

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

*Securing Rights:
Influencing Sustained
Engagement on Violations of
Women and Girls in Kenya*

ABRIDGED VERSION



Foreword

The Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW) understands that women's freedom from all forms of discrimination and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is not only a human right, but also crucial in enabling sustainable development. We believe that people can learn and change their attitudes towards women and girls, and that VAWG can be prevented.

This Strategic Plan will guide our efforts towards championing the rights of women and girls to be free from all forms of violence. Deliberate attempts have been made to ensure we contribute to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.

This Strategic Plan is anchored on five key pillars/strategic focus areas, namely: access to Comprehensive Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services; Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Leadership Development, Access to Justice and Institutional Development.

COVAW will contribute to empowering women and girls to address discrimination and VAWG, advocate for a progressive policy environment, address any attempts at reversal of hard-won gains on gender equality and support capacity development of relevant actors. We will engage with diverse actors to achieve our vision.

We invite you to join us as we venture into this exciting, ambitious and equally challenging phase of our journey in working towards the global goal of achieving gender equity and equality.

COVAW sincerely appreciates **Dr. Joan Nyanyuki**, who served as COVAW's Executive Director during the entire strategy review for her leadership, dedication and foresight.



Dr. Carolyne Odula-Obonyo
Chair, Board of Directors



Wairimu Munyinyi-Wahome
Executive Director





Maanda SRHR Project in Narok County

Identity and Core Values

Vision Statement:

A society where women and girls enjoy equal rights, freedoms and thrive in safe spaces.

Mission Statement:

COVAW exists to champion the rights of women and girls to be free from all forms of violations.

Core Values:

- 1. Integrity:** We are committed to the highest forms of accountability and honesty.
- 2. Dignity:** We believe in freedom of choice and autonomy regarding bodily integrity.
- 3. Courage:** We stand for what is right and just and take intentional bold steps in uncharted paths to effect change for women and girls.
- 4. Solidarity:** Inspired by the principles of diversity, equity and equality, we empathise with, and support women and girls to access social justice and human dignity.
- 5. Commitment:** We are passionate about working for the safety and wellbeing of women and girls. We have a pledge to fulfil all our promises.



INTRODUCTION

Who we are

Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW) is a national Kenyan not-for-profit women's rights organisation, committed to working towards a society free from all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). COVAW was founded in 1995 as a response to the silence of the Kenyan society to addressing VAWG.

COVAW's interventions deliberately address norms, attitudes, laws, policies and practices that affect women and girls' safety and wellbeing in general. This is done through implementation of gender progressive practices and supporting development of regulatory and institutional frameworks.

What we do

Advancing women's rights, and work towards achieving a society free from all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls.

COVAW Constituents

- Communities
- Civil society organisations
- National and County governments
- Development partners
- Private sector



Our Strengths

- Good, reputable and strong leadership.
- Skilled, knowledgeable and committed staff.
- Strong accountability mechanisms in place and use.
- Sound organisational policies, procedures and structures.
- Good relations, networks and contacts with key actors.
- Clear organisation identity, legitimacy, focus and mandate.
- Strong grassroots presence and anchoring.

"Sexual and reproductive health and rights embrace rights that are firmly entrenched in our national and international human rights documents and rest on the recognition of basic rights for ALL. This has been COVAW's raison d'être for the past 23 years and keeps us highly motivated to do more and more each and every day."

- Dr. Carolyne Odula-Obonyo, Chair, COVAW's Board of Directors



COVAW's Philosophy

COVAW adopts the United Nations (UN) International Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW). Article 4 of DEVAW defines VAWG as any act of SGBV that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in private or public life.

Building upon this and other human rights and feminist principles, COVAW recognises VAWG as a crime and a human rights violation. VAWG and related violations are both a cause and consequence of gender inequality and inequity that deny women and girls an opportunity to attain their full potential. COVAW, therefore, invests in interventions that accelerate progress in addressing norms, systems and structures that deter women and girls' safety, equal rights and wellbeing.

COVAW works with and support vulnerable and marginalised women and girls, rural and indigenous women, special interest groups as well as women and girls at risk of being left at the peripheries of advancement.

"Realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the goals and targets". - 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



COVAW's Value Proposition

COVAW proposes to add value to actors that we engage with in promoting social justice as follows:

Constituency	Value Proposition
Clients/ Communities	<p>To support our beneficiaries realise their rights and access services, COVAW:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Offers integrated high quality and contextualised responses to VAWG as well as women's empowerment services.2. Facilitates referral networks that ensure access to seamless services for survivors of VAWG and other women's rights abuses.3. Guarantees our beneficiaries' confidentiality, professionalism and accountability.4. Demonstrates commitment to bottom-up approaches that ensure local ownership and sustainability of benefits.
Peer Organisations	<p>Driven by a commitment to partnerships and systems thinking, we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Build synergy and complement peers to scale up impact and visibility of our programmes.2. Leverage resources and efforts to broaden reach.3. Ensure commitment to realisation of joint agreements and obligations.4. Associate peers with our reputable brand and goodwill.

"You do not have to be anti-man to be pro-woman." - Jane Galvin Lewis



Authorities/ Government	<p>Recognising the importance of synergy between civil society and government, we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leverage resources to complement state development ambitions and plans. 2. Support formulation, revision and implementation of gender progressive policies, legal and institutional frameworks. 3. Provide input into critical gender conversations or matters. 4. Generate and share evidence, new knowledge and solutions towards women and girls' development and wellbeing.
Development Partners	<p>Within the development chain, we offer our benefactors the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expertise on VAWG and human rights programming at multiple levels. 2. Delivery of value for money, good stewardship and open accountability of resources entrusted to us. 3. Extensive reach and presence via our County offices and multiple partners and networks. 4. Access to new knowledge, evidence and innovative solutions.
Private Sector	<p>Recognising the complementary developmental role of the private sector, we offer them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Platforms for delivery of Corporate Social Investments (CSI). 2. Well researched evidence and analysis on the status of women and girls. 3. Access to potential new markets through COVAW's extensive reach and multilevel presence. 4. Enhanced brand visibility and profiling using already established media presence.

"Violence against women is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace." **Kofi Annan**





Skills development exercise with a girl's club in Makongeni, Kwale County

EXTERNAL CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Globally

- One third of women worldwide have experienced violence.
- Intimate partner violence increases the risk of HIV, in some regions by up to 1.5 times.
- There exists persistent gender inequality which affects women socially and impedes their economic progress in the region.
- Gender-based violence reduces the bargaining power to negotiate safer sex, stay on treatment or remain in school.
- VAWG is caused by unequal power relations between men and women and discriminatory sociocultural norms.

In Kenya

- 43% of married women have experienced sexual violence.
- 32% of young women aged 18–24 years, and 18% of their male counterparts reported experiencing sexual violence before the age of 18.
- An estimated 23% of girls are married before their 18th birthday.



- Other major contributors include poverty, illiteracy, insecurity, alcohol and substance abuse, uncensored media, political instability and poor enforcement of laws and policies.
- Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting remains a key problem.
- Kenya is a source, transit route and destination for human trafficking.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

- SRHR remains among the most sensitive and controversial issues as evidenced by the stigmatization of both users and providers of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services; continued prevalence of practices that are harmful to women and girls' SRH; increasing restrictions on access to SRH information and contraceptive methods; watering down of legislations that protect women's rights; and the imposition of legal barriers, such as third-party consent requirements to SRH services.

In Kenya

- More than 40% of births are unplanned.
- Only one in five females are able to correctly identify the fertile period within their menstrual cycle regardless of their education levels.
- Only 53% of married women aged 15–49 years and 61% of sexually active unmarried women use contraceptives.
- This unmet gap puts many women at a risk of unwanted pregnancies that often result in unsafe abortions and maternal deaths.



- Women who report unintended pregnancy are less likely to seek antenatal care or to deliver with help of skilled attendants.
- About 310,000 abortions cases are reported annually.
- About 21,000 women are admitted in hospitals annually with complications from unsafe abortions, leading to death of about 2,600 women.
- There still exist substantial gaps in sexual and reproductive knowledge.
- There is a disconnect between SRH knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.
- There are misconceptions about contraceptive usage and the side effects.
- Induced abortion is allowed under the Constitution of Kenya (2010) if determined by a trained health care provider that the health of the mother is at risk. However, this is yet to be fully operationalised.
- Young urban dwellers living in resource-poor settings are particularly vulnerable to poor SRH outcomes.
- Addressing the SRH needs of adolescents is of utmost importance as it directly impacts on improving individual health outcomes.
- Effective reproductive health interventions include strengthening the health systems; improving efficiency, effectiveness and quality of reproductive health services; and targeting groups with special needs, “hard to reach communities” and other vulnerable groups.

Only one in five females are able to correctly identify the fertile period within their menstrual cycle regardless of their education levels.

“Feminism is the belief that women have the same value and worth as men, and a commitment to advocating for women’s rights - Get Moving!” - GBV Prevention Network



Women's Economic and Leadership Context

- There are proven synergies between women's empowerment and economic, social and environmental sustainability.
- Women's active participation in decision-making facilitates allocation of public resources to investments in human development priorities.
- Only one in twenty six salaried African women is employed in a senior management position, compared with one in every six men.
- In Kenya, women make a large economic contribution:
 - Nearly half of all small and micro enterprises are women's initiative.
 - Women supply 70% of labour, particularly in the agricultural sector.
- Women hold only about 1% of registered land titles and customary practices play a major role in restricting their control or ownership of productive assets.
- Women earn less – there is a huge wage gap between male and female employees for the same work performed.
- Women's representation in political and other areas of leadership in Kenya remains low - 21% female legislators in the 11th Kenyan parliament, 37.5% of the Cabinet Secretary slots, and 27% of the Principal Secretary positions.
- The realisation of the constitutional two-third gender rule in political and leadership representation should be acted upon urgently.
- The private sector should ensure that women realise their full and productive employment and decent work, equal pay for equal work or work of equal value and equal opportunities.



There are proven synergies between women's empowerment and economic, social and environmental sustainability. Increased earning by women has positive effect on children's nutrition, health and educational prospects.



Regulatory and Institutional Frameworks in Kenya

The Constitution of Kenya (2010)

- The Constitution:
 - Provides a powerful framework for addressing gender equality in the country.
 - Introduces an expanded Bill of Rights that includes social, economic and cultural rights (with a strong focus on the needs and entitlements of children and women), and charts out targeted measures that deal with women and girls exclusion.
 - Urges public institutions to avoid actions that discriminate against women and girls.

Kenya's Vision 2030

- Presents comprehensive social interventions aimed at improving the quality of life of all Kenyans.
- The flagship projects under the Gender, Youth and Vulnerable Groups sector include:
 - The Women Enterprise Fund.
 - The Consolidated Social Protection Fund.
 - Affirmative Action Policy.
 - Youth Empowerment Centres, and
 - Youth Enterprise Development Fund.

"GBV disproportionately affects women and hinders them from optimal participation in national socio-economic development."- Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative in Kenya



Other key frameworks

- The National Policy on Gender and Development (2011)
- Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2006 on Gender Equality and Development
- Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan of Action

International conventions

- Kenya is a signatory to several international conventions that hinges the work on women's rights including:
 - The Universal Declaration of Women's Rights.
 - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
 - Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Violence against Women, and
 - African Charter on Human and People's Rights.

Challenges related to the Regulatory Frameworks

- There is a major challenge of operationalisation of the existing regulatory frameworks. This is where a shift in focus and investment by stakeholders needs to be, collaborated by a change in attitudes and retrogressive cultural practices.





Dumisha amani
KOMESHA DHULUMA
DHIDI YA WANAWAKE

Voices and Culture: Increasing People Participation in Good Governance and Development
Supported by: Non State Actors Support Programme: NSA-NET



Archer's Post Samburu 16 Days of Activism against GBV

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Theory of Change

COVAW recognises that addressing the root causes of VAWG and related violations is a prerequisite for women and girls' safety and wellbeing.

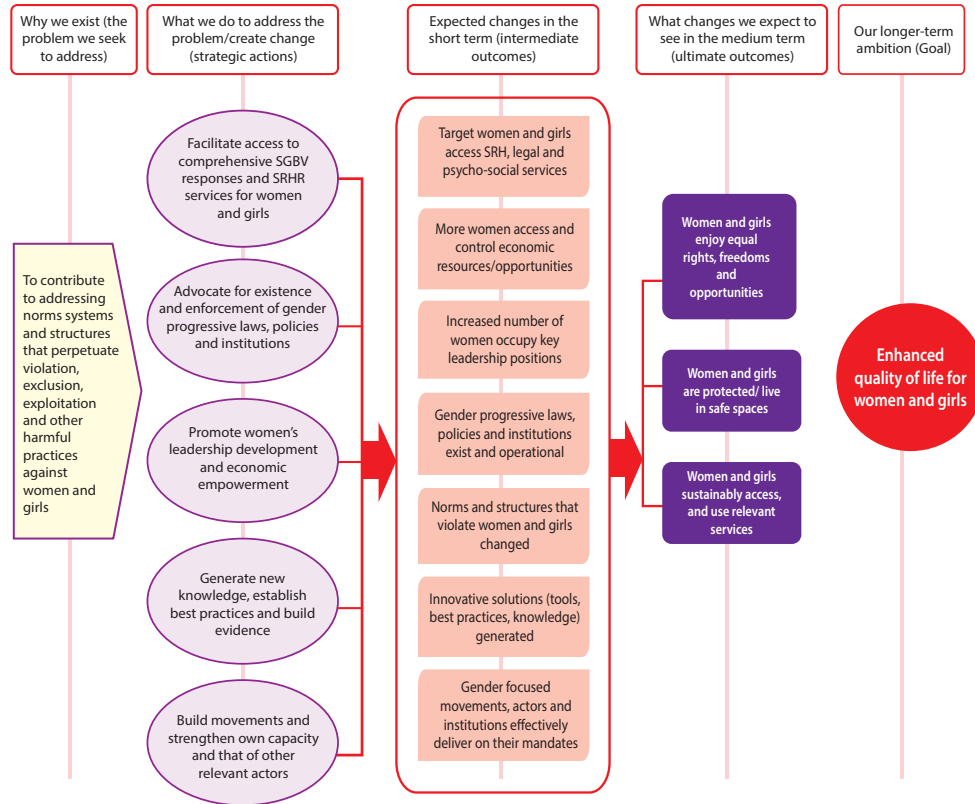
Key impediments to this include discriminatory and oppressive social norms; non-progressive policy, legal and institutional regimes; limited capacity of women, girls and key actors; as well as deprivation of rights, services, opportunities and resources.

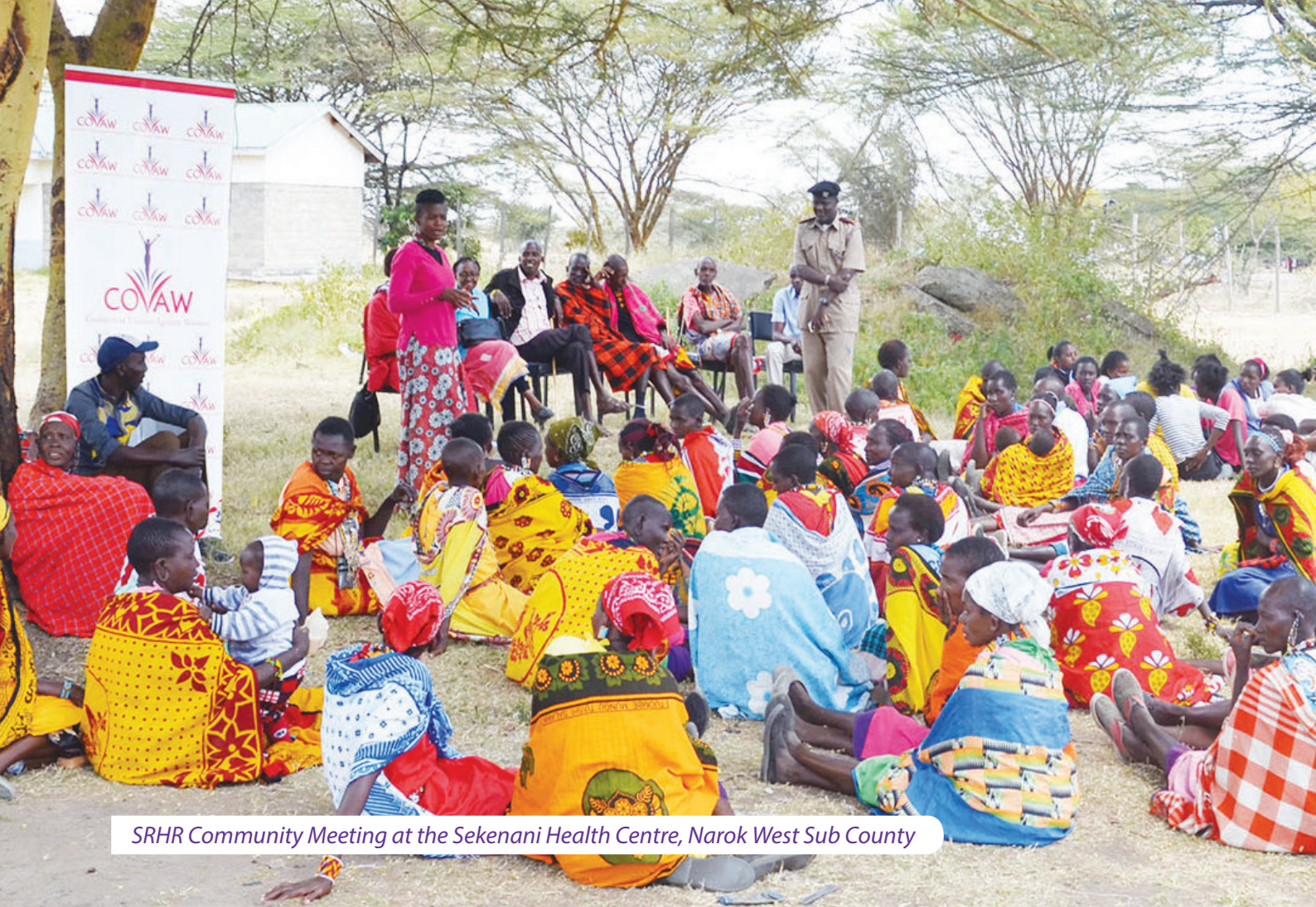
"As a witness in Reproductive health and rights first as a clinician and second, a mentor in Africa and beyond, I have appreciated the fact that violence against women and girls will NOT go away by simply sweeping it out of sight under the rug. Violence against women and girls is a public issue and addressing it must be done comprehensively and without bias, with the Government taking lead and committing resources for the same."

- Dr. Carolyne Odula-Obonyo, Chair, COVAW's Board of Directors



Theory of Change

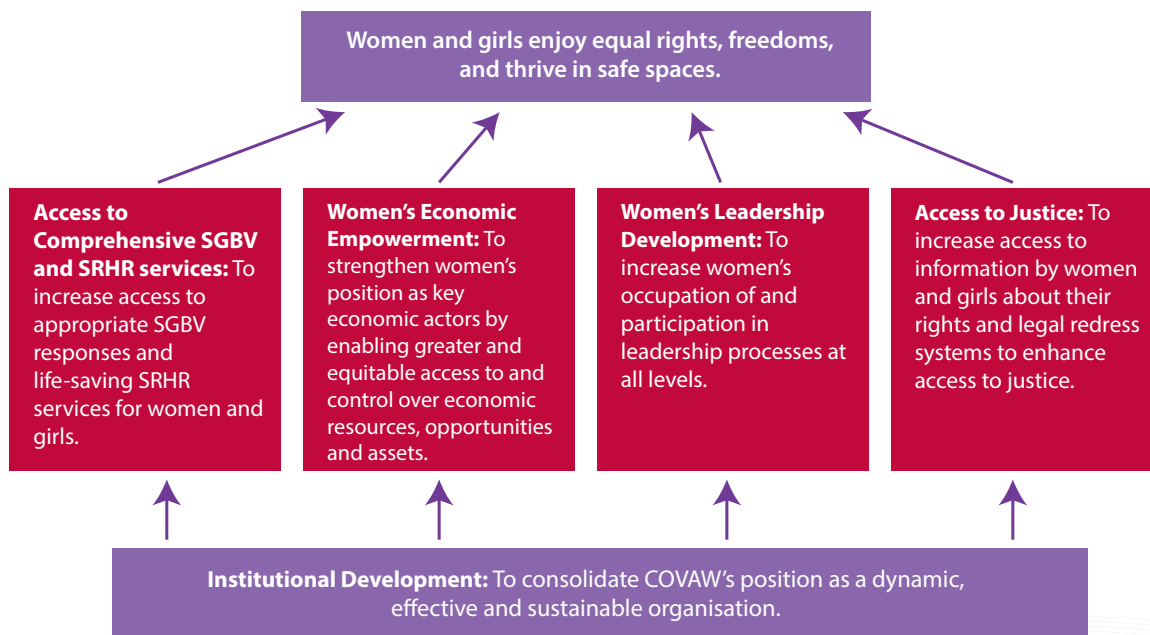




SRHR Community Meeting at the Sekenani Health Centre, Narok West Sub County

INTERVENTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

COVAW's Strategic Focus areas



COVAW's Approach and Strategies

To realise its five strategic areas of focus, COVAW will pursue integrated approach focusing on:

Advocacy:

Supporting evidence-based advocacy towards existence and enforcement of gender progressive norms, policies, laws and institutions.

Service delivery:

Piloting and implementing innovative and scalable high impact responses to SGBV and other violations and increased access to SRHR solutions.

Capacity development:

Offering technical support to women and girls and key actors involved in addressing VAWG and promoting women's access to rights, services, opportunities and resources.

Movement building:

Supporting mobilization, organising, empowering of and solidarity with key actors to increase their consciousness and activism on rights and freedoms of women and girls.

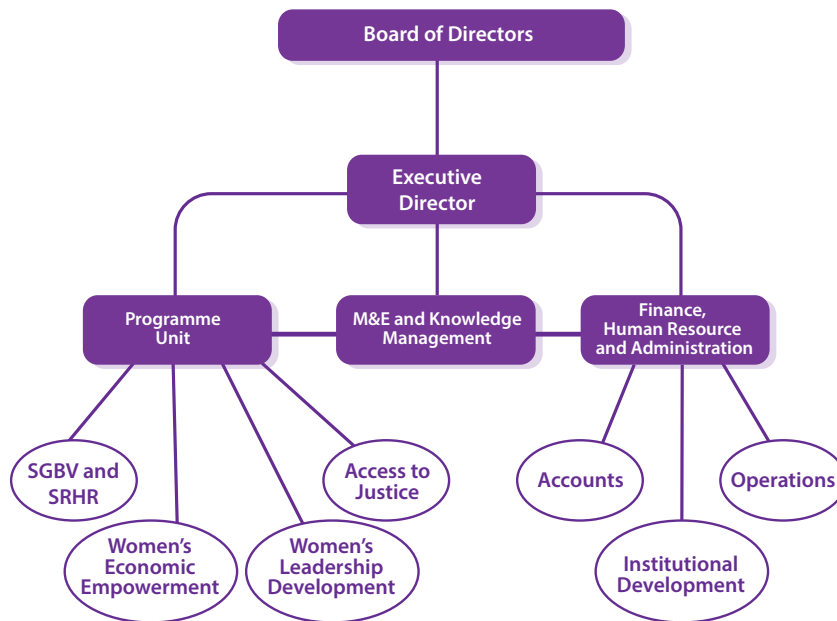




COVAW respects the role of traditional leaders in influencing positive change

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Organisation Structure



- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
- Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.



- Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.
- Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources in accordance with national laws.
- Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.





Dhanjay Apartments, Room 601, Hendred Avenue, Off Gitanga Road

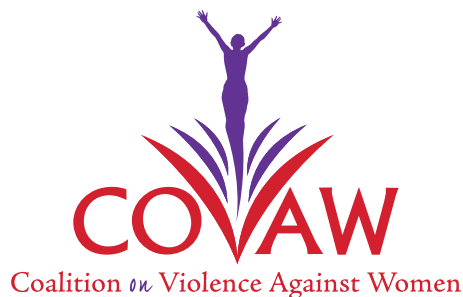
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