudan, Somalia and Burundi)	Targets: peace processes actors (governments, opposition, international facilitator, etc.)
<p>UNSCR 1325 states that women should be included in peace processes, from pre-negotiations to reconciliation phases. Due to their traditional 'care givers' role, women, have a greater understanding of their communities' needs and the challenges they face. Women are therefore more likely to bring women's issues and their communities' issues to the negotiation table. Youth on the other hand represent the most numerous part of the population in African countries, hence it is essential to give them the opportunity to participate in peace processes that will impact their present and future. However, women and youth's participation in peace processes is still dramatically low and overlooked. Women and youth voices must therefore be heard and considered, through official participation or through informal canals (consultations with the mediator and/or parties in the negotiations).</p>		
Sample activities	<p>Women and youth's capacity (information, skills and knowledge) for peacebuilding and conflict transformation is enhanced through capacity building initiatives (which include; training, sensitisation, awareness raising, mentoring, accompaniment), religious leaders advocate for women and youth's participation in peace processes, mobilisation of religious leaders, lobbying, technical support, religious leaders forums, policy dialogue and engagements, commemoration of important/relevant international days, documentation of best practices, regional conference modelled along "SOKO⁷ concept", online campaigns.</p>	
Output 3.2	Women representation and participation within religious institutions increased	Targets: religious leaders and religious institutions
<p>Anchored in communities and respected by political leaders, religious institutions and religious leaders have a great role to play in the achievement of gender justice. However, despite a growing interest for gender justice and the establishment of gender desks within religious institutions, women representation and participation remains very low. Religious institutions need to create space for women to lead and take decisions. Internal transformation is thus a pre-requisite to bring about societal change and achieve gender justice. The change in religious structures is a long-term process that requires a change in mind-sets through awareness raising, experience sharing, peers lobbying and mentorship, etc.</p>		
Sample activities	<p>Male religious leaders are mobilized to advocate for increased women representation within religious institutions, training, awareness raising, lobby, mentoring, exchange programmes, documentation of best practices.</p>	

⁷ SOKO concept based on the idea of a 'market place' where ideas , experiences, resources and skills are exchanged and learnt

Output 3.3	Women and youth groups and networks engage and influence peacebuilding policies and activities at national and local levels.	Targets: national and local authorities
<p>Women, because they are the ones in charge of the well-being of their communities, and youth, because they represent the largest group in most communities, must engage and influence peacebuilding policies and activities both at regional, national and local levels. However, politics and policies are mostly decided by adult male individuals. Hence, women and youth must be mobilized through women and youth groups and networks to lobby for their inclusion in the development and implementation of peacebuilding policies and activities.</p>		
Sample activities	<p>Policy gaps are identified in relation to women and youth (young women’s) participation, research, tools development, institutional strengthening, dissemination, Women and youth's capacity (skills and knowledge) for advocacy and lobbying is enhanced, capacity building on peacebuilding and conflict transformation, training, tools development, institutional strengthening, , mobilisation, lobbying, sensitisation, awareness creation, commemoration of important/relevant international days, policy dialogue and engagements, documentation of best practices, strategic partnerships, regional conference modelled along” SOKO concept”⁸.</p>	

⁸ SOKO concept based on the idea of a ‘market place’ where ideas , experiences, resources and skills are exchanged and learnt

6. Advocating together as one

Developing an advocacy strategy at the regional level jointly with partners will enable us to speak with one strong voice for ending GBV and promoting women's participation.

The collaboration with and between the regional and national partners for advocacy serves all implementing partners as each will benefit from each other's positions of influence and contacts. Connections between country offices and regional partners are established or reinforced, opening new windows of opportunity for collaboration for advocacy and also for other programmatic activities.

In advocacy, linking national and regional levels enables more cohesion and more resources (human, financial, material, etc.) and can contribute to the solution to locked situations at national level by using the regional level to influence, convince or pressure national authorities. Advocating at the regional level can also be an alternative to the national level when advocates are at risk within a country. At the same time, advocacy at the national level needs to be informed and guided by the national context without being locked to stringent regional advocacy priorities. The balance between cohesion and contextual flexibility is the key to successful linkages between the different levels of advocacy.

Overall, the participants to the RAS pursue a common goal and throughout the process, share experiences and develop activities and initiatives together, sharing resources when need arises. The Regional Advocacy Strategy will bring together religious actors to advocate for UNSCR 1325. The collaboration between the regional partners and their networks (children, youth, women and religious leaders) and NCA participates in reinforcing Side by Side and its advocacy work related to UNSCR 1325 principles.

7. NCA and partners' added value as advocacy actors

As an ecumenical diaconal organization Norwegian Church Aid favours partnering with faith based organizations and working with religious leaders. Both have a critical role to play for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 because they have a great influence on societies and because conservative religious bodies and actors are among the main barriers to effective implementation of gender positive policies.

Religious constituencies have a strategic position to bring about change:

- Religious leaders are moral authorities, not only internally in their constituencies, but in the society as a whole. Religious leaders addressing

issues of GBV and women's participation are strategic partners in holding duty bearers at all levels in society accountable.

- Being present even in areas where government structures are weak or non-existing, religious constituencies have a great potential for mobilizing rights holders at grassroots to address those in power, creating the public pressure that sometimes is needed to create change.
- Religious structures range from individual and local level to the regional and international level and if issues are addressed at all levels it increases the structural impact.

Mobilizing and working with faith constituencies is one of the most important methods in NCA's advocacy work. It gives a range of opportunities, but could also be a sensitive matter as faith constituencies themselves are civic duty bearers and might be the ones to be challenged. Sometimes the faith constituencies are also directly working contra productive to the issues related to UNSCR 1325 we want to address. When planning advocacy efforts stakeholder analysis related to context and thematic issue is needed to assess how to go about.

8. Coordination and responsibilities

The coordination of the RAS will be ensured through the Thematic Programme on the Reduction of GBV in Conflict and Post-conflict Settings represented by Silje Heitmann – Senior Advisor GBV, and Solène Brabant – Regional GBV Advocacy Officer, and by the Regional Peace Programme represented by Wasye Musyoni – Programme Manager. The GBV CPC will coordinate outcomes 1 & 2, and RPP will coordinate outcome 3. RAS stakeholders will meet on a bi-annual basis to review progress and share activities. A mid-term evaluation will be carried out in December 2017.

For further information please contact:
Solène Brabant, solene.brabant@nca.no
Or Wasye Musyoni, w.musyoni@nca.no

Together for a Just World

Norwegian Church Aid works to save lives and seek justice. Our support is provided unconditionally with no intention of influencing anyone's religious affiliation.

Norwegian Church Aid is a member of the ACT Alliance, one of the world's largest humanitarian coalitions. Together, we work throughout the world to create positive and sustainable change.

To save lives and seek justice is, for us, faith in action.



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